

**A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT  
OF THE STREET CHILDREN  
PHENOMENON IN RWANDA**

***May, 2019***

## Contents

Abbreviations.....	6
Executive summary .....	7
Assessment purpose and objectives.....	9
I. MAPPING OF STREET CHILDREN.....	11
1. 1. Methodological approach .....	12
1.1.1. Street children: A working definition.....	12
1.1.2. Systematic enumeration of street children.....	12
1.1.3. Whereabouts of street children.....	12
1.1.4. The administrative protocol to get to the street children sites .....	14
1.1.5. Contact and identification of street children on sites .....	15
1.1.6. Data collection .....	15
1.1.7. Meeting children in street children institutions.....	16
1.1.8. Meeting children in District transit centers .....	16
<i>Primary data, 2017</i> .....	16
Even though CRP Gitagata is located in the District of Bugesera, it is not run by the District, but by the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion.....	17
1.1.9. Night visits.....	17
1.1.10. Collected data and data collection techniques and tools .....	17
1.1.11. Organization of the field work .....	17
1.1.12. Data entry and analysis .....	17
1.1.13. Limitations of the study .....	18
1.2. Findings.....	18
1.2.1. Distribution of street children by location where met.....	18
1.2.2. Distribution of street children by District of enumeration and origin .....	19
1.2.3. Distribution of street children by gender.....	21
1.2.4. Why are there by far more boy than girl street children?.....	21
1.2.5. Distribution of street children by age group .....	23
1.2.6. Distribution of street children by forms of street life.....	23
1.2.7. Distribution of street children by school attendance.....	23
1.2.8. Alive or dead status of street children parents .....	24
1.2.9. Experience of stay in street children institutions and family reintegration.....	25
1.3. Conclusion .....	26
II. CHILDREN'S STREET LIFE CAUSES AND LIVING CONDITIONS .....	27

2.1. The literature review .....	28
2.1.1. Causes of and contributing factors to the street children phenomenon .....	28
2.1.2. Consequences of street life to the welfare of children.....	32
2.1.3. The situation of street children in Rwanda in 2012.....	32
2. 2. Methodological approach .....	33
2.2.1. Research design, nature and sources of data.....	33
2.2.2. Sampling of parents .....	34
$n = 3.8416 \times 0.50.0025 = 384.1$ .....	35
This is a sample size for the target population (384 parents).....	35
2.2.3. Data collection/Conduct of interviews .....	35
2.2.4. Data analysis plan and report writing.....	36
2.2.5. Limitations of the study .....	36
2.3. Root causes of street children phenomenon.....	37
2.3.1. Causes of street children's life as expressed by street children .....	37
2.3.2. Causes of children's street life as per parents.....	48
2.3.3. Causes of street children life as expressed by the stakeholders .....	56
2.3.4. Synthesis on the causes of the street children phenomenon .....	58
2.4. The living conditions of street children met in the street .....	61
2.4.1. Work instead of education .....	61
2.4.2. Limited food accessibility .....	63
2.4.3. Limited access to clothing .....	64
2.4.4. Lousy street children sleeping arrangements.....	65
2.4.5. Subjection to violence and abuse .....	65
2.4.6. Limited access to health care and poor hygiene .....	66
2.4.7. Drug abuse.....	68
2.4.8. Premature sexual activity.....	69
2.4.9. The negative public image of street children .....	72
2.4.10. Wishful views of the future .....	72
2.5. Living conditions of children met in centers.....	73
2.6. Synthesis on street children living conditions.....	75
2.7. CONCLUSIONS.....	77
III. REINTEGRATION AND PREVENTION STRATEGY .....	79
3.1. Methodological approach .....	80
3.1.1. Sources and nature of data and information .....	80
3.1.2. Data analysis, workshop and draft report.....	82

3.1.3. A validation workshop .....	82
3.2. Situational analysis.....	82
3.2.1. Children's street involvement causes and living conditions: a reminder .....	82
3.2.2. The current national legal and policy framework.....	84
3.2.3. Relevant stakeholders.....	90
3.2.4. The current family support schemes .....	97
3.2.5. Overview of the 2005 strategic plan for street children .....	99
3.2.6. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats/Challenges .....	101
3.3. Street children reintegration and prevention strategy.....	102
3.3.1. Vision and Mission .....	102
3.3.2. Guiding principles .....	102
3.3.3. Strategic objectives .....	103
3.3.4. Family and community reintegration of street children .....	103
3.3.5. Community-based prevention.....	112
3.4. Logical framework .....	119
ANNEXES .....	129
Annex 1: Documents consulted.....	129
Annex 2: List of visited sites .....	131
Annex 3: Persons interviewed .....	133
Annex 4: Distribution of street children by District of enumeration and origin.....	133

## List of tables and figures

Table 1: Street children institutions .....	16
Table 2: Visited Transit centers.....	16
Table 3: Map of distribution of street children by District of enumeration and origin .....	19
Table 4: Distribution of children involved with child labor by sex .....	22
Table 5: School attendance.....	24
Table 6: School attendance by place of enumeration.....	24
Table 7: Distribution of parents by alive/dead status .....	24
Table 8: Guardianship after parents' death .....	25
Table 9: Placement in centers and family reintegration.....	25
Table 10: Root causes of street life as explained by children and parents .....	37
Table 11: Reasons for dropping-out of school.....	41
Table 12: Causes disaggregated by sex.....	42
Table 13: Causes disaggregated by age .....	45

Table 14: Main causes disaggregated by districts .....	46
Table 15: Incidence of poverty and extreme poverty in Rwanda .....	47
Table 16: Comparison between levels of extreme poverty and number of street children .....	47
Table 17: Causes of children's street life as expressed by parents .....	49
Table 18: Number of parents with employment .....	51
Table 19: Distribution of respondents by types of employment.....	51
Table 20: Respondents' education .....	51
Table 21: Parents' school attainment level.....	52
Table 22: Distribution of respondents by housing arrangements .....	53
Table 23: Distribution of respondents by ways of health care access .....	53
Table 24: Distribution of respondents by source of community health care insurance .....	54
Table 25: Street children parents benefiting from Government social protection programs.....	54
Table 26: Reasons for not accessing the VUP program .....	54
Table 27: Distribution of respondents by food availability .....	55
Table 28: Parents with feeling of devastation after children departure.....	55
Table 29: Parents' reactions after devastation.....	56
Table 30: Explanations of children's street involvement by senior officers of street children centers ....	56
Table 31: Reasons for children's street involvement expressed by local authorities.....	58
Table 32: School attendance by place of enumeration .....	61
Table 33: Street children jobs.....	62
Table 34: Ways used by street children to earn money.....	62
Table 35: Money utilization by street children.....	63
Table 36: Ways of finding food.....	64
Table 37: Ways of getting clothes for street children.....	64
Table 38: Distribution of street children by type of suffered violence .....	65
Table 39: Street children suffered violence by gender .....	66
Table 40: Street children access to medical services .....	66
Table 41: About STDs infection.....	67
Table 42: Types of diseases common among street children .....	68
Table 43: Distribution of street children by disability.....	68
Table 44: Types of drugs abused by street children .....	69
Table 45: Table: Sexual activity among street children by gender .....	70
Table 46: Sexual activity by age group .....	70
Table 47: Street children sexual partners .....	70
Table 48: Condom utilization by street children .....	71
Table 49: Street children use of condom by gender .....	71
Table 50: Parenthood.....	71
Table 51: Street children views about the their future .....	72
Table 52: Street children centers and day and nighttime interventions.....	101

Figure 1: Distribution of street children by location where met .....	19
Figure 2: Street children distribution by gender .....	21
Figure 3: Distribution of street children by age group .....	23
Figure 4: Distribution of street children by forms of street life .....	23
Figure 5: Distribution of children by school attendance before street life .....	40
Figure 6: Distribution of children by school attainment level before street life .....	40
Figure 7: Reasons for not attending school before street life .....	41
Figure 8: Distribution of respondents by ubudehe categories.....	50
Figure 9: Parents with stable accommodation .....	52
Figure 10: Parents' access to health care .....	53
Figure 11: Proportion of street children attending school .....	61
Figure 12: Access to food .....	63
Figure 13: Street children sleeping places.....	65
Figure 14: Drug abuse among children.....	69

## Abbreviations

<b>APSP</b>	: Africa Platform for Social Protection
<b>APIB</b>	: Association pour la Promotion des Initiatives de Base
<b>CEDO</b>	: Cell Economic Development Officer
<b>CPAJ</b>	: Centre Presbytérien d'Amour des Jeunes
<b>DRC</b>	: Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>ECD&amp;F</b>	: Early Childhood Development and Family
<b>EDD</b>	: Les Enfants de Dieu
<b>EICV</b>	: Enquête Intégrale sur les Conditions de vie des Ménages (Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey)
<b>FARG</b>	: Fond d'Appui aux Rescapés du Génocide
<b>FDG</b>	: Focus Group Discussion
<b>FIDESCO</b>	: Fondation Internationale pour le Développement Economique, Social, Spirituel au Service de la Coopération
<b>GOR</b>	: Government of Rwanda
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	: Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>ICRC</b>	: International Committee of the Red Cross
<b>ILO</b>	: International Labor Organization
<b>INGO</b>	: International Non-Government Organization
<b>IZU</b>	: Inshuti z' Umuryango (friends of the family)
<b>M&amp;E</b>	: Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MIGEPROF</b>	: Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
<b>MINAGRI</b>	: Ministry of Agriculture
<b>MINALOC</b>	: Ministry of Local Government
<b>MINEDUC</b>	: Ministry of Education
<b>MINIYOUTH</b>	: Ministry of Youth
<b>NCC</b>	: National Commission for Children
<b>NGO</b>	: Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NISR</b>	: National Institute for Statistics of Rwanda
<b>NRS</b>	: National Rehabilitation Services
<b>NTS</b>	: National Transformation Strategy
<b>ODCCP</b>	: Office of Drug Control and Crime Prevention
<b>OPDE</b>	: Œuvre Humanitaire pour la Protection et le Développement de l'Enfance en Difficulté
<b>OVC</b>	: Orphans and other Vulnerable Children
<b>RDRC</b>	: Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission
<b>RCSPF</b>	: Rwanda Civil Society Platform
<b>SACCA</b>	: The Streets Ahead Children's Centre Association
<b>STD</b>	: Sexually Transmitted Diseases
<b>SWOT</b>	: Strengths - Weaknesses - Opportunities - Threats
<b>UN</b>	: United Nations
<b>UNCRC</b>	: United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children
<b>UNHCR</b>	: United Nations High Commission for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	: United Nations Children Fund
<b>VUP</b>	: Vision 2020 Umurenge Program
<b>WFP</b>	: World Food Program

## Executive summary

In order to work out a sustainable solution to the street children phenomenon, the National Commission for Children (NCC) commissioned a study to conduct a “comprehensive assessment on the street children phenomenon in Rwanda”. The assignment involved mapping of street children, identifying root causes of street children phenomenon and developing a reintegration and prevention strategy”.

Each and every street child was identified and head-counted and their profiles were recorded according to several categories and characteristics, including numbers, name, gender, age, location, names of parents and origin, alive or dead status of parents, names of guardian after parent's death; education status. Enumeration took place in major cities and emerging trading centers where street children have been seen or were suspected to be across the country. Overall 2,882 street children were enumerated, including 2,621 boys or 91% and 261 or 9%; 1,915 enumerated or 66.5% in the street and 967 or 33.5% in street children centers and transit centers; 55.6% living in the street day and night time and 44.3% staying in the street during day time and going home at evening time; 37% that attend family poverty, 37% between 15-18 years of age. A database with the street children's identification elements was developed.

Data and information to determine children's street involvement root causes and living conditions came from interviews of the 2,882 street children, a sample of 384 parents of street children, senior officers from the street children centers, and local authorities. The numerous factors and circumstances that respondents consider to be the driving factors of children's street life were condensed into three major causes: parental/extended family irresponsibility, family conflicts and family poverty. The study showed that the street children phenomenon is a multi-facet issue, and that, contrary to what many may believe, as such poverty is not the most striking factor. Furthermore, the assessment confirmed the fact that street children live in appalling conditions which not only deprive them of their childhood, dignity and potential, but also are harmful to their physical, social and emotional development. They include lack of protection and education, inadequate food and medical care, poor hygiene, loss of positive social and moral values, subjection to abuse, and premature sexual activity.

To deal with this problem, society must mobilize for the re-establishment of street children in their rights. This implies saving them from the hardship and dangers of street life; helping them to heal from street-inherited trauma and have a good health; helping them to return to their families and to stay there harmoniously and durably; and helping them to prepare to become active and productive members of society. More importantly, society must work



together to address the issue's root causes for the ultimate purpose of preventing it once for all.

The suggested strategy is based on two main engagements: (1) taking off the street all the 2,882 enumerated children and eventual new comers and reintegrate them to their families after a rehabilitation process; and (2) initiating preventive measures to pre-empt the phenomenon from occurring. Regarding street children family reintegration, the plan is: 1) withdrawal of children from the street by the police; 2) children are taken to District transit centers for no more than seven days, for identification purposes; 3) children are transferred from District transit centers to professional street children rehabilitation centers; 4) children undergo a rehabilitation (physical and psychological) process; children and their families are prepared for reunification; children receive a civic and positive social and moral values education; and children receive a catch-up or basic literacy and numeracy training; 5) children are reintegrated back into their families and communities, including into school/vocational training system. With adequate resources, all the interventions to take children off the street, rehabilitate and reintegrate them into families and communities, are set to be completed in 2 a year program.

The prevention component of the strategy is built on continuous actions, entailing the following: 1) strengthening "Inshuti z'Umuryango" (IZU or friends of the family) so they can pro-actively detect families at risk of being separated from their children; 2) IZUs inform and report cases to relevant structures in the District; 3) informed relevant structures initiate interventions designed to support economically and/or relationally the families and children concerned. The preventive action will also comprise a rigorous public awareness and sensitization campaign to educate parents and community members at large on positive parenting and on their civic roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis children in danger of going to the street.

## Assessment purpose and objectives

Many children, generally referred to as “mayibobo”, are seen wandering on the street in towns and emerging trading centers across the country. These children partially or completely broke away with their families to become street children. UNICEF describes street children as “boys and girls, aged under 18 years, for whom the street (including unoccupied dwellings and wasteland) has become home and/or their source of livelihood, and who are inadequately protected or supervised” (In Wikipedia. Retrieved October 15, 2017, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street\\_children](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street_children)). The Rwandan community is concerned about protecting the rights and welfare of street children because they are constantly victim of inherent dangers of street life, including deprivation, starvation, lack of education, homelessness, lack of medical care, inadequate hygiene, delinquency, prostitution, drug abuse, lack of protection, marginalization, lack of future, etc. (NCC, 2012).

The National Commission for Children (NCC) is a public agency under the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), established to spearhead the implementation of policies and strategies established to protect and promote children’s rights (Law n°71/2018 of 31/08/2018). Committed to addressing the root causes and finding a sustainable solution to the street children phenomenon, NCC has commissioned a study to conduct a **“comprehensive assessment on the street children phenomenon in Rwanda that includes mapping of street children, identifying root causes of street children phenomenon and developing a reintegration and prevention strategy”**.

The objectives of the research are the following:

1. Identify and record the street children in all Districts of Rwanda disaggregated by numbers, gender, age, location and origin;
2. Establish and define the different categories disaggregated by numbers, sex, age, locations and origin of children in/on the streets of Rwanda;
3. Establish a profile of vulnerable children in/on the streets (general living conditions, means of subsistence, needs and services received);
4. Identify, analyze and clearly categorize the root causes of the street children phenomenon in Rwanda;
5. Analyze the functioning and efficiency of the Centers/institutions caring for street children, their methodologies both for the care and reintegration of children into families and communities;
6. Develop a comprehensive reintegration strategy and plan to prevent and eradicate the street children phenomenon in Rwanda;
7. Generate recommendations for the effective and efficient implementation of the reintegration and prevention strategy developed.

The overall assessment is to be conducted in the following three steps:

**(1) Mapping of street children**

Mapping street children entailed identifying and head-counting each and every street child across the country and profiling all the recorded children according to several categories and characteristics, including numbers, name, gender, age, location, and origin.

**(2) Analysis of street involvement root causes and the living conditions of street children**

A good understanding of the root causes of the street children issue will serve as efficient starting point for developing a practical strategy to prevent it, while getting a clear picture of the physical and emotional damage inflicted in their life will guide efficient plan of action for a resourceful rehabilitation and reintegration back into society.

**(3) Development of a reintegration and prevention strategy**

Consistent with and based on the 2 previous consecutive reports, the ultimate objective of the assignment is to develop a comprehensive strategy to reintegrate sustainably street children into their families and a plan to prevent the street children phenomenon from occurring.

## **I. MAPPING OF STREET CHILDREN**

## 1. 1. Methodological approach

### 1.1.1. Street children: A working definition

UNICEF's definition of street children was the guiding light regarding whom to consider as street children. UNICEF describes street children as **“boys and girls, aged under 18 years, for whom the street (including unoccupied dwellings and wasteland) has become home and/or their source of livelihood, and who are inadequately protected or supervised”** (In Wikipedia. October 15, 2017, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street\\_children](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street_children)). Moreover, UNICEF distinguishes two categories of street children. On one side, there are “children of the street”, homeless children who live and sleep on the street. On the other side, there exist “children on the street”, relating to children who live and work on the street in the daytime, but return back home at night.

This definition dispels ambiguity, for example by excluding from the group of street children, the numerous children who find themselves in similarly challenging child labor situations, but generally under the supervision of parents. Indeed, children of the same age and but working in tea, coffee and rice plantations, mining operations, engaged in house work, etc., were left out of this enumeration.

### 1.1.2. Systematic enumeration of street children

As previously indicated the purpose of mapping of street children entailed a census or conducting a systematic individual enumeration of all street children in the country. Therefore, there was no need for a sampling.

### 1.1.3. Whereabouts of street children

The literature points out that, when challenged by their families' incapacity to provide for the basic needs, dysfunctional parenting styles and/or maltreatment, children have no choice but to flee from home and go where they think they can earn something to sustain their lives and stay away from hunger. As large human settlements and communities undergoing urbanization and development cities offer such opportunities due to the variety and multiplicity of service needs, or because of increased interactions between people and businesses (ODCCP, 2005; UNICEF, 2007, Volpi, 2002). Street children in major cities make a living begging, collecting scrap that is sold against money, collecting food leftovers from garbage dumps, loading/unloading trucks, washing and guarding cars and motorcycles, fetching and selling water, etc. (NCC, 2012).

Researchers travelled around Kigali City and other provinces looking out for street children in District headquarters and major cities, including the following, Nyarugenge, Gasabo, Kicukiro, Kamonyi, Muhanga, Nyanza, Huye, Gisagara, Nyamagabe, Nyaruguru, Rusizi, Bugarama,

Nyamasheke, Karongi, Rubavu, Nyabihu, Ngororero, Musanze, Gakenke, Rulindo, Gicumbi, Nyagatare, Gatsibo, Kayanza, Rwamagana, Ngoma, Kirehe and Bugesera.

Also, they visited several emerging trading centers scattered in rural areas throughout the country. In remote areas street children often move first to such emerging trading centers before they settle in nearby major cities and/or ultimately in Kigali City.

In most of major cities, NGOs and faith based organizations support initiatives to abandon street life through rehabilitation centers. Those institutions have social workers in direct contact with street children especially chiefs of site “shetu w’iseta”. The chiefs of sites know their group members by number and names. And they know the chiefs of sites of the neighboring sites. Our entry points to access street children were first social workers of NGOs and faith based organizations that linked us to the chiefs of sites from whom we were able to access street children. It is in the same way we were able to know street children absent at the time of enumeration and organized another appointment in collaboration with chiefs of sites. In some areas, including Kigali, Muhanga and Huye, we organized night enumeration in order to meet children who appear only during the night, especially girls.

In rural areas, District Gender and Family Promotion Officers, Sector, Cell and Village authorities and/or non-state service providers involved in promoting the welfare of street children, provided information on major emerging trading centers and sites (amashuri) where the presence of genuine street children was obvious or suspected. A complete list of visited sites can be found in annex 5.1.

On site, when all street children were brought together by the chief, the first thing to do was not to start enumeration or filling in the tools. Our enumerators were briefed to first take time and create trust and a conducive environment between them and children. Where possible, we first played with and told children stories. We shared soft drinks (juice or sodas), and snacks, (amashuri, sambusa and chapatti), not only as a way to earn their trust, but also to compensate for the time spent with us as they would have used it searching for food. We also organized control enumeration to verify information in some cases where we had doubts. Verification consisted on repeating enumeration with the same children by a different enumerator. What we can say here is that contrary to what anyone can think about street children, when you take time and earn their trust, they are collaborative and will provide the right information you need.

Many school children were found to hang around in the street especially in trading centers when leaving from or going to school, often not in school uniform. When, after some discussions with a child it was found out that the presence of the child in the street was only occasional, the enumerator excluded him/her from enumeration.

Similarly, it was often suggested that the market day was the most suitable day to meet street children at trading centers. However, if the street is the source of livelihood for a street child, his/her presence on the street does not necessarily have to occur on market days. Besides, waiting for street children only on market days' expose to the risk of wrongly enumerating a child that came at the market just carrying a basket of sweet potatoes for sale for his/her parents. This is why it was important to first discuss with children met in a trading center on a market day or any other day before recording only those with regular street life and whose real livelihood depended on the presence on the street as genuine street children.

In light of the above observations, the following three categories of children were selected for enumeration:

- 1) Children met by the enumerators in the street but meeting UNICEF criteria of street children (regular presence on the street; under 18 years of age; the street is the main source of livelihood; and inadequate protection and/or supervision);
- 2) Children met in street children assisting institutions meeting UNICEF criteria, especially aged under 18 years;
- 3) Children met in District transit centers but meeting UNICEF criteria of street children (regular presence on the street; under 18 years of age; the street was the main source of livelihood; inadequate protection and/or supervision), and not detained for various criminal offenses.

No children under 5 years of age were enumerated. One of the assumptions was that children under 5 years are normally under the mother's care and protection, and even when the mother has died, everybody in the family has pity and is willing to foster the children. In Rwandan culture, everyone even someone with no particular relationship will feel obliged to provide assistance to an under 5 year old child wandering on the street with no parental or adult supervision and protection.

#### **1.1.4. The administrative protocol to get to the street children sites**

After the National Institute for Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) granted a visa to conduct the research on street children, NCC announced the start of the operation via a letter addressed to all Mayors. Similarly, the researchers, through telephone calls and e-mail messages contacted District Gender and Family Promotion Officers to announce the exercise and collect information on street children sites. Once in a District, the researchers introduced themselves to the District authorities to whom they explained the object of their coming and work. The District authorities issued a pass allowing to go anywhere in the District to do the enumeration. Then, the researchers consecutively introduced themselves to the sector, cell and village authorities, and trading centers chairmen.

### **1.1.5. Contact and identification of street children on sites**

In Kigali City street children live in highly structured and organized groups with informal chiefs of sites who generally are respected by children in their circumscriptions, and it is more pragmatic to reach them through the chiefs of sites. Contacts with the chiefs of sites were facilitated by social workers from three street children service providers, including the centers Abadacogora-Intwari, les Enfants de Dieu (EDD) and the Centre Presbytérien d'Amour des Jeunes(CPAJ). Very familiar with street children in the areas where they work, the social workers introduced the teams of researchers to the chiefs of sites who, when explained the objective of the survey, were in turn instrumental for the mobilization and identification of children from their respective circumscriptions on agreed dates and venues, and for creating a friendly ambiance for fruitful interviews with children.

In Rubavu District, direct contacts with children were facilitated by social workers from Point d'Ecoute, another street children assisting organization. Due to the nature of their work, these social workers knew each and every street child in the area. Likewise, they were very helpful for mobilizing the children and creating an atmosphere of trust between the researchers and children.

Village authorities and/or trading centers chairmen facilitated the first initial contacts with street children in other indicated street children sites. Not only they identified children in their respective circumscriptions that met the description given in UNICEF's definition of street children, but also they invited them for conversations and dialogues with the researchers.

### **1.1.6. Data collection**

Once introduced to the children, the enumerators initiated pleasant conversations with the children not only to clarify the reason and process of the meeting with them, but also create an amicable setting and gaining their trust before actual interviews. Building confidence with children was essential both to persuade them to accept to be interviewed and to secure accuracy of information from them. So, the enumerators used street language, behavior, manners and life style. They joined in with children activities such as playing football. They also shared food and soft drink with them. It was only when the connection was established that they proceeded with filling out the questionnaires.

In order to avoid double counting, we ensured to visit a site only in one day. However, on a few occasions the enumerators passed again to meet the children that were absent at the first round.



### 1.1.7. Meeting children in street children institutions

The table below shows the list of visited non-state service providers involved in assisting street children. While some provide children with daytime care only, others offer both daytime and nighttime care to street children that positively respond to their call for assistance. Care offered in these institutions generally includes feeding, psychological counseling and family reunification services, school reintegration facilitation, life skills training, family support, etc. The enumerators visited each and every institution to collect information from children.

**Table 1: Street children institutions**

Provinces / Districts	Name of the institution
Kigali City	Enfants de Dieu
	Abadacogora-Intwari
	FIDESCO
	Mind Leaps
	Centre Marembo (for girls)
	Umucyo w'Ejo
	Hope for Life Ministry
	Root Foundation Children's Centre
	CPAJ
Muhanga	Bureau Social de Développement
Huye	Nyampinga (for girls)
	Intiganda
	Œuvre Humanitaire pour la Protection et le Développement de l'Enfance en Difficulté (OPED)
Rusizi	Baho Neza Mwana
Rubavu	Point d'Ecoute
Musanze	Association pour la Promotion des Initiatives de Base (APIB)
Rwamagana	Hameaux des Jeunes
	Imizi Children's Village
Kayanza	The Streets Ahead Children's Centre Association (SACCA)

### 1.1.8. Meeting children in District transit centers

Some Districts run transit centers where persons in irregular situation, reportedly including those that committed minor offenses and/or those wandering in the streets but without official identification documents or for any known object, are detained for some time for the main purpose of reeducation and rehabilitation. The table below shows transit centers that were visited to meet street children that eventually were detained.

**Table 2: Visited Transit centers**

N°	District	Name of transit center
1	Rusizi	Gashonga transit center
2	Huye	Mbazi transit center
3	Nyamagabe	Tare transit center
4	Nyamasheke	Kagano transit center
5	Karongi	Mwendo transit enter
6	Rubavu	Rubavu transit center
7	Gatsibo	Mugera transit center
8	Bugesera	Centre de Rehabilitation et de Production de GITAGATA

*Primary data, 2017*

Even though CRP Gitagata is located in the District of Bugesera, it is not run by the District, but by the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion.

#### **1.1.9. Night visits**

The majority of girl street children enumerated were met in assisting institutions catering for girls, particularly including Marembo, Nyampinga and Abadacogora. However, following the suggestion that some girls in the street remain invisible during the daytime but appear at night, night visits were organized in Kigali, Muhanga and Huye where a number of these girls were effectively met and interviewed.

#### **1.1.10. Collected data and data collection techniques and tools**

The information collected pertained not only to the identification of children (names, gender, age, location, origin), but also to their living conditions, means of subsistence, needs on the street, and the main reasons of their departure from home. In addition, children were asked to indicate their parents' names, location/origin, and matrimonial status, and the socio-economic situation prevailing in the family at the moment of his/her departure from home.

Survey was the main data collection technique because the information to be gathered related to individual street children. The questionnaire used to collect information was structured with closed ended questions. Some questions were multiple response categories and respondents were allowed to consider each of the possibilities.

#### **1.1.11. Organization of the field work**

Teams of enumerators were deployed to all districts to collect the needed information and data. Each team of enumerators had a **supervisor** whose role was to make necessary contacts and introduction to local authorities, street children centers and transit center in order to prepare enumeration and eventually respond to team members' technical and logistic problems. Another important role of the supervisor was to verify questionnaires at the end of each working day before handing them over to the **team leader** whose main role was the overall coordination of data collection and data quality assurance.

#### **1.1.12. Data entry and analysis**

Experienced data clerks entered quantitative data in a developed template using SPSS software. Data entered and analyzed include basic information on street children: names of the children; gender; age; location in the street; location of origin; names of parents/guardians; and location of origin of parents. After verification of their quality, data were imported into excel to make a database.

Both quantitative and categorical information are very important for the mapping of street children in the country. On one side, quantitative data illustrate the magnitude of the street

children phenomenon, to be reflected in the total number of children enumerated. On the other side, as a way of organizing and analyzing the data, frequency distributions enable to make comparison between different attributes of street children. So, figuring out the number of boys and girls, how many street children there are in different age groups and places of origin, is equally important and interesting to appreciate the geographic pervasiveness and extensiveness of the problem throughout the country.

### **1.1.13. Limitations of the study**

Mobility is often described as constant in the life of street children as the latter continuously look for better economic/survival opportunities at new different places or search for new more supportive and/or secure environments (D'Souza, 2012; Whitford David and Joanna Wakia, 2014). In view of this, reaching an exhaustive enumeration of all street children may be pretentious as it was likely to miss out a few children on the move during the exercise.

Furthermore, in a few cases the presence of local authorities next to enumerators made street children suspicious of a set-up and reportedly afraid of being rounded up. The children just run away. When later the children were approached by the enumerators but without the local authorities, they provided the needed information. Nevertheless, there was no absolute certainty that all the children that had run away showed up.

Some children who had already been interviewed came to us to apologize and rectify the information provided. Having explained that they had deliberately provided wrong information about their names, parents, origin, etc., because they initially had suspected our intentions, they reportedly had come to conclude that our work was worthwhile. The appeasing dialogue with children, the positive behavior towards them, and especially the soft drink and snacks shared with them, had apparently persuaded them that our work did not mean any harm. However, we cannot be totally sure that all the children met responded positively to our messages.

## **1.2. Findings**

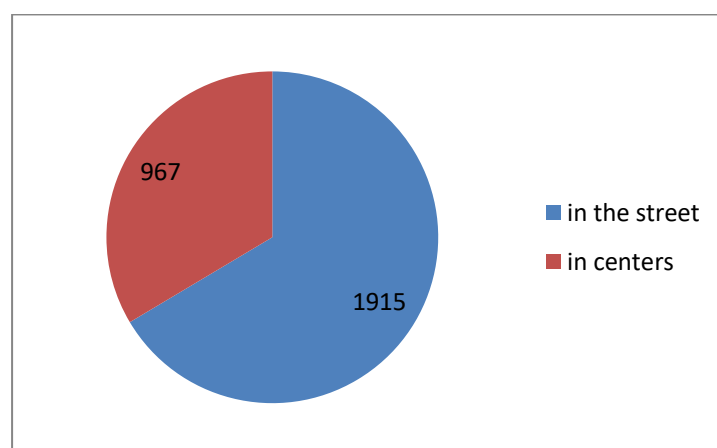
The findings of the mapping exercise include a socio-demographic and geographic profile of the street children enumerated across the country from 18 May through June 11, 2017. In annex of this report there is a database with the following street children identification elements: names/nicknames; age; sex; current location; location of origin; parents' names; names of guardian after parents death; education status.

### **1.2.1. Distribution of street children by location where met**

A total population of 2,882 street children were enumerated. They include 1,915 or 66.5% of children met in the street and 967 or 33.5% of those met both in street children assisting

institutions and District transit centers. The table below shows the distribution of street children by location where they were met to be enumerated.

**Figure 1: Distribution of street children by location where met**



Source: Primary data, 2017

### 1.2.2. Distribution of street children by District of enumeration and origin

The table on the following page shows the distribution of street children by District of enumeration and by District of origin because, as previously pointed out, street children are constantly relocating, including moving out of their districts of origin. With respectively 431 and 311 street children, the districts of Gasabo and Nyarugenge are on top in terms of the number of enumerated street children. Huye comes in the third place with 293 street children, Bugesera in fourth place with 291, and Kicukiro in the 5<sup>th</sup> with 200 street children. 942 or 32.7% of all the street children concentrate in the 3 districts (Gasabo, Nyarugenge, Kicukiro) of the capital Kigali City. Kigali City offers indeed the most attractive opportunities and has the highest number of street children institutions. Ten districts, including Gasabo, Nyarugenge, Kicukiro, Huye, Rubavu, Bugesera, Kayonza, Rwamagana, Muhanga and Rusizi, have each more than 100 street children. Growing cities and rapidly expanding trading centers in these districts obviously attract numerous street children looking for various opportunities. However, what particularly boosts the number in Bugesera is the presence of CRP Gitagata where about 178 children were enumerated.

**Table 3: Map of distribution of street children by District of enumeration and District/ Country of origin**

N°	Districts	Number of street children in districts of enumeration	Number of street children in districts/Country of origin
1	Gasabo	431	358
2	Nyarugenge	311	280
3	Huye	294	197
4	Bugesera	291	95
5	Kicukiro	199	143
6	Rubavu	164	152
7	Kayonza	144	108
8	Rwamagana	131	96

9	Muhanga	126	120
10	Rusizi	118	107
11	Ruhango	80	116
12	Nyamagabe	63	102
13	Musanze	60	70
14	Nyabihu	49	57
15	Nyaruguru	50	76
16	Kamonyi	46	109
17	Gatsibo	38	42
18	Karongi	38	53
19	Nyanza	36	57
20	Ngororero	35	62
21	Rulindo	35	46
22	Gicumbi	35	52
23	Gisagara	23	93
24	Burera	21	21
25	Nyamasheke	16	47
26	Ngoma	12	43
27	Rutsiro	9	30
28	Gakenke	9	27
29	Nyagatare	9	28
30	Kirehe	8	27
31	Burundi		8
32	RDC		4
33	Uganda		3
34	Unknown		54
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,882</b>	<b>2,882</b>

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

With respect to the Districts of origin, Gasabo, Nyarugenge, Huye, Rubavu, Kicukiro, Muhanga, Nyamagabe, Ruhango, Kayonza, Rusizi and Kamonyi come on top as everyone has at least 100 children. The three Districts in Kigali City combine a total of 775 or 26.9% of all street children.

Bugesera comes only in the 12<sup>th</sup> place as District of origin for street children, while it was the 4<sup>th</sup> with 291 children enumerated inside the district. This is because Bugesera is home to CRP Gitagata where children rounded-up from different places go through a re-education process before they are reunified with their families.

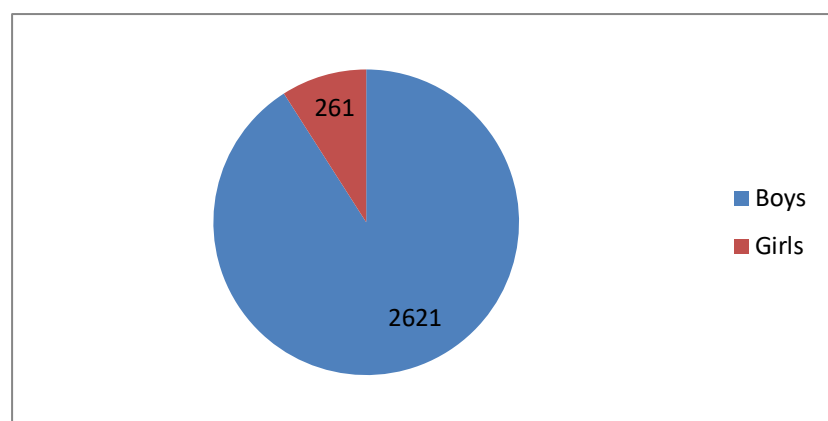
The constant mobility of street children explains the difference in numbers of street children between districts of enumeration and districts of origin. Children continually move from place to place in search of better survival opportunities, and where you meet a street child is not necessarily where he/she comes from. However, it remains interesting to realize that the number of children in districts of enumeration is higher than the number of children in the districts of origin for the first ten districts in the table, including Gasabo, Nyarugenge, Huye, Bugesera, Kicukiro, Rubavu, Kayonza, Rwamagana, Muhanga and Rusizi. These districts actually take in more street children than they send out to other districts. The trend is opposite for the remaining 21 Districts that essentially take in less street children than they send out to other districts.

About 15 children said that they were born in neighboring countries, including 8 in Burundi, 4 in RDC and 3 in Uganda. About 53 children indicated that they did not know their District of origin.

### 1.2.3. Distribution of street children by gender

The figure below shows the number of street children distributed by gender.

**Figure 2: Street children distribution by gender**



**Source:** Primary data, 2017

In a total of 2,882 enumerated street children the number of boys is 2,621 or 91%. Girls are only 261 or 9% of the total population of street children. The fact that there are more boys in the street than girls is no surprise. This is generally the case because girls face more risk of abuse than boys when in the street, and they also undergo more social constraints or pressure than boys to stay at home (October 16, 2017, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street\\_children](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street_children)).

### 1.2.4. Why are there by far more boy than girl street children?

The mapping exercise findings indicate that a total of 2,882 street children were enumerated, including 2,621 boys or 91% and 261 girls or 9%. In the street, boys are ten times more represented than girls. This finding seems to back the idea that there are generally more boys in the street than girls due to the fact that boys are not only under less risk of abuse than boys when in the street, but also girls face increased social constraints or pressure than boys to stay at home (October 16, 2017, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street\\_children](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street_children)).

It is however interesting to note that the enormous difference between the number of street boys and girls is in contrast with the situation of child labor where male and female children have about the same the level of participation (13%) of all children in 2013-2014, at least according to EICV4, economic activity thematic. The table below shows the distribution of children by sex.

**Table 4: Distribution of children involved with child labor by sex**

Sex	Number	%	Total of children
Male	242,588	13.7	1,772,509
Female	241,156	13.1	1,836,008

**Source:** EICV4, Thematic economic activity, March 2016

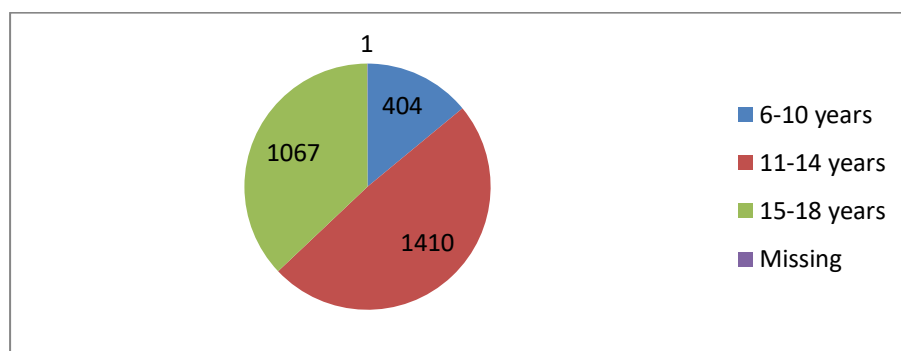
The ILO (International Labor Organization) refers to “child labor” as work that deprives children of their childhood, potential, dignity, is harmful to their physical and mental development and interferes with their schooling (October 16, 2017, from [www.ilo.org/ipecc/facts/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ipecc/facts/lang--en/index.htm)). Likewise, let remind that the working definition of street children in this assignment is: “boys and girls, aged under 18 years, for whom the street (including unoccupied dwellings and wasteland) has become home and/or their source of livelihood, and who are inadequately protected or supervised” (In Wikipedia, October 16, 2017, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street\\_children](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street_children)). Although, given its damaging effect on the welfare, development and schooling of children, street life may in some way be considered as an aspect of child labor, they in reality are different issues. Indeed, the 2,882 enumerated street children are about 167 times fewer than the 483,744 children in child labor situation (EICV4), yet they possibly undergo harsher specific issues and risks stemming from lack of adult supervision and protection.

Several reasons may explain the number differential between enumerated boy and girl street children. Firstly, during the mapping exercise, night visits were organized in order to meet girls that reportedly appear on the street only at night for the purpose of commercial sex activity. Some girls were actually enumerated on these occasions, but it is possible that some others misrepresented their age in order not to appear breaking the law. All children who indicated to be more than 18 years were not enumerated as street children. Secondly, all children deemed to be in situation of child labor following discussion with them, were left out of enumeration because they were supposed to work under the supervision and protection of their parents or adult individuals. So, though possibly met in the street, many girls may have been left out because judged to be in child labor situation. In the same vein, because many girls were perhaps engaged in private domestic and household work, they were unlikely to show up in the public at the time of enumeration (October 16, 2017, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child\\_labour](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_labour); [https://www.unicef.org/sowc07/docs/sowc07\\_panel\\_3\\_3.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/sowc07/docs/sowc07_panel_3_3.pdf)). Thirdly, as previously indicated, boys are generally under less pressure and control to stay at home than girls ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street\\_children](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Street_children)). Fourthly, girls are reportedly educated to be more subservient than boys and therefore may have fewer conflicts with their families as compared to boys (October 26, 2017, [allinschool.org/wp-content/uploads/.../OOSC-2014-Gender-and-education-final.pdf](http://allinschool.org/wp-content/uploads/.../OOSC-2014-Gender-and-education-final.pdf)).

### 1.2.5. Distribution of street children by age group

The figure below illustrates the distribution of street children by age group. What it suggests is that street children are mostly between the ages of 11 and 18 years old. Indeed, this age group combines a total of 2,477 or 85.97% of all enumerated children. This total includes 1,410 children aged 11 to 14 and 1,067 children aged 15 to 18. Only 404 or 14% of enumerated children have 6 to 10 years of age. One mentally retarded child was not able to provide indication regarding his age. The average age is 13.42.

**Figure 3: Distribution of street children by age group**

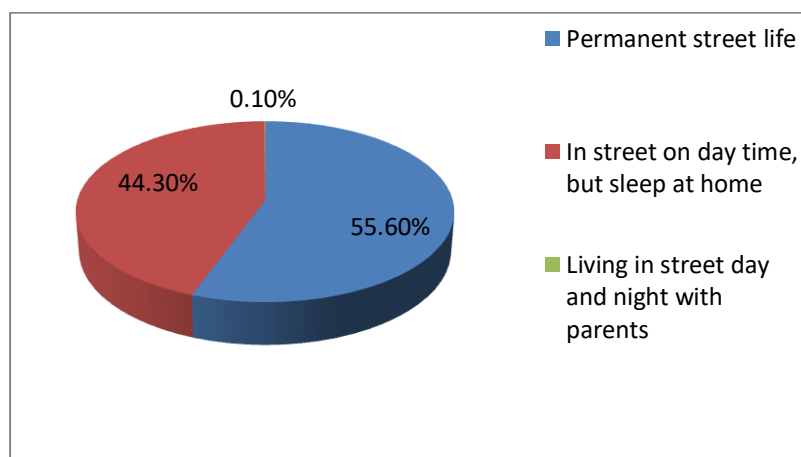


Source: Primary data, 2017.

### 1.2.6. Distribution of street children by forms of street life

Out of the 1,915 street children enumerated on the street, 1,064 or 55.9% reported to be in the street both during the day and night, while 849 or 44.3% indicated to stay on the street on daytime but go home to sleep at night. Two children (.1%) indicated that they lived in the street with their parents. The 967 children enumerated in centers are not taken into account here.

**Figure 4: Distribution of street children by forms of street life**



Source: Primary data, 2017

### 1.2.7. Distribution of street children by school attendance

On the question to know if children went to school before street life and if they were still going even during street life. The answers are illustrated in the table below.



**Table 5: School attendance**

	School attendance before street life		School attendance during street life	
	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Yes</b>	2,592	90	1,055	37
<b>No</b>	290	10	1,827	63
<b>Total</b>	2,882	100	2,882	100

Source: Primary data, 2017

Respondents' answers suggest that 2,592 or 90% of enumerated street children went to school before street life while only 290 or 10% did not. However, school attendance is reversed during street life. In effect, 1,827 children or 63% don't attend school when in street, while only 1,055 or 37% of street children, especially including those catered by street children assisting institutions, actually go to school.

**Table 6: School attendance by place of enumeration**

Place of enumeration	Yes	%	No	%	Total
Children in centers	762	79	205	21	967
Children in the street	293	15	1622	85	1915
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,055</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>1827</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>2882</b>

Source: Primary data, 2017

The majority or 79% of children catered for in centers attend school, while only 15% of children enumerated in the street attend school. The number of school-goers enumerated in the street must be small. Yet, their schooling must be sporadic as they are torn between school attendance and street work.

### 1.2.8. Alive or dead status of street children parents

Children were asked to state whether their parents, fathers and/or mothers, were alive or dead. About 1,917 or 66.5% of children indicated that their fathers were alive, while 2,334 or 81% said that their mothers were alive at the time of enumeration. About 11% of children ignored whether their fathers were alive or dead, and only 6% didn't know if their mothers were alive or dead. About 650 (or 23%) explained that their fathers were dead while 374 (or 13%) indicated that their mothers were deceased. About 1,629 or 56.5% of enumerated children declared to have both parents, while 135 or 4.7 % indicated to be orphan of both parents. Indications about the alive or dead status of parents are illustrated in following table.

**Table 7: Distribution of parents by alive/dead status**

		Mother			Total
		Alive	Dead	Don't know	
<b>Father</b>	Alive	1,629	202	86	1,917
	Dead	490	135	25	650
	Don't know	215	37	63	315
<b>Total</b>		2,334	374	174	2,882

Source: Primary data, 2017.

Parental death was in any case the immediate cause of children's decision to lead a street life. In effect, no child indicated that he/she went to the street immediately following the death of parents. Instead, they were taken by members of extended family, or lived in the same homes with remarried parents. Actually, it is due to unhealthy relations with the step-parents in the new homes that the children made the decision to go to the street.

**Table 8: Guardianship after parents' death**

<b>Guardians (n=306)</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Grand-mother	138	45.1
Grand-father	9	2.9
Member of extended family	78	25.5
Neighbor	29	9.5
Sibling	4	1.3
Other	48	15.7

*Source: Primary data, 2017.*

Following death of parents, 138 or 4.8% of children were supported by their grand-mothers, 9 or .3% by their grand-fathers, 78 or 2.7% by members of extended family, 29 or 1% by neighbors, 4 or .1 by siblings and 48 or 1.7% by others.

### 1.2.9. Experience of stay in street children institutions and family reintegration

The street children met in the street were asked to indicate whether they have previously been placed in a street children assisting institution and/or whether they had been reunified with their families. The answers are as follows.

**Table 9: Placement in centers and family reintegration**

	<b>Ever been placed into a center for street children</b>		<b>Ever been reintegrated in family</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	1,282	44.5	440	15
No	1,600	55.5	2,442	85
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,882</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>100</b>

*Source: Primary data, 2017.*

About 1,282 or 44.5% of all children enumerated had been placed at least once into a center for street children. This figure includes the 967 children enumerated while in rehabilitation centers and transit centers (figure 1). So, if 967 children were enumerated while in a center, this means that 315 (1,282 – 967) or 10.9% of children, in the street at the period of enumeration had had a center placement experience prior to mapping exercise. Street children were indeed reported to sometimes interrupt their reeducation process in centers to go back to the street.

About 1,600 or 55.5% indicated that they had never been withdrawn from the street and placed into a center, being a rehabilitation center or a transit center. This suggests that the majority of street children never have the chance to benefit from reeducation and/or rehabilitation services usually offered by assisting institutions.

Of all children enumerated, 15% indicated that they had been reunited with their families. This suggests that 85% have never been reintegrated in family. At the same time, it is an indication that 15% of reintegrated children ended up returning to the street after some facilitated family reintegration.

### **1.3. Conclusion**

The contributions and support from state and non-state actors both national and local facilitated access to the children. We visited all major cities, trading centers, street children assisting, District transit centers, in fact all locations indicated and/or suspected of shelter street children. After proper preparation children were cooperative as they accepted to be interviewed and provided the needed information.

The mapping exercise enumerated 2,882 street children overall across the country. They are mostly boys (91%) while only 9% are girls. The capital Kigali City counts for 32.7% of all street children. Furthermore, it is demonstrated that the street children phenomenon hits in major expanding urban agglomerations as well as in remote trading centers, even though with lower intensity.

Such an extent of street life for children is undoubtedly too much. In effect, street life severely jeopardizes their rights and undermines their future.

## **II. CHILDREN'S STREET LIFE CAUSES AND LIVING CONDITIONS**

## **2.1. The literature review**

The objective of this literature review is not only to gain background knowledge on the root causes of street children issue and street living conditions, but also there is need for establishing a theoretical framework and singling out promising lines of research, such as potential areas and hypothesis for study, support for design of research methodology, techniques of analysis and potential sources of information. So, this literature review is done with a view to guiding the choice of meaningful areas of investigation for the analysis of root causes of the street children issue and the living conditions of street children.

### **2.1.1. Causes of and contributing factors to the street children phenomenon**

The literature highlights a wide range of interconnected factors and circumstances that lead children to cut partially or permanently ties with the family. What is striking to notice is that most of these factors are grounded in the family as homes are not only where children are born, but also they are the best places to raise, care, educate and discipline children.

#### **Family grounded causes**

##### ***Family low income and poverty***

The most decried cause of the street children phenomenon is family deprivation. When families are unable to meet the basic needs for their children, including food, clothing, health care, education, etc., children will flee home, with the hope to get economic opportunities to sustain their own subsistence and/or contribute to family income (NCC, 2012; ODCCP, 2005; UNICEF, 2007; Volpi, 2002), possibly with implicit consent of parents. Furthermore, because of poverty, some parents leave their children uncared for in order to move to a place where they can earn income for a long period. Then, for lack of immediate support and supervision, children may, in the meantime, decide to resort to the street to meet the basic needs (ODCCP, 2005; UNICEF, 2007).

There are many causes of poverty, including limited employment opportunities, lack of education, limited access to means of production, illnesses and chronic diseases and physical handicaps. Also, natural disasters, wars and conflicts destroy the infrastructure and production and livelihood means, provoking poverty for many families. Likewise, family poverty has many aspects or indicators, including access to employment, homelessness or ownership of a house, access to health care, food accessibility in the family, etc.

Based on the 2013/2014 survey of the household living conditions, EICV4, 39.1% of the Rwandan population was classified as poor at that time. This number included the population whose total annual consumption was below the total poverty line (RWF 159,375 in January 2014 prices) and was not capable of affording to buy a basic basket of food and non-food goods (NISR, 2015). On the other hand, 16.3% of the population as estimated to live in extreme poverty. The number included the population whose total annual consumption (food and non-food) was below food poverty line (RWF 105,064 in January 2014 prices) was

estimated at 16.3% (NISR, 2015). Given the idea that poverty is a significant major factor in children's decision to lead street life, it remains to be established whether most street children belong to the population groups that are most hit by poverty.

### **Divorce or separation of parents**

Divorce or separation of parents erodes and weakens family capacity and readiness to act together to nurture and raise children. Minimal parental support, care, attention and supervision toward children are common consequences of parents' divorce or separation. Children of divorced/separated parents are reported to be shaken by self-doubt, uncertainty and confusion as they lack support and care in the home, or have difficulties in the new home, at the hands of stepparents, and as a consequence they easily can run away from home, show poor school performance, exhibit depression and/or have problems with the law (Patrick F. Fagan and Aaron Churchill, 2012; October 16, 2017, from). Poor communication, marital infidelity, heavy drinking, domestic violence, ill-preparation for marriage and financial issues are some to the most common causes for divorce and separation between parents (Patrick F. Fagan and Aaron Churchill, 2012; October 16, 2017, from [www.kidspot.com.au/health/ask.../separation-and-children-how-it-affects-your-kids](http://www.kidspot.com.au/health/ask.../separation-and-children-how-it-affects-your-kids); Patrick F. Fagan and Aaron Churchill, 2012; October 16, 2017, from [www.kidspot.com.au/health/ask.../separation-and-children-how-it-affects-your-kids](http://www.kidspot.com.au/health/ask.../separation-and-children-how-it-affects-your-kids)).

### **Death of parents**

Losing a father or mother to death following sickness, accident or war is another traumatic life experience that stays highly detrimental to the future of children, and push some to the street (NCC, 2012). When it is about the father death, children lack the principal breadwinner and source of income in the family. If it is an already economically struggling family, the consequences may be disastrous as poverty comes to settle in the family. How poverty is an underlying factor that triggers children's street life was discussed earlier.

The father gone, children stay with the mother. However, one recurrent facet of poverty remains the fact that women are at higher risk than men to suffer from poverty (October 16, 2017, from [www.wikigender.org/wiki/feminization-of-poverty/](http://www.wikigender.org/wiki/feminization-of-poverty/); October 16, 2017, from [www.ipc-undp.org/pub/IPCOnePager58.pdf](http://www.ipc-undp.org/pub/IPCOnePager58.pdf); October 16, 2017, from [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/session/presskit/fs1.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/session/presskit/fs1.htm)). This implies that children of women-headed households run a greater risk of ending up in the streets.

Many spouses remarry after the death of their loved ones, but this does not necessarily help out with the children. Indeed, for various personal, family and social reasons, children don't get along with the step-parents and vice versa, and maltreatment of children by the step-fathers or step-mothers was often reported as an important factor that leads children to choose street life (October 16, 2017, from [https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/ZIM\\_01-805.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/ZIM_01-805.pdf); October 16, 2017, from

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4212383/>; NCC, 2012). Furthermore, it used to be that orphans were taken by members of extended families, but given that very few today are capable and/or willing to take on the additional burden of more children, NCC initiated the Tubarerere mu Muryango (TMM) program to encourage foster families to take and raise orphans (October 16, 2017, from [ncc.gov.rw/index.php?id=32&tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=104&cHash](http://ncc.gov.rw/index.php?id=32&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=104&cHash)). In any case, orphan children are more likely to end up living on the street than children whose parents are alive and live together.

### ***Neglect and /or maltreatment by parents***

Children retreat to the street as a consequence maltreatment or neglect by careless, irresponsible, addicted or alcoholic parents (NCC, 2012; Volpi, 2002; ODCCP, 2005; UNICEF 2007). Other children cannot stand domestic violence even when it is not directed at themselves, but against one of the parents (Volpi, 2002). Child maltreatment by parents may be caused by alcohol abuse, stressful social experiences such as unemployment and financial difficulties (October 17, 2017, from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child\\_abuse;www.livestrong.com › Lifestyle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_abuse;www.livestrong.com › Lifestyle)).

Also, it is pointed out that not all parents possess resourceful parenting skills. Indeed, some parents don't communicate effectively with their children as they may use harsh language and/or practice excessive criticism towards them, demean them, don't show interest in their needs, or overload them with work (October 17, 2017, from [www.lifemartini.com/signs-of-bad-parenting/](http://www.lifemartini.com/signs-of-bad-parenting/); [howtoadult.com › Parenting](http://howtoadult.com › Parenting); [oureverydaylife.com › Parenting](http://oureverydaylife.com › Parenting)). Lack of respect and consideration vis-à-vis his/her children may make them feel hated and scared to go home. In such a case, the street may become a safer place than home for a concerned child.

### ***Large family size:***

Studies found a relationship between large family size and the likelihood for children to end up on the street. For example, in the Philippines most street children were found to come from large families with an average size of 6 to 10 members (UNICEF, 2007). In Egypt, the average family size of the sample was 5.94 persons per family for most street children (Egypt-ODCCP, 2005).

Indeed, a single child will receive less material and economic comfort in large families, at least in poor families, because the competition over household resources is more intense among children. Similarly, in a large family a single child will get less time, care, attention and affection, when compared to small size families (UNICEF, 2007; ODCCP, 2007; Volpi 2002).

### ***Dropping-out of school***

Dropping out of school is another relevant issue in the literature on street children as research suggests the existence of linkage between dropping out of school and turning into street children. In Egypt a study of street children found out that 70% were school drop-outs, while

30% of them had never been to school (ODCCP, 2005). Likewise, a study in Brazil suggested that 57% of street children had dropped out of school before going to streets, 25% dropped out of school while being out in the streets and 12% did so after finding final refuge in the street (ODCCP, 2005). MINEDUC reports indicate that in 2015 the number of primary school drop-outs was 139,690 (the rate of 5.7% for a total of 2,450,705 pupils); the number of lower secondary drop-out was 21,868.73 (the rate of 6.5% for a total of 336,442 pupils); the number of upper secondary school drop-outs was 5,187.35 (the rate of 2.5 for a total of 207,494 pupils) (MINEDUC, 2015 Education Statistical Year Book). Moreover, the 2012 study on street children found out that 92.7% of enumerated children were school drop-outs (NCC, 2012). The main reasons reported to explain these drop-outs were family poverty and lack of school fees and materials.

In any case, school keeps children busy, but when they drop out, some of them may resort to the street. What seems certain is that efficient schemes against school dropping-out will keep children out of the street.

### ***Juvenile delinquency:***

In the 2012 study on street children, 12% of children pointed to juvenile delinquency as the main driving factor behind their street involvement (NCC, 2012). For many reasons some children adopt disagreeable attitudes, and when such a child goes to the street, you may easily be tempted to blame the child's inherent delinquency. But, if you dig deep into his/her background, you may find out that his/her misconduct primarily stemmed from unhealthy parents-child relations, lack of proper parental supervision, ongoing conflict in his/her family, neglect and/or abuse, etc. (October 17, 2017, from

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juvenile\\_delinquency;legalbeagle.com › Criminal Law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juvenile_delinquency;legalbeagle.com › Criminal Law)).

### **Non family based causes**

#### ***War and natural disasters***

Wars and natural disasters destroy infrastructure, kill people and disperse families, provoking numerous unaccompanied and homeless children (October 17, 2017, from <https://www.ukessays.com/.../the-causes-and-effects-on-street-children-young-people-ess...>; October 17, 2017, from <https://www.compassion.com/causes/street-children-awareness-day.htm>; UNICEF, 2007; ODCCP, 2005). However, if this was certainly the case in Rwanda in the years following the 1994 genocide and war, it is not anymore as those children have grown-up and are adult today.

On the other side, in Rwanda during the rainy seasons and in areas where landscape is steep, torrential rains sometimes result into floods and landslides that kill people, destroy homes and land. Such was the case in October 2013 in the District of Nyabihu (October 17, 2017, from [www.ibidukikije.com/2013/10/nyabihu-district-residents-decry-natural-disasters/](http://www.ibidukikije.com/2013/10/nyabihu-district-residents-decry-natural-disasters/)) and in July 2016 in the District of Gakenke (October 17, 2017, from [en.igihe.com/news/gakenke-hit-hard-](http://en.igihe.com/news/gakenke-hit-hard-)



[by-natural-disasters.html](#)). Let observe however that, following the disaster, social protection mechanisms are usually activated in such a way that family and community members and the government institutions have come to the rescue of affected households.

**Peer pressure:**

In Egypt 36% of street children interviewed indicated that they joined the street as a result of peer pressure. They just followed or emulated other kids who provided valuable induction on life in the streets (NCC, 2012; ODCCP, 2005; Volpi, 2002).

**Freedom and/or sensation seeking:**

Some children may stay in the street to get some freedom from family routine jobs and social constraints (NCC, 2012; ODCCP, 2005). Street life may be attractive to children because they enjoy city comforts and conveniences such as going to a movie or playing games.

### **2.1.2. Consequences of street life to the welfare of children**

Children face hardship in the street and their living conditions are appalling. They make a living begging, barely doing domestic work, collecting scrap that is sold against money, collecting food leftovers from garbage bins, loading/unloading trucks, washing and guarding cars and motorcycles, fetching and selling water, etc. Their living remain appalling and their basic rights denied: lack of education, inadequate hygiene, starvation, lack of health care and hygiene, homelessness, violence by the adults, drugs use, lack of protection, risk of exploitation and abuse, etc. (NCC, 2012; UNICEF, 2007).

Furthermore and more regrettably, street children are subject of negative perceptions in community based on stereotypes. Street children develop aggressiveness, disrespectful, duplicity, dishonesty, self-centered and mistrustful manners, often seen as self-defensive and protective mechanisms in a hostile and ruthless environment (UNICEF, 2007). Following those antisocial behaviors, children are subject to suspicions, stigmatization, ostracism and resentment from community members who see them as a potential dangerous and criminal group (UNICEF, 2007).

### **2.1.3. The situation of street children in Rwanda in 2012**

In 2012 NCC's study made the first ever quantified systematic enumeration and profiling of street children in order to measure the scale and understand the causes and consequences of the phenomenon. The research was conducted in 11 Districts believed to have the most street children: Nyarugenge, Gasabo, Kicukiro, Muhanga, Huye, Rusizi, Rubavu, Musanze, Gicumbi, Kayanza, Bugesera. The total number of children enumerated was 1,087, including 944 boys (86.8%) and 143 girls (13.2%). The number of children aged 14-18 was 692 (63.66%), while those aged 6-13 were 287 (26.4%). 576 (53%) resided permanently on the street, while the remaining 511 (47%) passed the day on the street but returned home at night. The Kigali City Districts (Nyarugenge, Kicukiro, Gasabo) had the highest number (378 street

children), followed by districts in Southern Province (Muhanga, Huye) with 253 street children, districts in the Western Province (Rubavu, Rusizi) with 144 street children, districts in the Northern Province (Gicumbi, Musanze) with 121 street children and districts in the Eastern Province (Kayanza, Bugesera) with 109 street children (NCC, 2012).

The majority of children engaged in petty job activities, such as fetching water, keeping people's livestock, packing and unpacking goods, washing and guarding cars, washing dishes in restaurants, carrying luggage in the market place, collecting and selling different food and/or recyclable items from garbage. The money earned was mainly used in buying clothes and food, watching movies and buying drugs. The children reported to frequently suffer from beatings, injuries, starvation, homelessness (sleeping outside), lack of medical care and abuse of different kinds of drugs.

Ranking of the main causes for street life in order of importance was as follows: parents' poverty, death of one or both parents, lack of school fees and material, job opportunities, mistreatment by step parents, juvenile delinquency, parental carelessness, companionship of other kids, parents' separation, mistreatment by parents, lack of food, large family size, and insufficient time for playing.

## **2.2. Methodological approach**

### **2.2.1. Research design, nature and sources of data**

Because the literature review overwhelmingly suggested that the causes of street children life should mostly be tracked down within the family, the latter was the principal unit of analysis for this study. The objective was to investigate the prevailing socio-economic and relational conditions and family structure forms that prevailed at the time children decided to leave home in order to settle in the street. Moreover, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Indeed, while the quantitative part involved 2,882 street children and 384 parents of street children, the qualitative part involved stakeholders.

During the street children mapping exercise 2,882 children answered questions about the main reasons they had left home to settle in the streets. Since the literature review informs that a breakdown in family structure may push children to the street, they particularly were asked to indicate whether their parents were still alive, dead or lived together at the time they fled home. They also indicated the size of their respective families at the time they fled home. Furthermore, the children provided hints about the nature/quality of family relations (parents-child, parent-parent, and siblings-child), the educational level of parents, the existence of older brothers or sisters in the streets, reasons for dropping-out of school, etc. Questions were also asked to know whether becoming street children could have resulted from peer pressure or freedom/sensation seeking and natural disasters.

Moreover, parents/guardians also provided their own accounts and opinions on the main reasons their children decided to go to the street. In light of the highlights of the literature review, there was a strong need to understand the socio-economic situation of a child's family at the time he/she left home. About 384 parents (see formula to get to this number in 3.2.) were asked to give their accounts on the prevailing socio-economic conditions in their respective families. In the first instance, interest was in verifying in what "ubudehe" category a child's family was placed into when he/she fled home. The community-based ubudehe categorization gives a socio-economic profile of the population by placing households into different categories according to their living standards. House-holds appraised to be in extreme poverty are put in category 1, while those assessed to live in poverty are classified in category 2. Public pro-poor interventions frequently rely on ubudehe categorization in their planning and implementation processes when, for example, they select the beneficiaries of the social protection programs. The categorization of street children families according to ubudehe was a good indicator of these families level of poverty.

In the same vein, there was interest to verify street children parents' participation in the VUP program. The VUP program is a social protection scheme designed to accommodate the most deprived households, including those in ubudehe categories 1 and 2. Moreover, the line of questioning concerned also the basic means of livelihoods in children's families. Parents answered questions on employment status, educational attainment, house ownership, the frequency of meals taken at home, access to health care, and access to government social protection programs.

To sum up, the following variables were used to assess the level of poverty in families' street children come from: ubudehe category, employment status, house ownership, family size, health care access, VUP participation, and the frequency of daily meals.

In daily operations, concerned stakeholders, including policy makers and/or implementers and service providers deal with the street children phenomenon. Because they interact with the children and their parents, they have a good understanding of the conditions and circumstances under which the street children occur. This is why they were asked to give their views on the main causes of the phenomenon.

### **2.2.2. Sampling of parents**

There is need to calculate a minimum representative sample size of parents to be surveyed.

The sample is determined on the basis of the following formula:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \times P \times (1-P)}{D^2} \text{ whereby } n = \text{minimum sample size required}$$

Z = confidence level 95%

P = Prevalence

D = maximum tolerable error: 0.5%

**N.B:** Because the street children phenomenon combines different factors, we will use a prevalence of 50% (0.5)

PS: Z-score corresponding to the level of confidence with which it is desired to be sure that the true population lies with  $\pm D$  percentage points of the sample estimate (unless otherwise noted, assume 2-sided test with  $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $Z = 1.96$ )

$$(z)^2 = z \times z = 1.96 \times 1.96 = 3.8416$$

$$p = 0.5 = \text{prevalence } q = 1 - 0.5 = 0.5$$

$$p \times q = 0.5 \times 0.5 = 0.25$$

$$d = 0.05$$

$$d^2 = 0.05 \times 0.05 = 0.0025$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.5}{0.0025} = 384.1$$

This is a sample size for the target population (384 parents)

### **2.2.3. Data collection/Conduct of interviews**

As previously indicated, interviews were conducted with street children, parents and the stakeholders. Interviews with street children took place during the street children mapping exercise when children were asked to explain the main reasons they left home and settled in the street. Later on, sampled parents/guardians were also asked to provide their accounts on the causes for their children street involvement.

The main objective for discussions with the heads of street children centers was to collect views of the main causes for children's street life, as well as collecting their opinions on the main challenges for sustainable reintegration of children in families. Street children centers are of two categories: closed centers and open centers.

The objective of discussions with local authorities and officers active in child protection and family promotion was to collect their views on the causes of the street children phenomenon, as well as their opinions on the best ways to prevent it. Based on their daily encounter with street children issues, they provided explanation on why the phenomenon occurs and persists.

Data used in this study were gathered by a team of experienced enumerators familiar with both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. In addition, prior to the actual field work, training was organized to refresh these enumerators on basic research principles and review the data collection tools with them.

The enumerators created an amicable setting with children in order to gain their trust before actual interviews. They used street language, behavior, manners and life style, and joined in with children activities such as playing football, before the actual interviews took place.

Building confidence with children was essential both to persuade them to accept to be interviewed and to secure accuracy of information from them. Once the connection was established, the enumerators started filing the quantitative questionnaire developed to gather children's explanations in connection with the root causes of their decision to establish in the street. In addition, they collected children-/provided descriptions of their street living conditions.

Data collection with parents followed a similar path. The enumerators clearly explained the purpose and objectives of the study in order to gain parents' consent and secure their permission to gather their views on why their children left home to establish on the street. It was equally important to gain parents trust and cooperation in order to secure reliable data for the study. Actual data collection started only after a parent had signed a consent form developed for the purpose. The enumerators showed openness and assured parents of the legitimacy to retract from the study any time without giving explanation. Some questions were multiple response categories and respondents were allowed to consider each of the possibilities.

#### **2.2.4. Data analysis plan and report writing**

Quantitative analyzes were conducted on both the 2,882 street children and 384 parents' responses. The analysis enabled to understand the relative importance of every underlying factor in triggering or exacerbating the street children issue. Moreover, the analysis also enabled to appreciate whether significant differences exist between having a street child and various attributes in the family socio-economic configuration and/or other non-family related factors.

The findings were confronted with the current trends with respect to the socio-economic situation in the country. For example, findings relative to family poverty issues were challenged in the context of current family poverty trends as reported in current general living conditions of households (EICV4) and poverty profile (NISR, 2015). Various qualitative views of the stakeholders added further clarifications to the street children phenomenon, and this enabled to stay with a pertinent and realistic list of causes in a way that dispels ambiguities.

#### **2.2.5. Limitations of the study**

The enumerators clarified the objectives of the study and created strong rapport and built confidence with respondents in order to secure interviews and accuracy of information. Nevertheless, not all respondents expressed themselves on all the issues. The consent form that parents had signed permitted them not to answer any question of their choice. Likewise, some children had challenges answering sensitive issues relative to possible involvement in sexual activity and drug abuse. It is possible that they did not want anyone to suspect them of

criminal or anti-social activities. So, the expected totality of answers to all questions was not reached especially since elusive answers were not recorded and left out.

Information provided by parents regarding their children may be biased because it sometimes reflected stereotypes about how “street children” behave rather than actual behavior of their children at the time they left home. For example, when asked to comment on how their children behaved before they went to the street, the response from some parents was: “bari ba mayibobo, abana bananiranye” or fundamentally difficult children. These parents did not answer asked questions. Moreover, parental information may be biased due to their personal involvement with the child or their responsibility in the education of the child. In any case, the enumerators asked probing questions to clarify to the respondents the study’s context and angle of questioning.

## 2.3. Root causes of street children phenomenon

The findings comprise two major sections. The first section involves the main underlying factors for the street children phenomenon as expressed by the three categories of respondents, including street children themselves, parents and the stakeholders. The second section illustrates street living conditions for street children.

### 2.3.1. Causes of street children’s life as expressed by street children

The table below provides a snapshot of how the 2,882 enumerated street children, including 2,621 or 91% of boys and 261 or 9% of girls, explained the reasons for going to the street.

**Table 10: Root causes of street life as explained by children and parents**

Street life reasons / factors /circumstances	Street children	
	Number	Percentage
Parents’ poverty	1,372	47.9
Parental carelessness /irresponsibility	612	21.3
Juvenile delinquency	574	20.0
Lack of school fees and materials	558	19.4
Search for a job	465	16.2
Maltreatment by parents	331	11.5
Maltreatment by stepmother/father	319	11.1
Misunderstanding between parents	314	10.9
Peer group influence / Motivated by other street children	254	8.9
Large family size	147	5.1
Death of parents	125	4.4
Have freedom	123	4.3
Heavy household work load	95	3.3
Following siblings	71	2.5
Conflict with brothers and sisters	52	1.8
Forced to go to school	18	.6
Natural disasters	7	.2

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

N.B: Respondents were allowed to consider each of the possibilities. Every reason was provided as an independent variable, the nominator was the total number of children who responded yes to the reason and denominator the total number of children.

#### **2.3.1.1. Family poverty and related factors**

According to the enumerated street children, poverty of parents was the most important factor responsible for their trouble. Indeed, about 1,372 or 47.9% of enumerated street children pointed out that, despite lots of efforts by parents to provide for the family, the situation was such that they could not have the basic needs home (not enough to eat at home), and they decided to go to the street in order not to go hungry. It is remarkable that in the 2012 study on the street children phenomenon about the same proportion, 47.8% of interviewed children indicated that their parents' poverty was the most important factor of their ordeal as street children (NCC, 2012).

Lack of school fees and material comes in fourth place among explanatory factors of children's street life as about 558 or 19.4% of children pointed it out. The search for a job comes fifth with 465 or 16.2% of street children enumerated. Heavy household work load is fifteenth with 95 or 3.3% of children. However, by pointing out the search for paying job and lack of school fees and material, street children parents implicitly emphasize the role of poverty in triggering street life for children. Indeed, these two factors to a large extent are facets of poverty and add to its weight as an underlying factor. Because the parents reportedly were not able to afford school fees and material, the children did not go to school and eventually ended up to the street. In addition, children from very destitute families reportedly were made to work outside the household or do heavy household work as way of supplementing the dearly needed household income.

#### **2.3.1.2. Parental carelessness and other related factors**

With 612 or 21.3% of children that voted for it, parental carelessness comes in the second place among what street children consider to be the triggers of their street life. When probed, children indicated that their fathers were addicted to alcohol or maintained several girlfriends. They explained that this type of behavior from their fathers depleted most revenues that should have helped the family to make ends meet, including providing for the children's basic needs. They underlined that their families lived in poverty, but poverty sustained by the fathers' irresponsibility and frivolity. About 8% of children explained that they did not have "real" mothers because their mothers had fallen into alcoholism. In any case, alcoholism prevents parents from sparing little time to talk to their children, interact with them, show parental affection and care, and provide life guidance. Because these children lived like sheep without a shepherd, they were forced to fend for themselves

In the same vein, children in large number indicated that abuse, maltreatment or neglect drove them to the street. Abuse was perpetrated by parents and members of extended families for 11.5% of street children and by step-parents for 11.1% of street children. Moreover, 10.9% of children blamed misunderstanding between parents as the main factor for their street life because they could not bear to see their parents abusing each other. 2.5% of children explained that they went to the street following their siblings, while 1.8% was reportedly driven to the street by unbearable conflict with their brothers and sisters. Nevertheless, what parental child abuse, child maltreatment by step-parents, parental infighting, being misled by siblings and conflict between siblings have in common is not only the fact they are perpetrated inside the family, but also the fact that they unveil parents failure to meet their obligations as individuals that are in the position of authority and remain liable for the well-being of family members. Parents must indeed play the role of conductor with a view to bringing about harmony in the, especially by creating favorable conditions for children's resourceful physical and emotional development. Failure to do so is a mark of parental irresponsibility and recklessness.

Furthermore, 18 children or .6% allegedly went to the street because their parents forced them to go to school. The parents were fulfilling their obligations to urge their children to get educated, and they certainly were guided by good intentions. However, may be because of limited parenting skills, they used coercion that, instead of encouraging children to go to school, turned them away.

#### ***2.3.1.3. Juvenile delinquency and related factors***

Several children attributed their street life misfortune to their misbehavior and delinquency on their part and related factors. About 574 or 20.0% believed they behaved irrationally; 254 or 8.9% indicated that they were influenced by peer pressure; and 123 or 4.3% reported that they wanted to have freedom. When the children were probed to dig deeper into the why and how of the irrational conduct, it became apparent that succumbing to peer pressure and the need for freedom came as a result of bad relations with the parents, particularly when the latter were absent to provide the necessary support whenever children needed it. The children explained that they needed freedom in order to be able to fend for themselves in effort to get what parents could not provide. Also, they clarified that peer groups became alternative sources of material and emotional support.

#### ***2.3.1.4. Natural disasters***

Seven children or 0.2% of respondents remarked that their family homes had just been destroyed by floods and landslides at the time they decided to go to the street. However, the natural disaster alone could have not directly driven directly these children to the street

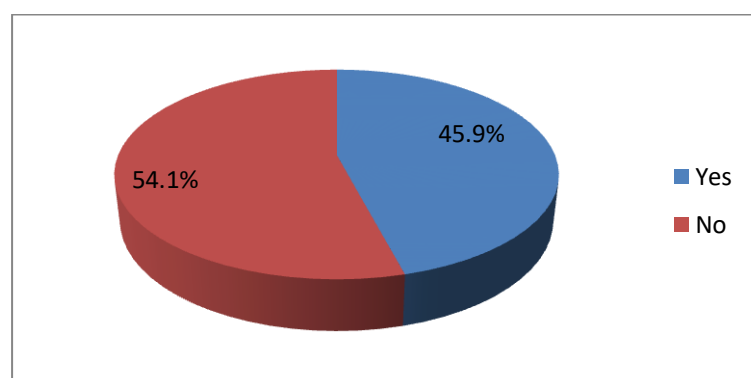


because the affected households were reportedly accommodated in temporary shelters by the local authorities and community members through social protection mechanisms. Details of the disasters and their aftermaths were not discussed. But, there is reason to believe that the affected families probably endured property destruction and led quite a tough life in temporary accommodations afterwards. Then, the situation became unbearable and the children went to the street due to the negative turn of events.

### 2.3.1.5. Children's school drop-out

Because school drop-out remains a risk factor for children's street life as the literature review suggests, there was interest for understanding whether or not children were attending school at the time they decided to go to the street. The situation is illustrated in the following table:

**Figure 5: Distribution of children by school attendance before street life**

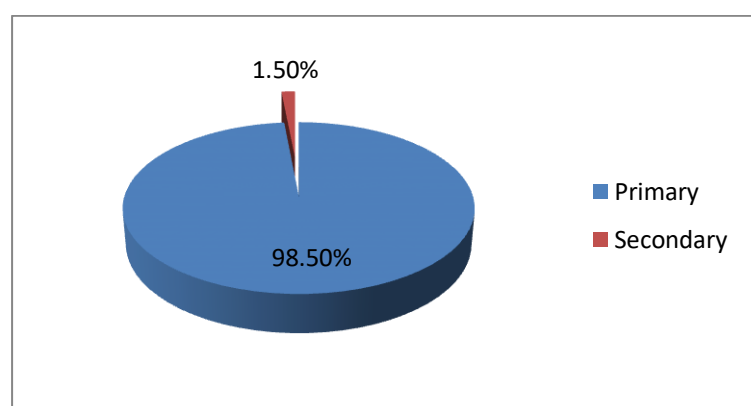


**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

About 1,306 or 45.9% of children responded that they attended school before street life, while the majority of street children, 1,537 or 54.1% said no.

Among those that were attending school before street life, 1,286 or 98.5% indicated that they were enrolled at primary school level, while only 20 or 1.5% were reportedly in secondary school. This is illustrated in the table below:

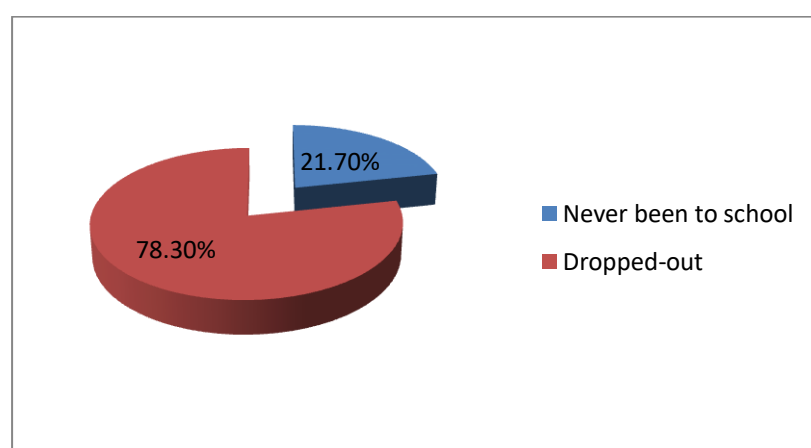
**Figure 6: Distribution of children by school attainment level before street life**



**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

The table below illustrates the reasons for not attending school before street life.

**Figure 7: Reasons for not attending school before street life**



**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

There were two expressed reasons for not attending school before street life. About 334 or 21.7% of children indicated that they had never been to school, while 1,203 or 78.3% reported that they had dropped-out of school before they went to the street. On one side, when 334 children do not attend school at all, the responsibility lies to a large extent with parents that show carelessness and negligence to integrate their children into school despite the prevailing free and compulsory basic education policy in the country. On the other side, the number of 1,203 street children and school drop-outs are probably part of the number of 166,645 school drop-outs across the country in 2015, including 139,690 primary school drop-outs, 21,868 lower secondary drop-outs, and 5,187 upper secondary drop-outs, as reported in MINEDUC's 2015 Education Statistical Year Book.

The following table shows expressed reasons explaining why 1,203 of street children had dropped-out of school before street life.

**Table 11: Reasons for dropping-out of school**

Reasons for dropping-out (n=1,203)	Number	Percentage
School located far away from home	14	1.1
Parents recklessness	98	8.1
Not enough food to eat after school	161	13.3
Failure at school	49	4
Lack of school fees and material	771	64
Death of parents/ guardians	84	6.9
Child delinquency	23	1.9
Unfavorable school environment / mistreatment by teacher	2	.1

**Source:** Primary data

Children expressed the reasons for dropping-out of school before they eventually ended up to the street. About 771 or 64% of children explained that they quit school because they lacked school fees and material. About 161 or 13.3% of children blamed insufficient food to eat at

home. Parents/stepparents/guardians were purportedly reckless towards 98 or 8.1% of children through physical or verbal abuse, negligence, by making them do hard household work and/or by forcing them to stay at home to look after the siblings. Death of parents/guardians reportedly accounted for 84 or 6.9% of children to drop-out of school. Failure at school allegedly made 49 or 4% quit school. About 23 or 1.9% of children blamed their own delinquent behavior. Long distance from home to school was pointed out by 14 or 1.1% of children as the main factor for dropping-out of school. Only 2 or .1% of children attributed their dropping-out of school to mistreatment by teacher.

The finding on street children education suggests that poverty as expressed in lack of school fees and material has a very big share (65%) in making children drop-out of school. On the other side, it shows that important efforts should be deployed and may be special skills transfer programs should be put in place to accommodate the street children that have been school and dropped-out as well as those that have never been to school. Likewise, the issue of school dropping-out has to be dealt to pre-empt street involvement for many children.

### 2.3.1.6 Gender differences

As it looked insightful to find out whether boy and girl street children were equally or differently driven to the street by different factors, the causes were disaggregated by sex, and the results are illustrated in the table below.

**Table 12: Causes disaggregated by sex**

Root causes	Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%
Parents poverty	1,234	47.1	138	52.9
Parental irresponsibility	549	20.9	63	24.1
Juvenile delinquency	541	20.6	33	12.6
Lack of school fees and material	514	19.6	44	16.9
Search for a job	421	16.1	44	16.9
Maltreatment by parents	302	11.5	29	11.1
Maltreatment by stepmother/father	290	11.1	29	11.1
Misunderstanding between parents	286	10.9	28	10.7
Peer group influence	229	8.7	25	9.6
Large family size	128	4.9	19	7.3
Death of one parent	293	11.2	34	13.0
Death of both parents	107	4.1	18	6.9
Have freedom	113	4.3	10	3.8
Heavy household work load	85	3.2	10	3.8
Following siblings	69	2.6	2	0.8
Conflict with brothers and sisters	48	1.8	4	1.5
Forced to go to school	17	0.6	1	0.4
Natural disasters	4	0.2	3	1.1

**Source:** Primary data, 2017

The percentages in the male column indicate the proportion of boy street children who voted for any particular cause as the main driver for children's street involvement, and the

percentages in the female column show the proportion of girl street children that indicated any particular cause to be a contributing factor to children's' street life.

On one hand, while 47.1% of boy street children indicated that family poverty was responsible for children's street life, 20.9% pointed out parental irresponsibility, 19.6% lack of school fees and material, 16.1% search for jobs, 11.5% maltreatment by parents, 11.2% death of one parent, 11.1 maltreatment by step-parents, 10.9% misunderstandings between parents. On the other side, 52.9% of girl street children blamed family poverty for children's street, 24.1% parental irresponsibility, 16.9% lack of school fees and material, 16.9% search for jobs, 12.6% juvenile delinquency, 11.1% maltreatment by parents, 11.1% maltreatment by step-parents, 10.7 misunderstandings between parents.

Are boys differently affected than girls? One may easily notice that family poverty appears to hit girls (52.9%) relatively a little harder than boys (47.1%). Parental irresponsibility seems to affect boys (20.9%) less than girls (24.1%). Likewise, juvenile delinquency may look more pronounced in boys (20.9%) than in girls (12.6%). Lack of school fees and material appears to disturb boys (19.6%) more than girls (16.9%). Search for jobs moves almost similarly boys (16.1%) and girls (16.9%). Both boys (11.5%) and girls (11.1%) are almost equally distressed by parental maltreatment. Death of one parent upsets boys (11.2%) a little less than girls (13%). Maltreatment by step-parents affects equally boys (11.1%) and girls (11.1%). Misunderstandings between parents affect almost equally boys (10.9%) and girls (10.7%).

### **2.3.1.7. Forms of street life**

There must be strong significant reasons for children to sever all bonds with their families! Two types of responses emerged when the children were probed to explain the main reason for the chosen form of street life. On one side, children staying on the street daytime but returning home for the night had a tendency to evoke economic concerns, such as lack of food, lack of school fees and material, lack of clothing, etc. The following are some quotations from children:

*“Nagiye i Kigali tumaze iminsi nk’itatu tutarya imuhira. Nari nzi ko iyo ugeze i Kigali ushobora gutwaza ibintu ba « bosi » baje guhaha ku soko, bakaguha amafaranga, nawe ugashobora kugura icyo kurya. Mba ndi hano ku soko, ngatwaza ibintu ba bosi, bakampemba amafaranga akaba ariyo ngura mo icyo kurya cyangwa imyenda yo kwambara... Akenshi ku mafaranga mbona, ngura mo icyo ndya, hanyuma nataha ku mugoroba ngaha ho n’iwacu nabo bagahaha”.*  
In English: “I decided to go to Kigali when, we had barely eaten at home for three days because there was not enough food. I usually stay at the market where I carry stuff for the big bosses that come for shopping; they pay me money which I use to buy food and clothes...

Quite often I use part of money they pay me to buy food, and take the rest of the money to my parents so that they can buy food too”.

*“Naje ku muhanda maze igihe kirekire ntajya kwiga kuko nari narabuze imyenda n’ibikorehos by’ishuri, mama yavugaga ko nta mafaranga yifitiye yo kubigura, data we yari yarapfuye”.* In English: “I came to the street after some time without going to the school because I did not have school uniform and material (books, pens, bag). ... My mother said that she did not have money to buy it and my father died”.

In fact, these children everyday rotate between home and the street, and for this reason they maintain relatively good relations with parents and family members. Because of the intermittent character of their presence on the street, they are often referred to as “the children in the street”.

On the contrary, street children who led a permanent street life marginally mentioned poverty and strongly emphasized the absence of a pleasant and welcoming family environment. They emotionally referred to all kinds of abuse they were subjected to in their respective families. They have cut all ties with the families. They are often referred as “children of the street”. The following is a sample of quotations from children”

*“Ntabwo nasubiraye imuhira kuko banyanga cyane. Umugabo wa mama yahoraga ankubita”.* I can’t dare going back home because they hate me. My stepfather always bit me”.

*“Njyewe barantaye. Sinasubiraye kuko ni nko kwiyahura”.* In English: “They abandoned me and going back home would be suicidal”.

This dichotomy of situations suggests at least two things. First, because the number of “children of the street” is higher than the number of “children in the street”, one may be brought to think that non-material deprivation push to the street more children than material poverty. Second, while material satisfaction may be enough to completely withdraw from the street the “children in the street”, it will require a stronger package of both material and non-material gratification for “children of the street” to be completely detached from the street.

#### **2.3.1.8 Age differences**

The mapping exercise findings suggested that most street children were between 11 and 18 years of age. Indeed, this age group combines 2,477 or 85.97% of street children over a total of 2,882 enumerated children. The 2,477 children comprise 1,410 children aged 11 to 14 and 1,067 children aged 15 to 18. Only 404 or 14% of enumerated children have 6 to 10 years of age. Does age have an influence vis-à-vis how children are pushed to the street?

In order to determine whether children are driven to the street by different causes according to their age, the root causes were disaggregated by age. The table below illustrates the frequencies distribution in different age groups.

**Table 13: Causes disaggregated by age**

Root Causes	Age group					
	6-10 years		11-14 years		15-18 years	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Parents poverty	207	51.2	648	46.0	517	48.5
Parental irresponsibility	71	17.6	330	23.4	211	19.8
Juvenile delinquency	76	18.8	296	21.0	202	18.9
Lack of school fees and materials	72	17.8	284	20.1	202	18.9
Search for a job	48	11.9	217	15.4	200	18.7
Maltreatment by parents	38	9.4	170	12.1	123	11.5
Maltreatment by stepmother/father	31	7.7	167	11.8	113	10.6
Misunderstanding between parents	35	8.7	166	11.8	113	10.6
Peer group influence	35	8.7	138	9.8	81	7.6
Large family size	15	3.7	60	4.3	72	6.7
Death of one parent	47	11.6	156	11.1	124	11.6
Death of both parents	18	4.5	53	3.8	54	5.1
Have freedom	11	2.7	65	4.6	47	4.4
Heavy household work load	8	2.0	55	3.9	32	3.0
Following siblings	4	1.0	36	2.6	31	2.9
Conflict with brothers and sisters	3	0.7	34	2.4	15	1.4
Forced to go to school	0	0.0	11	0.8	7	0.7
Natural disasters	1	0.2	6	0.4	0	0.0

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

Family poverty stays dominant across age-groups as 51.2% of children aged 6-10, 46% of those aged 11-14 and 48.5% of those aged 15-18 considered it to be the most important driver of children's street involvement striking. Parental irresponsibility comes second as it was pointed out by 17.6% of children aged 4-10, by 23.4% of children aged 10-14 and by 19.8% of those aged 15-18. Juvenile delinquency was identified by 18.8% aged 5-10, 21% aged 11-14% and 18.9% aged 15-18. Lack of school fees and material was pointed out 17.8% of children aged 5-10, 20.1% of children aged 11-14 and 18.9% of children aged 15-18. About 11.9% of children 5-10 years old, 15.4% of those 11-14 years old and 18.7% of those 15-18 years old, considered search for a job to be an important contributing factor to children's street life. Maltreatment by parents was pointed out by 9.4% aged

### **2.3.1.9. District differences**

In order to verify whether the drivers of street life affect differently children's decisions according to the District of origin, the three most prevailing expressed root causes (family poverty, parental irresponsibility and family conflicts) were disaggregated by districts, taking into consideration only the ten first and ten last districts of origin in terms of the number of street children native of these districts. The table in column 3 shows the total number of street children who, during enumeration, indicated to come from the corresponding districts in column

2 (districts of origin). The number and percentage in the following columns indicate the frequencies distribution of children for the particular root causes. At this juncture districts where street children reported to originate from come into play because that is where their parents and families live. Therefore, it is there where the root causes responsible for driving children to the street can be found.

As illustrated in the table a pattern in frequencies emerges: across Districts, family poverty draws the greatest number of frequencies, parental irresponsibility comes second with the subsequent number of respondents, and finally family conflicts draws the least number of respondents.

**Table 14: Main causes disaggregated by districts**

N°	Districts	Number of street children in the District of origin (in accordance with the mapping report)	Family poverty		Parental irresponsibility		Family conflicts	
			Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1	Gasabo	358	179	50	75	21	50	14
2	Nyarugenge	280	127	45	59	21	38	13
3	Huye	197	100	51	44	22	17	8.6
4	Rubavu	152	97	64	31	20	22	14
5	Kicukiro	143	65	45	27	19	22	15
6	Muhanga	120	65	54	12	10	16	13
7	Ruhango	116	62	53	36	31	12	10
8	Kamonyi	109	46	42	15	14	8	7
9	Kayanza	108	39	36	28	26	17	16
10	Rusizi	107	59	55	25	23	6	5.6
21	Gicumbi	52	28	54	9	17	7	13
22	Nyamasheke	47	28	60	9	19	8	17
23	Rulindo	46	31	67	12	26	0	0
24	Ngoma	43	14	32	6	14	4	9
25	Gatsibo	42	23	55	5	12	1	2.3
26	Rutsiro	30	11	36	10	33	1	3
27	Nyagatare	28	9	31	3	11	1	3.5
28	Gakenke	27	8	29	4	15	1	4
29	Kirehe	27	12	44	5	18	2	7
30	Burera	21	7	33	0	0	1	5

Source: Primary data, 2017.

### **2.3.1.10. Street children's districts of origin in the context of poverty national trends**

As indicated in the literature review, 2013/2014 survey of the household living conditions (EICV4) suggests that 39.1% of the Rwandan population was classified as poor, while 16.3% was found to live in extreme poverty (NISR, 2015). According EICV4 findings, the District of Nyamasheke was the most hit by poverty with 62% and 39.2% of its population respectively classified as poor and extreme poor. In each of Burera, Rutsiro, Gisagara and Gicumbi Districts more than 50% of their residents were poor. The table below illustrates the incidences of poverty (the population whose total consumption was below the total poverty line (RWF 159,375 in January 2014 prices) and was not capable of affording to buy a basic basket of

food and no-food goods (NISR, 2015), and extreme poverty (the population whose total consumption (food and non-food) was below food poverty line (RWF 105,064 in January 2014 prices) was estimated at 16.3% (NISR, 2015).

**Table 15: Incidence of poverty and extreme poverty in Rwanda**

N°	District	Incidence of poverty	Extreme poverty incidence	N°	District	Incidence of poverty	Extreme poverty incidence
1	Kicukiro	16.3	6.5	16	Nyamagabe	41.5	13.0
2	Nyarugenge	19.8	8.4	17	Kirehe	41.8	17.8
3	Gasabo	23.4	11.3	18	Gakenke	42.0	16.2
4	Rwamagana	25.4	8.0	19	Gatsibo	43.8	18.5
5	Kamonyi	25.9	6.0	20	Nyagatare	44.1	19.5
6	Kayanza	26.4	9.5	21	Karongi	45.3	21.3
7	Muhanga	30.5	7.8	22	Ngoma	46.8	19.5
8	Huye	32.5	5.7	23	Nyaruguru	47.9	20.0
9	Bugesera	34.3	13.4	24	Rulindo	48.1	20.2
10	Musanze	34.9	16.8	25	Ngororero	49.6	23.5
11	Rusizi	35.1	15.8	26	Burera	50.4	23.0
12	Rubavu	35.5	14.2	27	Rutsiro	51.4	23.6
13	Ruhango	37.8	12.8	28	Gisagara	53.3	20.6
14	Nyanza	38.0	17.7	29	Gicumbi	55.3	24.7
15	Nyabihu	39.6	12.6	30	Nyamasheke	62.0	39.2

Source: EICV 4 2013/2014)

Given the indication that poverty remains an important contributing factor to the street children phenomenon, one would expect districts where poverty rages to be the major sources of street children. This can be verified by looking at the number of street children in districts of origin as stated in the mapping report. Column 3 shows the number of street children enumerated to originate from in the district, while column 4 shows the ranking in terms of magnitude or decreasing number of children.

In the table below a quick comparison is made between extreme poverty levels and the number of native street children in five districts with the least levels of extreme poverty and in five districts with the highest levels of extreme poverty.

**Table 16: Comparison between levels of extreme poverty and number of street children**

Districts	Extreme poverty incidence	Street children in districts of origin	
		Number	Ranking
Huye	5.7	197	3
Kamonyi	6.0	109	8
Kicukiro	6.5	143	5
Muhanga	7.8	120	6
Rwamagana	8.0	96	12
Karongi	21.3	53	20
Ngororero	23.5	62	17
Rutsiro	23.6	30	26
Gicumbi	24.7	52	21
Nyamasheke	39.2	47	22

Source: EICV4; Primary data, 2017.



Huye, with the 1<sup>st</sup> least incidence of extreme poverty, is the 3<sup>rd</sup> in the number of street children reportedly originating from that District; Kamonyi, with the 2<sup>nd</sup> least incidence of extreme poverty, is the 8<sup>th</sup> in the number of street children reportedly originating from the it; Kicukiro, with the 3<sup>rd</sup> least incidence of extreme poverty, is the 3<sup>rd</sup> in number of street children reportedly originating from it; Muhanga, with the 4<sup>th</sup> least incidence of extreme poverty, is the 6<sup>th</sup> in the number of street children reportedly originating from it; and Rwamagana, with the 5<sup>th</sup> least incidence of extreme poverty, is the 12<sup>th</sup> in the number of street children reportedly originating from that district.

On the other end of extreme poverty, Nyamasheke, with the 30<sup>th</sup> (greatest) incidence of extreme poverty, is the 22<sup>nd</sup> on the number of street children reportedly originating from that District; Gicumbi, with the 29<sup>th</sup> (penultimate) incidence of extreme poverty, is the 21<sup>st</sup> on the scale of number of street children reportedly originating from it; Rutsiro, with the 28<sup>th</sup> incidence of extreme poverty, is the 26<sup>th</sup> on the scale of number of street children reportedly originating from the district; Ngororero, with the 27<sup>th</sup> incidence of extreme poverty, is 17<sup>th</sup> in the number of street children reportedly originating from it; and Karongi, with the 26<sup>th</sup> incidence of extreme poverty, is the 20<sup>th</sup> in the number of street children reportedly originating from it.

What this illustration suggests is that, contrary to expectations, Districts with the lowest level of extreme poverty are not necessarily those with the least number of street children originating in these Districts. Likewise, Districts with the highest level of extreme poverty are not necessarily those with the greatest number of street children originating from these Districts. This certainly backs the idea that, as elucidated throughout the text, family poverty is not the sole reason of the street children phenomenon, and that other factors contribute to it as well.

### **2.3.2. Causes of children's street life as per parents**

A sample of 384 parents of children living on the street, including 279 women and 105 men, were interviewed for two main reasons. Firstly, it was important to collect their views on the causes of their children's street life. Secondly, parents were the only more reliable source of information with respect to the prevailing socio-economic conditions in street children's families at the time these children decided to flee home. About 224 or 58.3% of respondents reported to be mothers of street children.

The table below illustrates parents' responses regarding different proposed causes of children's decision to go to the street:

**Table 17: Causes of children's street life as expressed by parents**

Children's street life causes (n=383)	Number	Percentage
Family poverty	201	52.4
Juvenile delinquency	150	39.2
Parents /extended family carelessness	71	18.5
Peer pressure	44	11.5
Search for job	41	10.7
Lack of school fees and material	37	9.7
Misunderstanding between parents	33	8.6
Death of parents	28	7.3
Maltreatment by parents	20	5.2
Maltreatment by step-mother	5	1.3
Maltreatment by step-father	16	4.2
Large family size	13	3.4
Forcing children to go to school	13	3.4
It was time for the child to fend for him/her self	3	.8
Heavy work load	2	.5

**Source:** Primary data.

### **2.3.2.1. Poverty related factors**

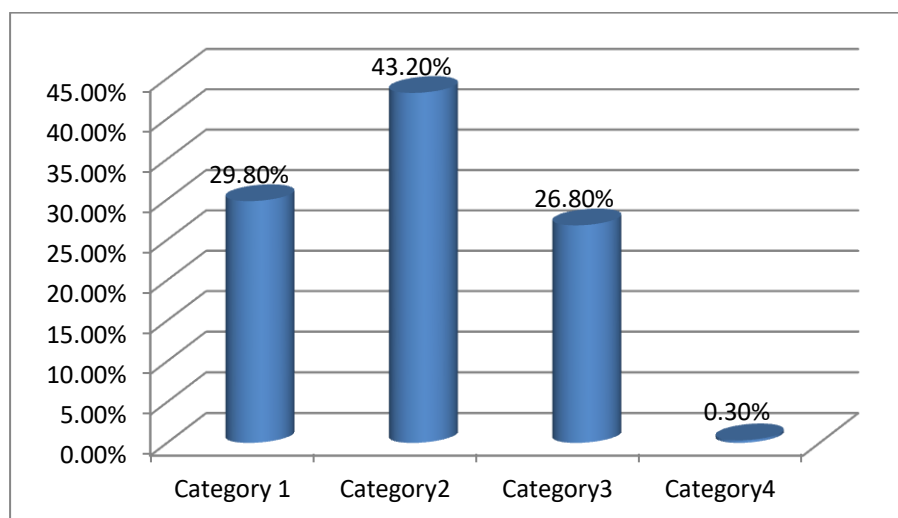
The majority of interviewed parents, 52.4%, believed that family poverty was the most important driver of children to the street. As parents/guardians they admitted their failure and disappointment to provide for family in spite enormous efforts. Several reasons were offered to account for family poverty, including a limited number of off-farm employment opportunities, low level of education, small and unfertile pieces of land, unreliable climate, and lack of financial capital to initiate income generating activities.

On the other side, 10.7% of parents believed that their children went to the street in search of remunerating jobs, while 9.7% indicated that lack of school fees and material was the main factor in their children's decision to go to the street. By citing lack of school fees and material and children's employability, parents implicitly emphasized the role of poverty in triggering children's departure from home to settle on the street. Indeed, parents clearly confirmed that they would have not allowed their children to become street children or work for remuneration if they had been able to afford it.

### **2.3.2.2. Parents' ubudehe categorization**

As indicated in the methodology, the ubudehe categorization provides a clear indication of how respondents live in the conditions of poverty. The table below illustrates the Ubudehe categories as expressed by themselves during the interviews.

**Figure 8: Distribution of respondents by ubudehe categories**



**Source:** Primary data.

About 29.8% of street children parents live in extreme poverty (category 1) and 43.2% live in poverty, at least according to the Ubudehe categorization (NISR, 2015). Combined, 73% of street children parents live in poverty. On the other hand, 27% of street parents are classified in prosperous 3 and 4 categories.

VUP beneficiaries largely in Ubudehe categories 1 and 2 are among the most deprived households living in rural areas where, when compared to the rest of the population, they remain less likely to be in the proximity of the basic services, including market, main road, primary school and health facility, and where they use less the basic amenities, including electricity as the main source of light, improved water source and improved sanitation (NISR, 2015, 23-24). So, children from needy families may want to go and stay in cities in order to enjoy the amenities that they benefit from in cities not in the countryside.

Furthermore, the fact that 27% of street children parents are in wealthy categories (3 and 4) supports the idea that street life is not the exclusive preserve of children from deprived households and material dispossession cannot alone cause. But, other non-material factors actually come into play.

### **2.3.2.3. Parents' employment status**

Being unemployed and being employed in low paying jobs are frequently mentioned causes of poverty. Parents were asked to tell whether they had an employment as source of livelihood when their children went to the street. 77.8% of respondents indicated that they were employed, while 60.8% of spouses were reported to be working at the time their children left for the street. The numbers for those reported to not work were respectively 22.2% and 39.2% for respondents and spouses.

**Table 18: Number of parents with employment**

Had employment	Respondent		Spouse	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Yes	298	77.8	177	60.8
No	85	22.2	114	39.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data, 2017

Among reported employed parents, 57.2% reportedly worked in farm-related activities, including 31.4% working in own farms, 23.4% working in farm-related activities for cash, and 2.4% working for food. Farm-related activities remain among the least paying jobs.

**Table 19: Distribution of respondents by types of employment**

Types of employment	Respondent		Spouse	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Farming in own farm	93	31.4	79	35.9
Farming for others for money	69	23.4	40	18.2
Farming for others for food	7	2.4	6	2.8
Paid non-farm work	66	22.3	71	32.3
Own business type activities	58	19.6	21	9.5
Work for VUP	1	.3	3	1.3
Other (prostitution, begging)	2	.6	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data, 2017

About 22.3% of respondents were reported to work in non-farm activities and 19.6% in business-related activities.

#### 2.3.2.4. Parents' education

Education and skills are considered a sure foundation for respectable employment, be it self-employment or waged employment. When asked whether they have been to school, 65.1% of respondents replied were affirmative and 57.7% of respondents indicated that their spouses had been to school as well.

**Table 20: Respondents' education**

School attendance N=383)	Respondent		Spouse	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Yes	250	65.1	179	57.7
No	134	34.9	131	42.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data 2017

The table below shows that 86.1% reportedly had attended primary school, 11.5% secondary school and 2.4% vocational training, while spouses reportedly had reportedly attended primary school, 10.2% secondary school and 2.2% vocational training.

**Table 21: Parents' school attainment level**

School attendance level (n=383)	Respondent		Spouse	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Primary	216	86.1	157	87.6
Secondary	28	11.5	18	10.2
Vocational training	6	2.4	4	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

As the great majority of street children parents only attained primary school, their overall the education level remains low and this partially explains the challenge they may face to secure better remunerating employment.

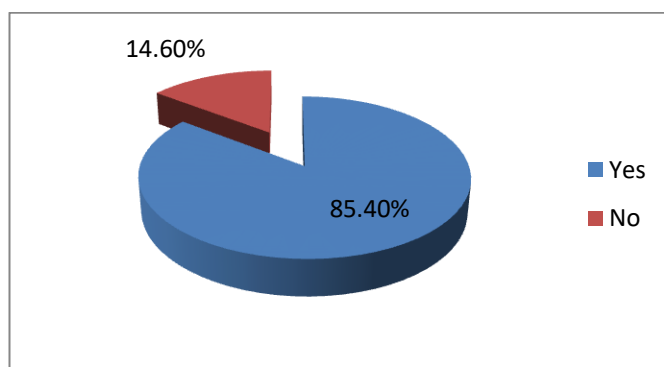
### 2.3.2.5. Family size

However, only 13 parents or 3.4% or respondents believed that family size had something to do with their children's decision to flee home. The average family size of interviewed parents was computed to be 5.7. This average family size remains higher than the national average household size of 4.6 as indicated in the 2012/2013 EICV 4.

However, in the context a developing country where the majority of people are employed in subsistence agriculture, a large number of family members deplete the resources in such a way that there is not enough left for everyone. This is certainly the situation for the majority of street children parents who, as previously seen, live in conditions of poverty or extreme poverty.

### 2.3.2.6. Lodging arrangements of street children parents

When someone stays in a stable housing or not, when he/she own a house or not, when he rents or not, lodging arrangements reflect the level of material vulnerability people suffer from. When respondents were asked to indicate whether they were living in known stable lodging, the answer was yes for 85.4% and no for 14.6% of them. This is illustrated in the figure below.

**Figure 9: Parents with stable accommodation**

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

The following table suggests that among those living in stable housing conditions, 52.9% lived in town houses, 27.3% in rented houses and 8.1% in houses borrowed from family members or friends.

**Table 22: Distribution of respondents by housing arrangements**

Housing arrangements	Number	Percentage
Living in own house	203	59.9
Living in rented house	105	31.0
Living in house borrowed from family member/friend	31	9.1

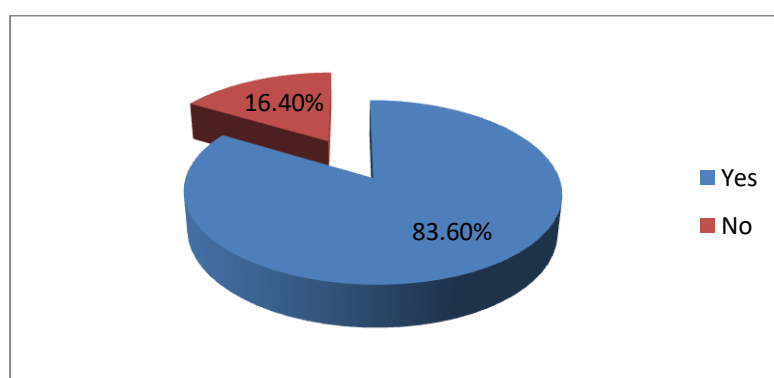
*Source: Primary data, 2017*

### 2.3.2.7. Street children parents' access to health care

Lack of access to healthcare remains another aspect of families' vulnerability because, in order to survive, family members must have access to health care when they fall ill. There is reason to believe that when a household cannot ensure medical care to its members, children in this family may be tempted and/or encouraged by parents to seek work on the street and make money for the community health insurance.

As the figure below illustrates, 83.6% of respondents observed that members of their families had access to health care whenever they fell ill.

**Figure 10: Parents' access to health care**



*Source: Primary data, 2017*

While 68.8% of respondents reportedly had access to health care thanks to the community health insurance, 25.6% indicated that they sought health care only when money was available, and 5.6% allegedly sought health care from traditional healers.

**Table 23: Distribution of respondents by ways of health care access**

Ways of health care access (n=320)	Number	Percentage
Had health community health care insurance	227	68.8
Sought care from traditional healers	18	5.6
Sough care only when they had money	82	25.6

*Source: Primary data, 2017*

The means to subscribe the annual community health insurance come from various sources. Indeed, only 41.0% of respondents reported to be able to pay themselves for the community health care insurance, while 39.1% allegedly received support, including 28.6% from the Government, 4.8% from family members or friends, and 5.7% from NGOs.

**Table 24: Distribution of respondents by source of community health care insurance**

Source of health care insurance (n=227)	Number	Percentage
Health care insurance paid for with own money	93	41.0
Health care insurance subsidized by Government	110	28.6
Health care insurance supported by friend/family member	11	4.8
Health care insurance supported by NGO	13	5.7

**Source:** Primary data, 2017

### 2.3.2.8. Access to Government VUP social protection program

The Government of Rwanda has established the VUP social protection program to cater the poorest segments of the population, and there is reason to believe that the majority of respondents, especially the 73% of street children parents living in poverty and extreme poverty, should benefit from that program. However, according to the table 23 below, only 23.2% of respondents indicated that they had actually benefited from them, while 76.8% had not. Table 24 below illustrates expressed reasons for the limited access to VUP.

**Table 25: Street children parents benefiting from Government social protection programs**

Benefiting from Government social protection programs (n=380)	Number	Percentage
Yes	88	23.2
No	292	76.8

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

Reasons provided to explain why respondents did not benefit from the VUP program are enumerated in the following table.

**Table 26: Reasons for not accessing the VUP program**

Reasons for not accessing VUP programs (296)	Number	Percentage
Not selected because limited positions available	121	40.8
Not aware of the selection process time	108	36.7
Not in allowed category (3 or 4)	19	6.7
Priority given to the most vulnerable groups (very old people, people with physical handicap, etc.)	14	4.7
Didn't want to join / Negligence	13	4.5
In constant mobility	5	1.8
VUP not yet operational in some districts	4	1.6
As members of the local authority administration, they were apparently not allowed	4	1.6
Had child supported by NGO	2	0.8
Corruption	2	0.8

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

The most prominent among what respondents provided to be reasons for not accessing the VUP program included limited number of positions available expressed by 40.8%, and unawareness of the selection process time reported by 36.7% of respondents. About 6.7% of respondents were not in the allowed category; 4.7% were not among the prioritized groups of very old people and those with physical handicap; 4.5% did not want to join or neglected it; 1.8% were in constant mobility; 1.6% indicated that the VUP was not yet operational in their districts; 1.6% were not allowed reportedly as members of the local authority administration; 0.8% reportedly were not allowed because they had another source of support (children benefiting already from NGO support); and 0.8% indicated that they were not selected because of corruption.

### **2.3.2.9. Food accessibility**

Challenges to get food are an important facet of poverty and this is the reason respondents were asked to indicate the level at which food was accessible at home at the time children decided to settle in the street. Answers provided are illustrated in the following table.

**Table 27: Distribution of respondents by food availability**

Availability of food (n=)	Number	Percentage
Got food without difficulties	95	24.9
It was hard to get food	158	41.4
It was very hard to get food	129	33.8

*Source: Primary data, 2017.*

It was hard or very hard to get food for as many as 75.2% street children families as reportedly suggested in the table above. Only 24.9% got food without difficulties.

### **2.3.2.10. Parents' sensitivity to their children's departure**

There is reason to believe that when some one's child goes to the street, he/she should be tormented or devastated by the appalling street life his/her child should face on the street or by the embarrassment the child decision brings to him/her. Consequently, there also reason to believe that he/she should make efforts to persuade the child to come back home. The tables below illustrate parents' answers when they were asked to indicate whether they felt distressed and what they did to bring their children back home.

**Table 28: Parents with feeling of devastation after children departure**

Parental feeling of distress after children departure (n=381)	Number	Percentage
Yes	358	94.0
No	23	6.0

*Source: Primary data, 2017*



While 94.0% of parents indicated to be distressed and concerned about their children, 6% explained that they actually were not. As the table below shows, 46.8% of parents clarified that they went to see the children in order to persuade them to come back, 23.8% sought assistance of local authorities in efforts to bring back their children, 1.4% resorted to religious leaders for assistance, and 3.9% sought help from extended family members, while 24.1% did nothing.

**Table 29: Parents' reactions after devastation**

Parental reactions (n=361)	Number	Percentage
Went to sensitize children to come back home	169	46.8
Sought local authorities assistance	86	23.8
Sought religious leaders assistance	5	1.4
Sought extended family members assistance	14	3.9
Did nothing	87	24.1

Source: Primary data, 2017

### 2.3.3. Causes of street children life as expressed by the stakeholders

Street children institutions provide them with physical/psychological rehabilitation and family reintegration assistance. In addition, local government authorities provide administrative services geared at strengthening street children family and community reintegration. A thorough account of services performed by different stakeholders is not discussed here, but it will be in the upcoming and third report expected to focus on the strategies to sustainably reintegrate street children into their families and communities and to prevent the issue from taking place. Yet, different stakeholders provided their views on the causes of the street children phenomenon.

The table below illustrates explanations on the causes of children's street involvement as expressed by fourteen heads of street children centers:

**Table 30: Explanations of children's street involvement by senior officers of street children centers**

Reasons for children street involvement (n=13)	Number	Percentage
Family poverty	10	77
Family conflicts	10	77
Parental and extended family irresponsibility	6	46
Family breakdown (orphans)	6	46
Juvenile delinquency	4	30.7
Married father with a concubine (ubuharike)	3	23
Illegal cohabitation	2	15.3
Separation/divorce of parents	2	15.3
Mother is prostitute (kuvuka ku ndaya)	1	7.6
Large family size	1	7.6
Attractiveness of cities	1	7.6
Misunderstanding between parents and children	1	7.6

Source: Primary data, 2017.

By an equal number of votes, 77% of heads of street children centers believed that family poverty and family conflicts drive children to the street. Equally, by an equal number of votes, 46% of heads of street children centers condemn parental and/or extended family irresponsibility and parental death as important factors contributing to children's street involvement. While 30.7% of heads of street children centers blame juvenile delinquency, 23 % denounce the fact that, though legally married, some fathers entertain concubines, and this depletes family resources. Family breakdown (separation or divorce) and illegal cohabitation had both 15.3% of votes. Finally, by an equal number of votes, 7.6% of street children centers heads blame mother's prostitutions, large family size, attractiveness of cities, and poor communication between parents and children. Below are some to the quotations from the respondents:

"The existence of very impoverished segments of the population is real and cannot be concealed. Street children are not inherently bad kids. They go to the street because they don't have enough food at home. Once on the street, they can work to buy food or eat leftovers from restaurants... If my center has been able to take some of them out of the street, it is not because we organize games, leisure time and entertainment for them, not because we organize educational talks for them, not because we put them back into school. But, it is primarily because we are capable and willing to meet their basic needs, in particular food, clothing and health care. It is only when they are fed and in good health that they will accept the other services we provide, not the other way around".

*"Iyo tubajije abana impamvu bagiye mu muhanda, abenshi basubiza nta gushidikanya ko batari gukomeza kwihanganira ababyeyi bahora barwana, bagakomeretsanya. Abana bavuga nabo ubwabo iyo mirwano ntiyabasigaga kuko iyo bashakaga gutabara ba nyina, base barabakubitaga".* In English: "When we ask children why they went to the street, the answer from many of these children is unequivocal. They say that they had enough of their parents' frequent daily violent infighting, indicating that they were beaten up themselves when they stood between the conflicting parents".

*"Hari ho ababyeyi babaye tereriyu batita ku burere bw'abana babo".* In English: "There exist parents who are reckless and don't care about their children".

*"Mu bana dufite harimo umubare muniri w'abana b'imfubyi baba barananiranywe na ba mukase cyangwa abagabo ba nyina".* A good number of our children are orphans who did not get along with their step-parents.

*"Abana b'abakowa babana n'abagabo bitanyuze mu mategeko. Iyo babyaye, ba bagabo barabata bakabasiga bonyine. Bibabera abo ba mama ikibazo gikomeye kurera bonyine abo bana kuko nta bushobozi buhagije baba bafite. Kwiambaza amategeko nabyo birabagora kuko*

*baba barabanye n'abagabo batanyuze mu mategeko. ... icyaba cyiza ni uko abo bakobwa bakwitonda bakajya bakora iteka ibintu binyuze mu mategeko*". In English: "Girls engage with men in illegal cohabitation. When they get pregnant and give birth, they are abandoned by those men. Due to lack of resources, they have many challenges raising alone the children. For these women legal recourse is difficult because cohabitation was illegal".

On the other side, about 44 local authorities were interviewed, including 3 gender and family promotion officers, 3 sector executive secretaries, 11 sector social affairs officers, cell 14 executive secretaries, 2 cell social affairs officers, 5 village heads, 2 village security officers, 3 friends of the family, and 1 head of District transit center. The table below illustrates their accounts with respect to the causes of children's street involvement.

**Table 31: Reasons for children's street involvement expressed by local authorities**

Reasons for children street involvement (n=44)	Number	Percentage
Family poverty	29	66
Family conflicts	27	61
Parents and extended family irresponsibility	22	50
Death of parents (orphans)	9	20
Juvenile delinquency	7	16
Mother is prostitute (kuvuka ku ndaya)	3	6.9
Large family size	2	4.5
Parental alcoholism	1	2.2
Father has wife and concubine (ubuharike)	1	2.2
Parent in jail	1	2.2

**Source:** Primary data, 2007.

The votes are redistributed as follows: family poverty comes first with 66% of votes; family conflicts is second with 61%; parental and extended family irresponsibility is third with 50% of votes; parental death comes fourth with 20% of votes; juvenile delinquency is fifth with 16% of votes; being born and raised by prostitute mother is sixth with 6.9% of votes; large family size is seventh with 4.5% of votes; and lastly, parental alcoholism, married fathers but with concubines, and parent in jail got 2.2% of votes.

What is noticeable is that family poverty, family conflicts and parental irresponsibility are the three most important factors of children's street involvement, at least in the opinion of heads of street children centers. Furthermore, though stated as distinct causes for children's street life, several reasons are in fact facets or parental irresponsibility. They include juvenile delinquency, large family size, parental alcoholism, having a mistress and parental jail time.

#### **2.3.4. Synthesis on the causes of the street children phenomenon**

Different sources, including street children, parents of street children, senior officers in street children centers and local authorities, have pointed out several factors and circumstances as causes of children's street involvement. The street children phenomenon is obviously caused by

a combination of factors embedded in the socio-economic characteristics of children's families as well as behavioral characteristics of children. The long list of reasons as identified by the respondents range from family poverty, parental irresponsibility, family conflicts, lack of school fees and material, search for jobs, juvenile delinquency, death of parents, separation of parents, poor parenting, maltreatment by parents, maltreatment by step-parents, misunderstanding between parents, misunderstanding between parents and children, family size, heavy work load, forcing children to go to school, peer pressure, children's yearning for freedom, conflict between a child and siblings, prostitution, having concubines, illegal cohabitation, attractiveness of cities.

All of these expressed factors of street involvement for children can be condensed into three causes, including family poverty, parental and extended family irresponsibility and family conflicts as all the remaining factors represent aspects of one the these three main causes or may serve as proxies or substitutions to them.

What is also obvious is that the majority of respondents pointed to poverty as the most important in the array of expressed factors. Those, (children, parents, local leaders, and the staff in rehabilitation centers) who pointed out poverty as the main cause, have also mentioned other causes at the same time. Additionally, the study found out that all children in the street are not necessarily from the poorest families, and all poor families don't have children in the street. This suggests that poverty may not necessarily be the most important cause, rather an excuse for parental carelessness and/or family conflicts. The following table illustrates the main causes and their proxies.

N°	Main causes or factors of children's street involvement	Proxy / substitution / aspect
1	Parental and extended family irresponsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Death of parents</li> <li>-Separation of parents</li> <li>-Juvenile delinquency</li> <li>-Peer pressure</li> <li>-Heavy work load</li> <li>-Forcing children to go to school</li> <li>-Having freedom</li> <li>-Family size</li> <li>-Prostitution</li> <li>-Concubines</li> <li>-Illegal cohabitation</li> <li>-Attractiveness of cities</li> <li>- Lack of school fees and material</li> <li>-Search for jobs</li> </ul>
2	Family conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Maltreatment by parents</li> <li>-Maltreatment by step-parents</li> <li>-Misunderstanding between parents</li> <li>-Conflicts between parents</li> <li>-Conflicts between parents and children</li> <li>-Conflicts between children and siblings</li> </ul>
3	Family poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Lack of school fees and material</li> <li>-Search for jobs</li> </ul>

**Parental and extended family irresponsibility is ranked first.** Parental death cannot directly substitute for parental irresponsibility because it is always an unwanted sad life experience. What is to blame in the case of a two-parent orphan is failure by the remaining extended family to take good care of the orphans left by the deceased parents. In addition, death of one parent, divorce and separation of spouses were also highlighted as contributing factors to the street children phenomenon. Life can indeed become very challenging to children compelled to live in single mother households, or stay with stepparents. Parental irresponsibility comes into play because of the new parents' failure to provide the children with the necessary care and protection. In effect, the well-being of children must necessarily be preserved in all family settings, including in new homes of remarried spouses. Moreover, large family size, involving in prostitution, entertaining concubines and engaging in illegal cohabitation, reflect wanted situations that can be avoided.

Furthermore, when children succumb to juvenile delinquency, peer pressure, cities' attractiveness, or yearning for freedom, it can be argued it is because parents failed to provide them with needed education and supervision. Asking children to carry heavy work load and / or forcing them to go to school depict a situation of poor parenting and lack of consideration and respect towards them. Lack of school fees and materials and seeking for a job for a child, may not always be related to family poverty but in some cases due to parents' irresponsibility and carelessness for their children, whereby some parents prefer to abuse alcohol instead of fulfilling their parental responsibilities including children education.

**Family infighting and domestic violence** is another but no less important contributing factor of the street children phenomenon. Kids indicated that they went to the street to escape from the direct physical and /or emotional maltreatment by parents, step-parents of family members. Kids also remarked that they went to the street to escape from the tormenting ordeal of watching their parents violently abusing each other. Likewise, children reportedly went to the street because they could not stand infighting between their parents or because of unbearable conflict with the siblings. All of these cases represent situations of family conflicts.

**Family poverty** is also a driver of children to the street as children indicated to go the street to get food and other amenities they could not get in their families. On the other hand, lack of school fees and material are important aspects of family poverty because, and when the children and parents cited lack of school fees and material or the need for children to seek a remunerated job, they were in fact pointing fingers at poverty.

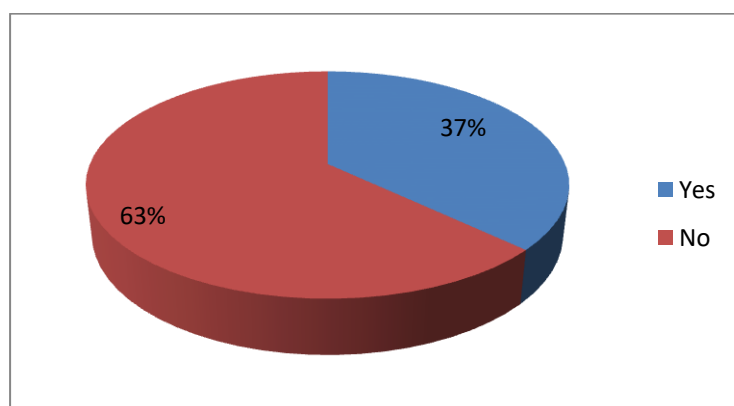
## 2.4. The living conditions of street children met in the street

As the following lines will show, street children live in conditions that deprive them of their childhood, their dignity and their potential, and are harmful to their physical and emotional development.

### 2.4.1. Work instead of education

Street children are involved in a variety of jobs that interfere with their schooling. The following table shows the number of children attending school during street life.

**Figure 11: Proportion of street children attending school**



*Source: Primary data, 2017.*

The majority of enumerated children, 1,827 or 63%, don't actually attend school, while only 1,055 or 37% do of all enumerated children. The table below illustrates school attendance by place of enumeration of children.

**Table 32: School attendance by place of enumeration**

Place of enumeration	Yes	%	No	%	Total
Children in centers	762	79	205	21	967
Children in the street	293	15	1622	85	1915
Total	1,055	37	1827	63	2882

*Source: Primary data, 2017*

The majority or 79% of children catered for in centers attend school, while only 15% of children enumerated in the street attend school. The number of school-goers enumerated in the street must be small. Yet, their schooling must be sporadic as they are torn between school attendance and street work.

### ***Types of jobs that street children do***

The majority of street children, 54.6%, survive by collecting and selling different items from the garbage; by doing different small jobs (45.8%) and transportation of purchased items. Children are not engaged in one exclusive job; they can do different jobs depending on

circumstances. Other jobs that street children do are washing cars and motorbikes 1.9%, keeping cars in parking by about 1.7%, and doing some small trade on the street (0.5%). Street children are also engaged in bad behaviors that they consider as jobs like begging by 2.2% of children enumerated, prostitution, 0.6%, stealing 0.6% and selling drugs as mentioned by 0.4% of enumerated street children.

**Table 33: Street children jobs**

Type of jobs (N=1887)	Number	Percentage
Collect and sell, recyclable items from garbage etc.	1,030	54.6
Doing different small jobs	864	45.8
Transportation of purchased items	800	42.4
Washing cars and motorcycles	35	1.9
Keeping cars in parking	33	1.7
Small trade	10	.5
Begging	42	2.2
Prostitution	11	.6
Stealing	11	.6
Selling drugs	8	.4

Source: Primary data, 2017.

### **Money-earning related jobs street children are involved in**

The table below shows different ways that street children use to earn money. Most of street children earn money by executing jobs for cash (61.6%), and selling different items collected from garbage for about 54.5% of children. About 12% of street children beg for money. When street children cannot find money in an honest way, they can steal from families or on the street as mentioned by 6.3% of children enumerated. Prostitution was mentioned by 10% of street girls as a way to earn money. It is important to know that there is no unique way of earning money for street children as a child can use one way or another.

**Table 34: Ways used by street children to earn money**

Ways of earning money (n=1903)	Frequency	Percentage
Begging	226	11.9
Stealing in families/on the street	120	6.3
Doing jobs for people for cash	1,173	61.6
Selling different items collected from garbage	1,037	54.5
Doing small trade	14	0.7
Prostitution	23	1.2

Source: Primary data, 2017.

### **Street children money spending**

Money earned through different ways is mostly used for buying food in about 86.4% of cases. Money is also used to buy clothes for 47.3% of children. 18.4% of children use money earned from the street to support their families. 9.2% street children spend earned money to

watch films, while 7% use it to buy drugs. There are also some children (3.5%) who reportedly make good use of money by paying school fees, school materials and covering basic personal needs. About 1.2% of street children allegedly invest in small income generating activities like buying small animals. About 1.1% of street children reportedly save earned cash and the same proportion of street children use earned money playing hazard games.

**Table 35: Money utilization by street children**

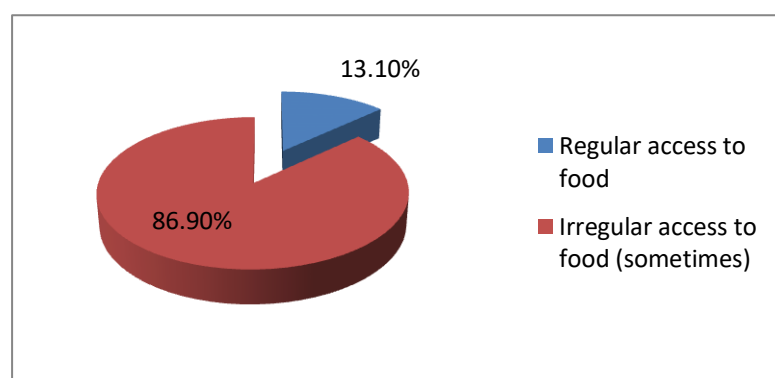
Money utilizations (n=1895)	Number	Percentage
Buying food	1,637	86.4
Buying clothes	896	47.3
Family support	349	18.4
Watching films	174	9.2
Buying drugs	132	7.0
Paying school fees and materials and covering other basic needs	66	3.5
Investing in small income activities	23	1.2
Playing hazard games	22	1.2
Saving	21	1.1
Paying sex workers	7	0.4
Bribing night security guards so that they don't beat them	2	0.1

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

#### 2.4.2. Limited food accessibility

As illustrated in the table below, only 13.1% of street children observed that can get food on regular basis, while 86.9% allegedly cannot eat every day.

**Figure 12: Access to food**



**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

#### How do street children get food?



**Table 36: Ways of finding food**

Ways of getting food (n=1,898)	Number	Percentage
Buying with money earned from jobs	1,526	80.4
Leftovers from restaurants	554	29.2
Begging	240	12.6
Eating at home	205	10.8
Stealing in families/on the street	47	2.5
Obtaining food from people's generosity	31	1.6
Food paid against work	31	1.6
Collecting food items from bins	1	0.1

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

The Table above shows different ways street children use to find something to eat. The majority of street children, 80.4%, reportedly buy food with money earned from different jobs; 29.2% collect leftovers from restaurants; and 12.6% beg. However, even though 53% of children reported to sleep at home, only 10.8% indicated to eat at home. Also, most of street children surprisingly do not eat food items collected from bins as only 0.1% admitted it. A small proportion of street children use different ways to find something to eat like stealing food from families and on the street, obtaining food from people's generosity, getting food against work.

#### 2.4.3. Limited access to clothing

Street children get clothes through different ways. 60.6% of children indicated that they buy clothes with money earned; 43.1% reported to get clothes from generous people as donation; 10.5% secure clothes from begging; 8.2% explained that they are dressed by parents and relatives. 3.6% reported to steal clothes from families, on the street or from street mates; and 2% admitted to wear worn and thrown clothes that they collect.

**Table 37: Ways of getting clothes for street children**

Ways (n=1898)	Number	Percentage
Buying with money earned	1,151	60.6
Getting clothes as generous donations	818	43.1
Begging people on the street	200	10.5
Clothes bought by parents/other relatives	155	8.2
Stealing from families/on the street/from colleagues	68	3.6
Collecting thrown clothes	38	2.0

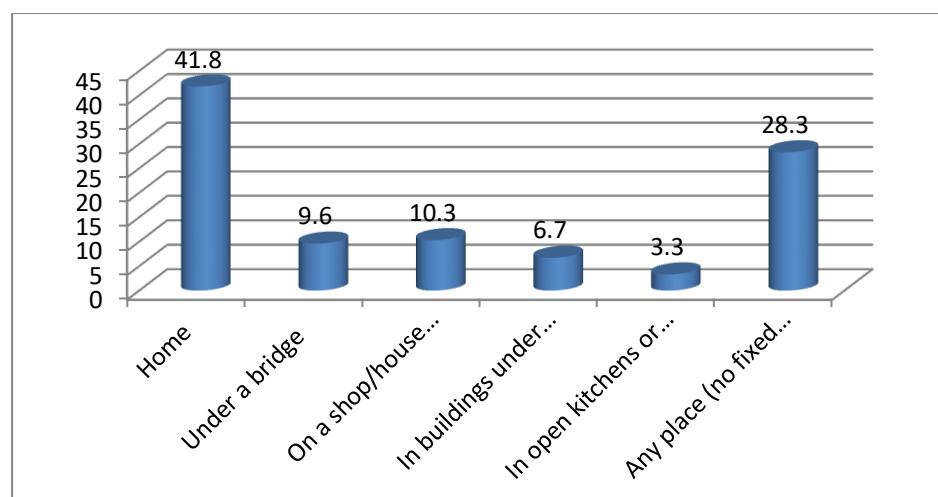
**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

During the enumeration time, street children, boys and girls visibly were wearing rags. They lacked adequate clothing to protect against the cold at night or against the rain.

#### 2.4.4. Lousy street children sleeping arrangements

About 41.8% of children sleep in parental homes or in hired / borrowed makeshift homes. While 10% sleep under bridges, 10.3% use shops and house verandas for sleeping, 6.7% spend night in buildings still under construction (6.7%), and 3.3% in open kitchens and public toilets. With no fixed shelters, 28.3% of street children keep changing sleeping places.

**Figure 13: Street children sleeping places**



**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

Obviously, these children sleep in the open air only with paper cardboards both as mattresses and blankets, suffering from the cold and rain during raining seasons. The lousy sleeping arrangements leave children without protection and vulnerable to diseases and different kinds of abuse and exploitation.

#### 2.4.5. Subjection to violence and abuse

Street children suffer from different types of violence. 84.3% complained about beatings and injuries at the hands of adult people or street mates. 43.2% indicated reported to be forced to go to transit centers or leave the street. 3.3% complained sexual abuse and rape. Being forced to carry heavy loads was mentioned by 2.9% of street children. About 0.6% of children deplored suffering from unpaid work.

**Table 38: Distribution of street children by type of suffered violence**

Type of violence (N=1803)	Number	Percentage
Being beaten and injured	1,520	84.3
Being forced to go to transit centers/ forced to leave the street	778	43.2
Sexual abuse / rape	60	3.3
Forced to carry heavy stuff	53	2.9
Work without paid	10	0.6

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

Girls fall more victim of sexual abuse than boys. The table below shows that 19% of street girls indicated that they had been subjected to sexual abuse, while only 2% of boys did so. However, 85% of street boys and 77% of street girls are concerned with being beaten and injured. 44% of boys and 36% of girls consider the fact of being taken to transit centers by security and local authorities as violence.

**Table 39: Street children suffered violence by gender**

Type of violence	Male	Female
	%	%
Being beaten and injured	85	77
Being forced to go to transit centers	44	36
Sexual abuse	2	19

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

#### 2.4.6. Limited access to health care and poor hygiene

Street children access to health care deplorably remains limited. The table below shows that, when sick, only 43.5% of street children reportedly seek medical care from health centers and hospitals. 31% will go to informal health service providers commonly known as Magendu, while 21.4% declared that they never seek medical treatment. Only 2.8% of street children reported to go to traditional healer, and 1.2% indicated that they treat themselves when they get sick. When asked to explain the major reason why they do not seek out medical care, 77.7% mentioned lack of money, while 22.3% pointed out negligence.

**Table 40: Street children access to medical services**

Where do street children seek for medical care (N=1908)	Number	Percentage
Health center/hospital	830	43.5
Informal health services providers (Magendu)	592	31.0
Never seek medical treatment	409	21.4
Traditional healer	54	2.8
Self-treatment	23	1.2
<b>Reasons for not seeking medical services (N=1331)</b>		
Lack of money	1,034	77.7
Negligence / under estimate the sickness	297	22.3

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

#### Street children awareness about the community based health insurance

As illustrated in the table below, 94.6% of street children indicated to be aware of the community health insurance (mutuelle de santé), but only 28.8% reportedly have subscribed to the scheme. This finding illustrates that health care and support remains very limited for street children.

**Table 36: Awareness of the community based health insurance among street children**

Awareness of the mutuelle de santé	Number	Percentage
Children who know about the existence of community health insurance (n=1,905)	1,802	94.6
Children with subscription to 'mutuelle de santé' (n=1,883)	542	28.8

Source: Primary data, 2017.

### HIV&AIDS knowledge among street children

The table below is about knowledge about HIV&AIDS among street children. About 86.1% of street children indicated to have HIV&AIDS knowledge, while 13.9% reported to have no knowledge at all. On the other hand, only 49.9% of street children admitted to have had tested HIV, while 59.1% had not. These figures call for more attention and help to street children because all street children should ideally aware of the pandemic and test it.

**Table 37: HIV&AIDS level of knowledge and test among street children**

Ever heard of HIV&AIDS (n=1915)	Number	Percentage
Yes	1,648	86.1
No	267	13.9
Ever been tested of HIV (n=1648)		
Yes	674	40.9
No	974	59.1

Source: Primary data, 2017.

### Other Sexually transmitted diseases and street children

Street children who admitted having had sexually transmitted diseases represent 3.4% of all children who responded to this question. The proportion becomes 17.7% of street children who admitted having had sexual intercourse at least once.

**Table 41: About STDs infection**

Ever had STDs	Number	Percentage
Yes	66	3.4
No	1,804	94.2
Don't know	45	2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,915</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data, 2017.

### Most common diseases affecting street children

Malaria remains prevalent among street children as 81.8% reported to fall sick of it very frequently. Indeed, most of them sleep in the open and never use nets to protect themselves against mosquito bites. Similarly, intestinal worms remain very dangerous vis-à-vis street involvement because 43.8% of street children reported to suffer from intestinal worms related diseases quite often. On the other hand, 37% of street children indicated to suffer skin diseases recurrently, while 29.1% reported to suffer from wounds commonly. Other common

sicknesses include respiratory diseases (cited by 17.8% of street children), diarrhea (by 13.3%), headaches (by 11.8%), pneumonia (by 10.8%), HIV& AIDs (by 5.6%), other sexual transmitted diseases (by 4.5%), and tuberculosis (by 2.6%).

**Table 42: Types of diseases common among street children**

Common diseases (n=1900)	Number	Percentage
Malaria	1,555	81.8
Worms	832	43.8
Skin diseases	703	37.0
Wounds	553	29.1
Respiratory diseases	338	17.8
Diarrhea	253	13.3
Headaches	225	11.8
Pneumonia	205	10.8
HIV & AIDS	106	5.6
Sexually transmitted infections (STI)	85	4.5
Tuberculosis	50	2.6

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

Many of diseases that street children suffer from are indicative of the poor quality of hygiene and protection conditions they live in. This is the case of malaria, worms, skin diseases, respiratory diseases and diarrhea.

### Living with disabilities

About 126 or 4.4% of enumerated children suffer from different disabilities. Among children with disabilities, physical disability is the most prominent with 58.3% of reported cases. About 17.4% of street children reportedly suffer from mental disability, 11.1% from hearing impairment, 4.7% from vision impairment, and 3.1% from speech problems.

**Table 43: Distribution of street children by disability**

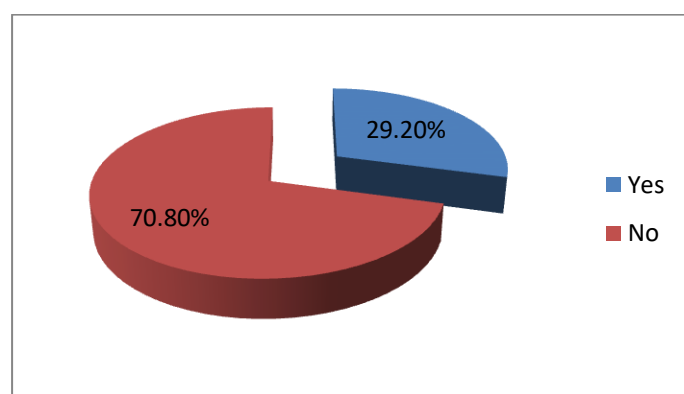
Disability (n= 126 or 4.4%)	Number	Percentage
Physical	79	62.6
Mental	22	17.4
Hearing impairment	14	11.1
Vision impairment	6	4.7
Speech problems	4	3.1

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

### 2.4.7. Drug abuse

About 29.2% of children enumerated in the street admitted having abused drugs. However, drug abuse is less pronounced among girls with 20% against 30% among boys.

**Figure 14: Drug abuse among children**



*Source: Primary data, 2017.*

#### **Types of drugs mostly abused by street children**

Ganja or cannabis is the most abused drug by street children as mentioned by 59.8% of them admitted having used it. It is followed by glue commonly called “lkivuge”, used by 39.1% of children. “Kanyanga”, an illicit spirit, comes in third place with 24.8% of children that had consumed it. Petrol (premium) comes in fourth place with 8.4% that had sniffed it. Other types of drugs used by street children include illicit brews known as “Muriture, Tunuri, and Mugo”. Children have also mentioned grain of a plant called “Rwiziringa” that they chew and has euphoric effects. Khat (known as “Mailungi”) is also present and masticated by children though in small numbers. Street children also affirmed using tiner as drug.

**Table 44: Types of drugs abused by street children**

Types of drugs abused (N=557)	Number	Percentage
Ganja (cannabis sativa)	333	59.8
lkivuge (Glue)	218	39.1
Kanyanga (illicit spirit)	138	24.8
Petrol (Premium)	47	8.4
Muriture (illicit brew)	32	5.7
Tunuri (Illicit brew)	11	2.0
Trente-six oiseaux (thirty six seed from a local wild plant called <i>Rwiziringa</i> that are taken once)	7	1.3
Mailungi (khat)	6	1.1
Mugo (illicit brew)	6	1.1
Tiner	6	1.1

*Source: Primary data, 2017.*

#### **2.4.8. Premature sexual activity**

About 19.5% of street children admitted having had sexual intercourse at least once. The proportion is high among girls 35% while street boys who admitted have had sex intercourse are 18.4%.

**Table 45: Table: Sexual activity among street children by gender**

Every had sexual intercourse (n=1,915)	Boys		Girls		Total
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Yes	331	18.4	42	35	373
No	1464	81.6	78	65	1542

Source: Primary data, 2017.

### **Sexual activity by age group**

It appears from the table below that sexual activity engagement grows with age among street children. Indeed, 10% among street children aged 6-10 years have admitted to have had sexual intercourse. The proportion rises to 42% among street children of 11-14 years' age group and to 48% among those 15-18 years old. Even though the proportion of street children of 6-10 old street children appears to be small (10%), there is a reason to be worried about their premature sexual activity, particularly in view of eventual risks associated with it, including sexual transmissible diseases and premature parenthood.

**Table 46: Sexual activity by age group**

Age group (n=373)	Ever had sexual intercourse	
	Number	Percentage
6-10 years	36	10
11-14 years	158	42
15-18 years	179	48

Source: Primary data, 2017.

### **Who are street children sexual partners?**

When informing about sexual partners they have had, 61.1% of street children mentioned neighbors 61.1%, 24.1% talked about fellow street children, and 6.7% cited sexual workers. The finding suggests that street children are having sex with adult people.

**Table 47: Street children sexual partners**

Street children sexual partners (n=373)	Frequency	Percentage
Neighbors	228	61.1
Street boys/girls	90	24.1
Sex worker	25	6.7
Girls who walk at night	7	1.9
Single ladies	3	0.8
Filauni (gays)	2	0.5
Other	18	4.8

Source: Primary data, 2017.

### **Condom use among street children**

Street children who admitted having had sexual intercourse with irregular use of condom are 72.4%, while 23.1% reportedly use it regularly. About 4.6% of street children who had sexual intercourse acknowledged that they did not use condom at all.

**Table 48: Condom utilization by street children**

Use of a condom while having sexual intercourse (n=373)	Number	Percentage
Yes	86	23.1
Some times	17	72.4
No	270	4.6

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

Female street children seem to know better the importance of condom use than male street children. Girls who admitted having used condom represent 33.3% of all girls who have had sexual intercourse against 21.8% among boys. Girls who use condom on irregular basis represent 21.4% of all girls who admit to have had sexual intercourse, while only 2.4% of boys admitted to use condom on irregular basis. About 75.6% of boys who have had sexual intercourse have never used condom, the proportion is 45.2% among street girls.

**Table 49: Street children use of condom by gender**

Use of a condom while having sex	Boys		Girls	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Yes	72	21.8	14	33.3
Sometimes	8	2.4	9	21.5
No	251	75.8	19	45.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

### **Parenthood among street children**

Only 22 street children, representing 2% admitted to have had a child. It appeared from the survey that 11 was girls (50%) and 11 was boys 50%.

**Table 50: Parenthood**

Ever had a child (n=1,080)	Number	Percentage
Yes	22	2.0
No	1,053	97.5
Don't know	5	0.5
Parenthood by sex (n=22)	Number	Percentage
Boys	11	50%
Girls	11	50%

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

Of the 22 children born on street children, 6 are living with their parents in the street, including 4 living with their mothers and 2 with their fathers. The remaining 16 teen parents have given their children to relatives and parents in most cases. In any case, it must be extremely confusing to be a father or a mother for a child that suddenly becomes a parent. Similarly, chances for the new born to hope for favorable conditions for resourceful education, growth and development, are rather very limited.



#### 2.4.9. The negative public image of street children

The general public portrays street children as “mayibobo”, or children who are fundamentally insolent, drug-user, criminal and disobedient. As previously explained, this negative view is associated with the disrespectful, deceptive, and frequent anti-social behavior that the “mayibobo” adopt in order to survive in an unfriendly and hostile environment. Yet, this negative image exacerbates the already precarious situation of street children as many people disparage them and don’t want to get involved with them. Those who move to sympathize with them or bring them assistance are mostly individuals and organizations motivated by religious beliefs.

#### 2.4.10. Wishful views of the future

Despite all the misery and ruthless experiences, street children are not totally desperate about the future. The table below illustrates their answers when they were asked their views about the future.

**Table 51: Street children views about the their future**

Children’s views about the future (n=1,909)	Number	Percentage
Would like to go back home	465	24.4
Would like to be taken to a rehabilitation center	612	32.1
Would like to go back to school	1,208	63.3
Would like to get helped to have a job	580	30.4

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

It appears from statements from all children interviewed while in the street that no street child is really enthusiastic about remaining in the street. The majority of children, 63.3%, wished to go to school, suggesting that they needed not only someone to advocate on their behalf, but also material support. About 32.1% indicated that they would like to be taken to a rehabilitation center, the latter reportedly being seen not only as safeguard from the dangers of street life, but also as a transit to the family home. About 30.4% said that they would like to be helped to get a job, reportedly motivated by an urgent need to look after themselves and help out their families. About 24.4% indicated that they desired to go back home. When probed in order to understand why they don’t go home if that was what they really desired, these children explained that they were anxious to do it just like that because of the severed relations with their parents and families for quite some time, and suggested that they needed some mediation with the families. On the other side, other children pointed out the need for transport support to reach their places of origin that were distant from where they were enumerated.

Street children's views of their future are an indication that, if a good strategy is developed and the resources to implement it are available, it is possible to withdraw them all from the street and sustainably reintegrate them into families and society.

## **2.5. Living conditions of children met in centers**

In street children centers, the children undergo a 3-6 months' program designed to help them heal from street trauma, instill in them new knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, roles, behaviors and self-confidence that will enable them to go to school and smoothly and sustainably reintegrate back into families and communities. The main services that centers provide children are described in the following lines.

### **2.5.1. Access to the basic needs**

The centers provide children with the basic needs, including shelter and protection, food, clothing, hygiene items, health care hygiene via community health insurance. The idea is to protect children from the dangers of street life, but also enable them to get physical rehabilitation or recovery from the consequences of hunger and malnutrition, poor hygiene and poor health conditions.

### **2.5.2. Psychological rehabilitation**

Through a warm and friendly welcome and through show of affection, respect and care by every staff member in a center, the emotional and psychological rehabilitation of street children goes forth. Besides, centers' psychologists set time for active listening and psychological counseling to help every child every child from the trauma endured in the street.

Moreover, time for fun is set for all children in centers. Different kinds of sports, games, and cultural activities such as music, dance and drama entertain children and decrease their anxiety and worries. Through them, the children express their emotions and feelings. They help children to improve not only their physical health, but also their collaboration, competition and friendliness skills. They enable them to enhance their confidence and self-esteem.

### **2.5.3. Education to positive social and moral values**

Street children centers organize educative talks, sessions, games and dramas around a wide range of themes with a view to educating them to positive social and moral values, and inculcating in them useful life skills. The subjects range from child's rights to individual responsibility, discipline, conflict management, self-respect, fairness, gender respect, teamwork, getting along with parents and siblings, saying no to alcohol and drug, etc. through these teachings, children receive valuable character education designed to instill in them positive social values and virtuous behaviors expected to help them to become good and responsible citizens capable of living harmoniously in society.

Similarly, the children are trained on leadership skills when they are allowed to participate in decision-making, organization and implementation different activities performed inside a center. The overall objective of character education is to help children to adapt from agitated and free street life to a more stable and structured home environment.

Likewise, children receive personal hygiene and self-care health education. A number of hygiene and health related issues are discussed with them, including sexual and reproductive health, HIV/SIDA and ways of preventing it, proper body care; wearing clean clothes, washing hands after use of toilet, etc. This type of education aims to equip children with sufficient knowledge and skills so they can improve their hygiene, prevent diseases and reduce health-related risk behaviors.

Furthermore, basic literacy and numeracy training is also organized, especially for children who have never been to school. The training is particularly designed to steer the interest of children for learning.

#### **2.5.4. Preparation for family reunification**

The ultimate objective of the child rehabilitation and re-education program is to prepare the children and their families for an effective, smooth and sustainable family and community reintegration. The task related to this end starts as soon as a child is welcomed in a center.

In the very early days of a child at the center, a social worker interviews him/her in order to trace his/her family, by identifying the names and location of his/her parents. Once this is done, the social worker organizes visits to the family to inform them about the child, assess the socio-economic conditions of the family, and the state of relations between them and the child at the time of his/her decision to go to the street. With a clear idea about the root cause for the street involvement, the social worker initiates the process to prepare the child and the family for a reunification, by way of counseling both to the child and parents, mediation between them, support to the family, etc. Somewhere in the middle of the process, the social worker visits the family accompanied by the child in order to re-initiate the physical contact between the child and his/her parents and family members.

#### **2.5.5. School / vocational training integration or reintegration**

Street children centers support children to integrate/reintegrate primary and/or secondary school system or vocational training according to their choice. They start by steering the children's interest for learning and education. They then take charge of school uniforms, material and fees, and work with parents to monitor the children's progress in school.

### **2.5.6. Family reintegration**

When the time is judged right for the reunification, then hand-over of the child to his/her family is formally performed, usually in the presence of local authority representative. The parents sign a document where they commit to provide care and protection to the child and look for his/her welfare. The local authority present signs the document to attest his/her support to the family and the child.

### **2.5.7. Post-family reunification follow-up**

Social workers from the centers perform post-reunification follow-up to provide counseling support to both the parents and the child. This is meant to ensure that the reintegration is durable.

## **2.6. Synthesis on street children living conditions**

Based on the study findings, the least that one can say is that street living conditions are very detrimental to the physical, psychological, moral and social development of children. On the physical level, street children's normal growth is undermined by the limited access to food, health care and poor hygiene which leave them like an easy prey to dangerous diseases. The findings indicate that street children are frequently victim of rape and sexual exploitation, beatings and injuries, and live with untreated physical handicaps.

Moreover, instead of going to school, street children prematurely do adult work, when for example they execute remunerating employment to access the basic needs or to supplement family income. As part of this situation, they are sometimes compelled to do heavy and wrecking work with respect to their age and physical strength. On the other side, street children are exposed to premature sex, with high risks of experiencing premature parenthood or contracting dangerous sexually transmissible diseases.

On the psycho-social logical front, street children develop aggressive, duplicitous, dishonest and self-centered manners and practices as self-protective mechanisms in hostile environment. As a consequence, they are seen like social perverts. They receive negative perceptions as community members see them as potentially dangerous and criminal elements. They develop depraved habits and involve in illegal activities, such as stealing, prostitution, drug addiction, playing hazard games, etc. Moreover, they live in conditions where they do socially demeaning practices such as collecting restaurant leftovers or begging. Their psychological peace is gravely jeopardized as they lose valuable moral and societal values and skills. On the other side, with limited access to education and marketable skills, their chances and hopes for a better future are compromised.

The lucky ones have been approached and accepted assistance from the street children centers. After physical and psychological rehabilitation, preparation for family reunification, support for school reintegration, many have reintegrated their families and communities.

## 2.7. CONCLUSIONS

Children turn to the street not because they are fundamentally bad kids, but rather because they fall victim of unfortunate circumstances. Street involvement is a means of survival for children who essentially escape away from numerous unfavorable material and emotional conditions rooted and embedded in their families.

The findings suggest that most street children go to the street as a matter of survival, both material and emotional. They mostly come from needy families where they are not provided with enough of the basic material needs, including food, clothing, medical care, etc. In the street they barely make a living, performing different types of jobs for cash, selling different kinds of collected items, begging, stealing, etc. They use earned money to satisfy the basic needs. The underlying factors contributing to deprivation include parents/guardians' unemployment, low wage jobs, low level of education and marketable skills, limited entrepreneurship skills, challenges to secure the capital to initiate an income generating activity, single parenthood that weakens parental capacity to provide for the family, and relatively large family size.

On the other hand, children go to the street to escape from unhealthy family relations where they are subjected to different kinds of abuse and maltreatment from parents, family members or guardians. Child maltreatment occurs in the form of abuse (physical, psychological, sexual); rejection; lack of proper supervision and disinterest in the child's needs; lack of care, support and affection towards children; heavy work load; etc. Parents/guardians become abusive for several reasons, including alcohol addiction; poverty-related stress and frustration; child abuse experience; poor parenting skills; inadequate preparation for parenthood; etc.

Likewise, the findings demonstrated how street children are shaken and traumatized by street living conditions. Limited access to food and health care, poor hygiene, lack of education, abuse and maltreatment, drug use, premature sexual activity and hostility on the part of the adult environment leave them severely shattered, physically, emotionally and socially.

In this situation where children rights are violated, it is matter of ultimate responsibility to re-establish street children in their rights and dignity. The following recommendations are made: This implies the following:

In the short term, it is essential to save them from the hardship and dangers of street life and remedy the damage caused to the physical, emotional, moral, and psychological health of street children as a consequence of street involvement. While this is being done, it is important to prepare these children and their families for a smooth and sustainable reintegration into families and communities.

In the medium term, it is vital to facilitate family reintegration while preparing and/or equipping children with the tools to become active and productive children members of society.

In the long term, it is necessary to take measures to prevent the phenomenon before it occurs, by addressing and changing the root causes that drive to it in the first place. This primarily entails supporting economically and relationally families at risk of street involvement for their children, as well as helping parents to assume their parental roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis their children.

Of course what to do to address the issue will thoroughly elaborated in the upcoming and third report that will discuss the strategy to reintegrate street children into their families and prevent it.

### **III. REINTEGRATION AND PREVENTION STRATEGY**



### **3.1. Methodological approach**

#### **3.1.1. Sources and nature of data and information**

Data and information used to design a strategy for street children family reintegration and a plan for preventing the children's street involvement, come from two main sources: relevant documents and testimonies from institutions committed to the cause of street children, including include national and local authorities, stakeholders and service providers. Documents consulted include those in connection with the prevailing legal and policy framework in Rwanda in the area of street children protection and assistance. Similarly, several study reports on the issue were reviewed with a view to thoroughly understanding its contextual characteristics and appreciating better how it has been approached from different perspectives. Let observe that at this juncture the street children mapping report, the findings on the causes of children's street involvement causes and living conditions, are the starting point for a realistic strategy to rehabilitate and family-reintegrate these children and prevent them from returning to the street. Other reports reviewed present different interventions mounted to assist street children with a view to identifying success factors, shortcoming or elements necessitating improvement for sustainable reintegration of former street children or for successful prevention of the phenomenon.

On the other side, testimonies were collected from 60 parents of already reintegrated former street children. Relating to their own personal experiences, these parents explained the dos and don'ts of street child family and community reintegration. In fact, because these 60 cases of reintegration were largely successful as only 2 children reportedly returned to the street, there are high hopes that the collected information was considered very useful to a plan to reunify efficiently children with families and retain them at home.

Furthermore, different institutions of the government were invited to provide their views on the promising lines of action to sustainably reintegrate street children, while efficiently preventing the issue. The national level institutions visited include MIGEPROF, MINALOC, MYICT, NCC, the newly created National Rehabilitation Services, and the National Commission for Human Rights.

Furthermore, the local authorities are very active in the policy implementation process and have a clear idea on the conditions that can potentially jeopardize parent-child relations. Besides, they are familiar with whatever has the potential to undermine the socio-economic stability in Rwandan households to the extent a child may be compelled to seek sanctuary in the street. About 44 of them were contacted to inform the study on the best ways to enhance parent-child relations and household economic stability. They included 3 gender and family promotion officers, 3 sector executive secretaries, 11 sector social affairs officers, cell 14

executive secretaries, 2 cell social affairs officers, 5 village heads, 2 village security officers, 3 friends of the family, and 1 head of District transit center. They provided suggestions to strengthen the family relationally and economically, given that an action to make families strong relationally and economically was posited as the central piece of the strategy to prevent the street children phenomenon.

Moreover, 19 street children institutions were visited across the country. Standing at the front line of assistance to street children, they explained in detail the form and content of various services they offer children, from the moment a child is still in the street, through his/her stay in rehabilitation process, until the moment he/she is reunified with his//her family, and the post reunification follow-up. This information was important for understanding success factors and challenges for an efficient street child rehabilitation and reintegration process. The table below shows the list of street children centers visited.

**Table1: Street children institutions**

N°	Province	Districts	Institutions
1	Kigali	Gasabo	Les Enfants de Dieu
2			Centre Marembo (for girls)
3			Root Foundation Children's Centre
4			FIDESCO
5		Kicukiro	CPAJ
6			Umucyo w'Ejo
7			Hope for Life Ministry
8		Nyarugenge	Abadacogora-Intwari
9			Mind Leaps
10	South	Muhanga	Bureau Social de Développement
11		Huye	Nyampinga (for girls)
12			Intiganda
13			Œuvre Humanitaire pour la Protection et le Développement de l'Enfance en Difficulté (OPDE)
14	West	Rusizi	Baho Neza Mwana
15		Rubavu	Point d'Ecoute
16	North	Musanze	Association pour la Promotion des Initiatives de Base (APIB)
17	East	Rwamagana	Hameaux des Jeunes
18			Imizi Children's Village
19		Kayanza	The Streets Ahead Children's Centre Association (SACCA)

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

Furthermore, the research team visited seven district-run transit centers where people in irregular situation, reportedly including those that committed minor offenses and/or those wandering in the streets but without official identification documents or for any known object, are detained for some time for the main purpose of reeducation and rehabilitation. The table below shows districts-run transit centers that were visited to meet street children.

In the same vein, 13 leaders or senior officers from street children centers were requested to provide their views on what should be done to ensure sustainable street children family reintegration.

**Table 2: Visited transit centers**

N°	District	Name of transit center
1	Rusizi	Gashonga transit center
2	Huye	Mbazi transit center
3	Nyamagabe	Tare transit center
4	Nyamasheke	Kagano transit center
5	Karongi	Mwendo transit enter
6	Rubavu	Rubavu transit center
7	Gatsibo	Mugera transit center
8	Bugesera	Gitagata transit center

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

Finally, UNICEF, an important strategic government partner provided insights on systems strengthening to ensure that everything is in place and operational for sustainable prevention of the street children phenomenon.

### **3.1.2. Data analysis, workshop and draft report**

Qualitative analyzes were conducted on the documented information and data provided by parents, stakeholders and street children institutions leadership.

### **3.1.3. A validation workshop**

A validation workshop was organized with all key players, including the government representatives, provincial and local authorities, non-state actors interested in street children assistance and key partners. They provided highly valuable and insightful feedback and comments that enabled to finalize this report.

## **3.2. Situational analysis**

### **3.2.1. Children's street involvement causes and living conditions: a reminder**

#### **3.2.1.1 Causes of children street life**

In the second report of this assignment it was thoroughly demonstrated that the causes of children street involvement have their roots in families. **Poverty** is unquestionably the most important and decisive factor in children's decision to go to the street and this was found across the spectrum of the study respondents. Indeed, However, 73% of street children families are actually classified in category 1 (extreme poverty) or in category 2 (poverty) of ubudehe categorization. About 57.4% of street children parents live on farm-related employment known to attract low wage compensation. The low level education of street children parents cannot attract high paying jobs as 34.9% of them did go to school at all, and primary school is the highest level of education attained by 56.3% of them. Poverty in families of street children is exacerbated by the relatively high average size of 5.7 people per household who deplete available meager resources. In this instance, household poverty implies that children don't get enough of the basic needs, including food, clothing, health care, shelter,

etc., and as a consequence, some of them may decide to go to the street to get what they cannot find at home.

Moreover, reckless or **irresponsible parents** have a significant share of damage among street children. For example, when deliberately or unintentionally parents maltreat their children, they push some of them to the street. Child maltreatment may take several forms, including abuse (physical, emotional, verbal and sexual), neglect or rejection, excessive criticism or demeaning, excessive work load, poor parental supervision and lack of attention towards children's needs. Parental abuse is said to be associated with alcohol addiction, stress or frustration-related socio-economic conditions, parental infighting, and poor parenting skills.

Children's street life is also closely linked with **domestic violence**, either when violence is directed against children, or when it occurs between parents. Children will escape from the physical violence inflicted to them, or from the emotional pain of watching one or the other suffering at the hands of a spouse.

It was also established that children's street involvement frequently occurs in **broken households**, as a result of spousal death or divorce/separation. This is so because children rarely get along with "abusing" step-parents when, after the tragic event, their mothers or fathers remarried. Yet, it was argued several factors contributing to a child street life are facets of parental irresponsibility, as least as far as the obligation of parents to create favorable conditions for the welfare and physical and emotional development of their children is concerned.

### **3.2.1.2. Street children living conditions**

Based on the study findings, the least that one can say is that street living conditions are very detrimental to the physical, psychological, moral and social development of children. At the physical level, street children's normal growth is undermined by the limited access to protection, food, health care and poor hygiene. Besides, the findings in the report on street children living conditions indicate that they frequently fall victim of rape and sexual exploitation, beatings and injuries, and live with untreated physical handicaps.

Moreover, instead of going to school, street children prematurely do adult work, when for example they execute remunerating employment to access the basic needs or to supplement family income. As part of this situation, they are compelled to do heavy and wrecking work, given their age and physical strength. On the other side, they are exposed to premature sex, running the risk of experiencing premature parenthood or contracting dangerous sexually transmissible diseases.

On the hand, street children develop depraved habits and involve in illegal activities, such stealing, prostitution, drug addiction, playing hazard games, etc. They live in conditions where they do socially demeaning practices such as collecting restaurant leftovers or begging. They develop aggressive, duplicitous, dishonest and self-centered manners and practices as self-protective mechanisms in a hostile environment. As a consequence, society sees as perverts potentially dangerous and criminal elements. Their psychological wellbeing becomes gravely jeopardized as they lose valuable moral and societal values and skills. More unfortunately, with limited access to education and marketable skills, their chances and hopes for a better future are seriously compromised.

In centers children are drawn away from the direct dangers of the street provided with shelter, protection, food, clothing, health care and hygiene. They get enough time to practice anxiety-releasing sports and games. They benefit from trauma counseling and healing activities, and are educated to positive social and moral values. They are professionally prepared to returning home and their parents are also prepared to a reunion. They are supported to integrate or reintegrate into school or vocational training.

### **3.2.2. The current national legal and policy framework**

#### **3.2.2.1. The policy framework pertaining to children in general**

The protection of children in general and street children in particular, is part of wider government efforts to promote and safeguard the family integrity, safety and welfare. So, this strategy, designed to provide guidelines for street children reintegration and eradicate the street children issue, is in line with and guided by the national strategic policy orientation documents, including the Vision 2020, the National Strategy for Transformation 1 or the Government program for 2017-2024; and the National Leadership Retreat Resolutions.

#### **Vision 2020**

Vision 2020 aims to improve the prosperity and welfare of all the Rwandan families. Indeed, its objective is to transform Rwanda from a poor into a middle-income country, through economic and social programs benefitting everyone in poverty alleviation, universal education, and good health, etc.

#### **The National Strategy for Transformation, NST1**

The National Strategy for Transformation is explicit about the Government priority to promote the integrity and welfare of citizens in general and of the family in particular. The following are a few relevant excerpts from the speech delivered by the Honorable Prime Minister when he presented the Government 7-year program before the Parliament on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

- “Igikorwa cya mbere ni ukurushaho gufasha Abanyarwanda bari mu cyiciro cy’ubukene n’icy’ubukene bukabije gutera imbere no kwigira”. The aim is to support poor families to get out of poverty and reach self-sufficiency
- “Igikorwa cya kabiri ni ukurandura imirire mibi”. The Government aim is to ensure adequate nutrition for all.
- “Igikorwa cya gatatu ni ugukomeza guharanira ko Abanyarwanda bagira ubuzima bwiza kandi serivisi z’ubuvuzi zikagera kuri bose”. The Government commits to ensuring health care services that are accessible to everyone
- “Igikorwa cya kane cy’ingenzi ni ukwita ku burezi bufite ireme kandi bugera kuri bose”. The Government commits to promoting quality education for all.
- “Hazashyirwa ingufu mu gushyira mu bikorwa ingamba zo gushishikariza abana kudata amashuri”. The Government will take measure to eradicate school drop-out.
- “Igikorwa cya gatanu kizibanda ku kuzamura imibereho y’abagize umuryango”. The Government commits to promote the well-being of the family members.
- “Hazongerwa imbaraga mu bikorwa byo gukumira no guhashya ihohoterwa rishingiye ku gitsina n’irikorerwa abana”. The Government will deploy all efforts possible to fight gender based violence and child abuse.
- “Hazongerwa imbaraga muri Gahunda yo kurerera abana b’imfubyi mu miryango”.

The Government reiterates its engagement to raising orphans in a family environment.

### **The National Leadership Retreat Resolutions**

In the National Leadership Retreat Resolutions the Government of Rwanda reiterates its commitment to promote the family and protect children’s rights, as illustrated in the following examples:

The 14<sup>th</sup> National Leadership Retreat, March 2017:

- Develop strategies to promote family moral authority and to prevent and fight against gender-based violence and eradicate violence against children;
- Put in place mechanisms aimed at changing the dependency mindset linking social protection benefits with Ubudehe Categories;

The 13<sup>th</sup> National Leadership retreat resolutions, March 2016

- Reinforce the implementation of children rights policies, eradicate their malnutrition, strengthen the prevention of “street children” or school drop outs cases and eradicate human trafficking.

The 12<sup>th</sup> National Leadership Retreat, in March 2015

- Fight women and child abuse wherever it might happen by all possible means including sanctions against bystanders and accelerate the establishment of "One Stop Centers" in all districts.

Furthermore, the Government of Rwanda at the operational level has, in **the National Policy for Family Promotion** established legislation, institutions and guidelines for creating an enabling environment for the strengthening of the Rwandan family. The vision of this policy is "to enhance the welfare of all population through a change of socio-economic conditions, thereby leading to the promotion of the welfare of the family, including gender parity while focusing on the welfare and protection of children" (MIGEPROF 2005).

The National Policy for Family Promotion sets provisions to protect children, build peace and strengthen relations within families, and foster economic and financial security of the family. It is in this respect that NCC was created to ensure implementation of the policy in matters in connection with safeguarding the welfare and protecting the rights of children.

In efforts to ensure the protection and promotion of every child's rights, the GOR ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) and enacted the "Integrated child rights policy". This policy provides guidelines to all children-related policy making and service delivery processes. More importantly, the policy safeguards the basic child rights, including the rights to identity and nationality, family and alternative care; survival, health and standards of living; education; protection; justice; and participation (MIGEPROF, 2011).

Several other policies contribute to safeguarding the welfare of families. They include:

- The National program for poverty reduction,
- The National Gender Policy,
- The National Population Policy for Sustainable Development,
- The National Strategy for Social Protection, and
- The National Policy for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children.

These policies and strategies all converge to strengthening the family in general. Yet, what is particularly contended here is that strengthening families reduces the risk for children's street involvement, by removing the main causes that push them to the street in the first place.

### **3.2.2.2. The policy framework pertaining to street children in particular**

#### **The national policy for orphans and other vulnerable children**

Today, street children issues are treated as part of the 2003 National Policy for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children, OVC (MIGEPROF, 2003). This policy laid down specific objectives and strategies for several categories of vulnerable children, including among others: children living in households headed by children; children in foster care; children living in centers;

children in conflict with the law; children with disabilities; children in armed conflict; sexual abuse of children; child labor; infants with their mothers in prison; children in very poor households; refugee and internally displaced children; children of single mothers; forced marriage of minor girls; and street children.

Specific objectives for street children were laid down as follows: (1) to reinforce the existing programs for the socio-economic and social reintegration of street children; (2) to establish prevention mechanisms at community level. Specific strategies were formulated as follows: (1) raise awareness of parents regarding their responsibilities; (2) establish outreach programs and sensitization activities in the streets; (3) reinforce capacity of transit centers to prepare children for their reintegration through the provision of schooling, life skills and skills training; and (4) reinforce the capacity of decentralized structures and community based associations to reintegrate children with their families or in alternative care through community mobilization, follow up and monitoring after reunification.

Until recently the most prevailing approach to the issue of street children consisted of placing them into child/juvenile institutions or centers, purposely created to withdraw them off the street, organize physical and psychological rehabilitation, and facilitate their reintegration back into their families and communities. Street children centers receive sometimes children rounded-up and transferred by The Rwanda National Police and/or they organize regular visits to known gathering sites to sensitize them and persuade them to go to the headquarters for professional assistance. Children who accept this offer are welcomed at the center where they go through a physical and psychological rehabilitation program and received school reintegration support to join the regular school system or undertake vocational training. Until recently, most children returned to their families and communities only at the end of the school/vocational training program, and consequently many stayed in centers several years until adulthood.

### **The Strategy for National Child Care Reform**

The Strategy for National Child Care Reform (MIGEPROF, 2012) was lately developed to promote ending the institutionalization of children because, it was argued, a family is and must be the most suitable environment for a child's growth and development. What this policy entails is that orphanages should be closed and children should be accepted in centers only for a short transition period for rehabilitation and preparation for reintegration into their families, extended or foster families. Today, few institutions remain operational, while many have been closed.

According to the Strategy for National Child Care Reform, the process to reunify children with families must involve the local authorities and families, and is expected to follow eight steps:



(1) initial assessment for each individual child; (2) family tracing to explore all options, including if necessary foster care; (3) family assessment to assess needs and risks prior to placement; (4) placement decision to determine the right family that matches the best interest of the child; (5) intensive child and family preparation to address needs and risks identified during the assessment phase; (6) care plan developed where appropriate and in partnership with the caregiver and community partners to ensure that future monitoring and support needs can be measured and adjusted as needed, this includes the older adolescents and adults who will need specialized support such as legal support, psycho-social support, shelter, vocational training and employment; (7) placements of the child into family alternative starting by birth family, extended family, foster family and/or adoption; (8) post placement support/follow-up for monitoring and supporting the placement to ensure child protection is guaranteed and sustained; and (9) regular monitoring and reporting of children placed in families (MIGEPROF, 2010).

To ease the implementation of this new strategy for national child care reform, NCC initiated “**inshuti z’umuryango, (IZU)** or friends of the family’. IZUs are volunteers selected by local communities to monitor the welfare and protection of children. They sensitize and mobilize community members to the cause of children, advocating on their behalf, and advising family members on the best ways to strengthen harmonious parents-child relations.

The objectives and strategies laid down in the 2003 OVC (orphans and vulnerable children) policy have manifestly been the basis for designing current initiatives to assist street children whereby the individual child is the center of attention at the detriment of the family as a whole. Emphasis is put on bringing immediate answers to the plight of children, with less focus on the unhealthy family environment. The current initiatives place inadequate focus on prevention. Clear additional policy guidelines are needed to focus on the family as a whole and addressing the family-embedded contributing factors to the issue of street children.

Besides, the new strategy for national child care reform provides guidelines for assisting only street children once in centers. The mapping exercise counted 967 children met in centers out of a total of 2,882 enumerated street children. No recommendation or standard exists to advise on what to do about the other 1,915 street children that were not absorbed in the centers and thus, remained in the street because of the limited support capacity of those centers. Policy guidelines are dearly needed to outline the right course of action to take for all street children, including those not yet in the care of centers.

### **The National Policy against Delinquency**

Street children live in special conditions. On one side, they have partially or completely cut ties with their parents/guardians. On the other side, they wander in the street, away from the

family ambiance where they normally can receive parental love and care. They stay in the street with no adult supervision and protection. This situation leaves them very vulnerable to many particular street challenges, and susceptible to engaging in criminal or anti-social behavior.

As part of its mandate, MINALOC in December 2016 adopted the National Policy against Delinquency “to establish sustainable measures for prevention and response to all forms of delinquency” (MINALOC, 2016). This policy defines delinquency as “any conducts that are against the laws and or moral standards of the Rwandan society”, and since children should be raised in a family environment, children’s street involvement is consequently dealt with under this new policy. This is why, the newly established National Rehabilitation Service under MINALOC, NRS, will henceforth oversee and coordinate all street children rehabilitation interventions and all the action designed to pre-empt the issue (MINALOC, 2016).

### **3.2.2.3. Child protection services and policy gaps**

In 2012 the Rwanda Civil Society Platform (RCSPF) and the Africa Platform for Social Protection (APSP) documented all child protection policies and programs in Rwanda. They identified a number of public institutions whose duties have to do, among others, with child protection. They include the following:

- The Rwanda National Police. The police are responsible among others of ensuring compliance with the law; maintaining public order inside the country; ensuring safety and security of people and property; and assisting any person in danger.
- The National Public Prosecution Authority. This was established in the National Constitution to prosecute offenders of law for crimes committed against the public.
- The Judiciary. Civil and labor child matters are reportedly heard in ordinary courts and tried according to ordinary law on procedure, while criminal issues are tried in specialized for children.
- The National Commission for Children. It was established in 2011 by Law N° 22/2011 Of 28/06/2011 to oversee and coordinate all initiatives related to the promotion and protection of the welfare and rights of children.
- The Rwanda National Human Rights Commission. The Rwanda National Human Rights Commission was established in 1999 by Law N° 04/99 of 12/3/1999 to handle complaints of human rights abuses against individual and in particular against children.
- The CRP Gitagata. This center is the only Government owned center that assists street children, located in the District of Bugesera. It provides children with a wide range of services, including physical and psychological rehabilitation, civic education, school/vocational training reintegration, preparation for family reintegration, and

family reintegration. It can accommodate up to 800 boys. Next to the Gitagata center, 19 privately-run street children centers provide street children with a variety of services leading to family and community reintegration, in the same manner as Gitagata.

Moreover, as previously indicated, there exist many private or civil society-run initiatives in in the area of child protection in Rwanda. Indeed, all street children centers visited during the mapping exercise are part of the child protection system.

Furthermore, the report points out the following gaps:

- Lack of enforcement mechanisms to ensure that every child attends school, at least primary and secondary school, despite the universal education policy. Indeed, many street children never attended school or are school drop-outs. A recommendation was made to put in place mechanisms of enforcing universal education policy to ensure that street children go to school.
- “Children born out of wedlock are barred by the law to inherit from their parents”. This may explain why several children of parents that cohabitated illegally, or children raised by single mothers, live in a situation of deprivation that drives them to the street. A recommendation was made to review the current law to ensure that a child can take legal actions to be recognized and gain legitimacy status so he/she can succeed his/her parents.
- Lack of legal framework for punishing parents or child custodians for depriving children of their rights, such as education. A recommendation was made to develop laws punishing parents or guardians’ failure to provide children with basic rights.

### **3.2.3. Relevant stakeholders**

#### **3.2.3.1. MIGEPROF / NCC**

The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, MIGEPROF, has the mandate to “to ensure strategic coordination and policy implementation in the area of gender, family, women’s empowerment and children’s issues” ([www.migeprof.gov.rw/](http://www.migeprof.gov.rw/)). In that capacity, the Ministry oversees policy formulation in all family welfare and child protection matters.

As indicated before, The National Commission for Children, NCC is the Government agency, under MIGEPROF, mandated to spearhead the implementation of all programs designed to promote the well-being and protection of children rights. It is in this capacity that NCC has requested a thorough assessment of the street children issue in order to work out a lasting solution to it.

### **3.2.3.2. MINALOC / NRS**

The Ministry of Local Government, MINALOC, coordinates governance and territorial administration programs to promote economic, social and political development of the country ([www.minaloc.gov.rw/](http://www.minaloc.gov.rw/)). Different programs, including good governance, decentralization, community development and social protection are under its mandate.

It was previously explained that the NRS is a MINALOC agency mandated to supervise all delinquency-related initiatives, including action to rehabilitate and reintegrate street children back into their families and communities, and coordinate the campaign to prevent this phenomenon from occurring.

### **3.2.3.3. Local authorities**

The local authorities (district, sector, cell and village levels) are instrumental in popular mobilization, sensitization, organization and administration when it comes to the implementation of government programs in the field. The new strategy for national children care reform has clarified the role of the local authorities in children's reunification process.

For example the local authorities are involved and assist in family tracing and assessment, and in mediation in the case of unhealthy family relations. Also, during the ceremony to reintegrate former street children to their families, representatives of the local authority are present to witness the event as a way of engaging the community to support the reintegrated child and his/her family.

Nonetheless, contrary to street children reintegration process for which the role of local leaders was defined, prevention of the street children issue attracted insufficient focus. As a result, there is lack of clear mechanisms and guidelines to go about it, and there is insufficient initiative and accountability from the local leaders.

### **3.2.3.4. Street children rehabilitation centers**

Street children institutions or centers are specialized organizations that provide professional care and support. They offer 3-6 months rehabilitation process designed to re-socialize children by instilling in them new knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, behaviors and self-confidence that will enable them to be smoothly and sustainably reintegrated back into their families and communities and go to school. At the end of this process, children are reunited with their families. The range of services offered includes: (1) sensitization of children for center-based assistance; (2) withdrawal from the street; (3) basic needs: shelter, food, clothing, health care; (4) psychological rehabilitation; (5) family mediation and reintegration; (6) school reintegration; and (7) post-reunification follow-up. Very few institutions have built houses, bought farming land, offered house construction material, distributed small animals,

and/or granted rotating credit, with the aims of materially and/or economically strengthening destitute families of street children. The services delivered by street children centers were discussed at length in the part on the causes of street involvement and living conditions street children, especially in the presentation of the living conditions of children met in centers during the enumeration.

As table 1 illustrates (page 8), there are 19 street children institutions operational in 10 districts as follows: 3 in Kicukiro; 4 in Gasabo; 2 in Nyarugenge; 3 in Huye; 2 in Rwamagana; 1 in Muhanga; 1 in Rusizi; 1 in Rubavu; 1 in Musanze, and 1 in Kayonza. About 967 children were enumerated inside these institutions, implying an average of 37.6 children by center. Out of a total of 2,882 enumerated children, the number of children catered in institutions represents only 33.5%. This implies that the accommodating capacity of institutions is only about 1/3 of all street children. In effect, 1,915 or 2/3 of 2,882 were enumerated on the street, meaning that 2/3 of street children were overall unattended for by any institution. Moreover, about 109 girls were enumerated while in institutions, including Nyampinga, Marembo that are girls-exclusive, and Abadacogora-Intwari, SACCA, OPDE and Root Foundation that are mixed gender. In a total number of 261 girls enumerated, this support capacity represents only 41.7% of the needed capacity to accommodate all street girls. About 152 street girls cannot access assistance due to limited institutional capacity.

#### Map of distribution of street children by District of enumeration and origin

N°	Districts	Number of street children in Districts of enumeration	Number of street children in Districts of origin
1	Gasabo	431	358
2	Nyarugenge	311	280
3	Huye	294	197
4	Bugesera	291	95
5	Kicukiro	199	143
6	Rubavu	164	152
7	Kayonza	144	108
8	Rwamagana	131	96
9	Muhanga	126	120
10	Rusizi	118	107
11	Ruhango	80	116
12	Nyamagabe	63	102
13	Musanze	60	70
14	Nyabihu	49	57
15	Nyaruguru	50	76
16	Kamonyi	46	109
17	Gatsibo	38	42
18	Karongi	38	53
19	Nyanza	36	57
20	Ngororero	35	62
21	Rulindo	35	46
22	Gicumbi	35	52
23	Gisagara	23	93
24	Burera	21	21

25	Nyamasheke	16	47
26	Ngoma	12	43
27	Rutsiro	9	30
28	Gakenke	9	27
29	Nyagatare	9	28
30	Kirehe	8	27
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,882</b>	<b>2,813</b>
1	Unknown		54
2	Burundi		8
3	DRC		4
4	Uganda		3

**Source:** Primary data, 2017.

About 54 children did not know their place of origin, while 15 said they came from neighboring countries as follows:

However, we can only be thankful that all Districts with more than 100 enumerated street children are served by at least one street children center. The Districts of Gasabo, Nyarugenge and Kicukiro in Kigali City account for 941 street children (about 1/3 of all enumerated street children) are served by 9 centers; Huye town with 293 enumerated street children is served by 3 centers; Rwamagana District with 131 street children is also served by two centers. The following Districts are also served by one center, including Rubavu with 164 children, Kayonza with 144 children, and Rusizi with 118 children. Moreover, the District of Musanze is served by one center, it has 60 street children.

Street children centers do a great professional job of rehabilitation and family reintegration of street children. Nonetheless, their action is of a limited character in the sense that, though assistance has been provided for more than 30 years, the issue never ends. Yet, they are aware that a sustainable solution has to involve families, and this is why some of them include provisions to empower economically/materially families and sensitize communities in their strategic and operational planning. Such initiatives include the following: 1) technical and financial support to start small income generating projects; 2) distribution of animals to breed; 3) provision of house construction material; 4) distribution of land to farm and cooperative organizational support; 5) public awareness campaigns; etc. Yet, economic and material support to families has been only a drop in the ocean. Given the limited amount of assistance available, the only few families that participated benefited rather from inadequate amount of support. Furthermore, the reach of public awareness campaigns organized by the street children centers was restricted because confined to a given territory at a given moment.

The heads of street children centers supervise the work of staff members organized in various units, including financial management, logistics and procurement, protection, kitchen, hygiene, sports and cultural activities, social work, psychological support and counseling, reintegration components, etc. Among staff members social workers and psychologists play a very important

technical role dealing with the social, moral and emotional development of children and families in situations of distress.

### **The missing link in the work of street children reintegration approach**

It was previously pointed out that, despite appreciated centers' work of rehabilitation and family reintegration of street children for so many years, the latter continue to come again. When asked about the issue, centers' senior officers responded that indicated the gap lies in inadequate plan to keep children in their families, by addressing the factors that drive them to the street. This was explained in the following terms in Kinyarwanda:

*“Abana bakomeza kuza mu muhanda kubera ko biba byakoroganye mu miryango yabo. .. Habaho ubwo abana baza hano tukabakorera ibya ngombwa byose kugira ngo basubire iwabo, ndetse igihe cyagera tukabasubiza ababyeyi babo. Ariko nyuma y’igihe tukazongera guhura nabo mu muhanda. Twabababazaga ko impamvu, bakatwerekaga ko impamvu yari yarabajyanye mu muhanda ubwa mbere igihari. Twihutira kubavana amu muhanda, ariko nyamara ikibibatera ntigikemurwa ”.* In English this translates as: Children continue coming to the street because of lingering unbearable situations in their families. ... Sometimes we received children in our center would, and we provide them with everything possible for a smooth family reintegration, and when the time if right we actually reunify them their parents. But, after some time we meet them again in the street and when we ask what happened in the meantime, they evoke the same reason they went to the street in the first place. We are quick to take them (children) from the street, but we do not do much to remove the root causes of the issue”. Indeed, the focus has been on directly rescuing children and meeting their needs, without a long-term vision to support families and preclude the street children issue from occurring. Street children are conscious of the situation, but efforts to respond accordingly are sporadic and inadequate due to limited resources.

#### **3.2.3.5. Transit centers.**

About 252 street children were enumerated while in district-run transit centers. In fact, these children were reportedly rounded-up during police raids organized to apprehend criminals. The leadership indicated that transit centers are meant for re-education and rehabilitation of persons in irregular situations, including those without appropriate identification documents and those wandering with no known purpose. Every District administers its own center in the sense that a district's center receives children rounded-up inside the limits of its circumscription. An exception is Gitagata which, although located in the District of Bugesera, receives children rounded-up in Kigali City Districts.

Among the visited transit centers, Gitagata seems to be the only one resourced and prepared for street children re-education, at least in view of the range of children needs. Indeed, Gitagata receives exclusively children and youth. They provide children and youth with the basic needs, psychological counseling, various educative talks, family reintegration services and vocational training (for the youth).

In the remaining transit centers children are detained in the same conditions with the rounded-up adults some of whom have possibly criminal record, and no special support program for children is available. They provide a three month program organized around educative talks designed to instill in the detainees positive social values and dissuade them from criminal behaviors. However, unlike in street children institutions, the program in transit centers (except Gitagata) does not provide professional psychological counseling to rehabilitate the emotional wellbeing of children, and it does not attempt to build trust relationships between children and their families/communities. Transit centers are neither equipped nor resourced to provide such services.

During the mapping exercise, many children explained that they settled in a trading center near their rural family home as the first step, then in the next bigger urban agglomeration, until they reached Kigali City, Huye, Rubavu, or any other major town. Therefore, given their location within the District and subsequently their proximity to the families that are newly separated from their children, transit centers may offer the advantage of enabling to start the rehabilitation process for many street children in the early days of their street life journey and before they reach major cities. District-run transit centers offer the possibility of re-educating the street children rounded-up by police, with greater chances for less intricate and difficult rehabilitation processes, because the lesser time a child has spent in the street, the less physical and psychological damage he/she has suffered.

Moreover, the relevant public officers emphasized the imperative and urgent obligation to safeguard children from the dangers of street life as quickly as possible. This is why the task of withdrawing children from the street is today bestowed to the national police whose staff will be enough trained to handle children with respect and care. So, social workers from street children institutions no longer directly withdraw children from the street. Instead, they are only allowed to receive them from transit centers where the children are kept for no more than seven days following police raids. In transit centers children are identified and separated from the adults before they are transferred to professional street children institutions. So, since transit centers have become an obligatory pathway in the habilitation and family reintegration process for street children, it is important to build their logistic and technical capacity so they can offer proper care to children who, for example, not only should be cared



for in premises that are separate from those reserved for the adult population, but also should be treated in a manner that is suitable for children.

#### **3.2.3.6. Inshuti z'Umuryango, IZU**

As previously explained, IZUs was introduced as a structure designed to strengthen the proximity and community-based system to protect the rights of children. The structure operates in the community to promote children's rights and welfare, while protecting them from violence and abuse. The roles and responsibilities of IZUs are as follows: (1) ensuring safety, wellbeing, care, and protection of children in families; (2) helping children and families in difficulty get assistance; and (3) empowering families to make the best choices for their children (MIGEPROFE, 2016). NCC is closely collaborating with its partners to ensure that IZUs are operational. For example, UNICEF is supporting by providing assistance to train them on their roles and responsibilities and strengthen their capacity through efficient supervision, coordination, reporting and provision of basic working tools.

Guidelines establish accountability and collaboration mechanisms between IZU and other community-based structures, including community health advisors, women councils, youth councils, "umugoroba w'ababyeyi" (evening parents' forum), community policing committees, mediation committees (abunzi), and agricultural development advisors MIGEPROF, 2016). Accountability mechanisms of IZUs are also clarified in those guidelines.

In December 2016 that the guidelines establishing IZUs came out and the process to establish them started afterward. Today, IZUs have reportedly been established and are operational in all the 30 Districts. MIGEPROF/NCC, in collaboration with partners (UNICEF and some NGOs) organized training of IZUs on their roles and responsibilities, and availed the basic working tools.

IZU is a structure whose members are volunteers elected at the village, cell and sector levels of the local administration, with two, a male and a female representatives operating at village level (MIGEPROF, 2016). They are still new actors with limited operational experience in the area of child protection. So, at this juncture they need to be supported and refreshed on the specific street children issues. Also, it seems beneficial to facilitate their work, especially by way of a means of transport to enable at least their sector coordinators to easily go around the sector circumscription.

#### **3.2.3.7. Development Partners**

##### **UNICEF and other UN agencies**

UNICEF is the UN program that provides developmental assistance to promote the welfare of children. UNICEF has granted financial and technical support to a variety of child protection

programs. Senior officers explained that UNICEF is currently interested in strengthening the systems and community level capacity to protect and care for children, as opposed to support to punctual projects. It is exactly within the framework of this policy that UNICEF is involved in the support to strengthen operational capacity of IZUs across the country.

Furthermore, other UN agencies provide direct or indirect support to the promotion the welfare of families and children. For example, UNDP is active in poverty alleviation. The UNHCR works for the protection of refugees and their return home. WFP strives to eradicate hunger and malnutrition in the world.

### **International Non-Governmental Organizations, INGOs**

A number of INGOs commit their resources to alleviating human suffering. Some, including Save the Children, World Vision, Plan, Right to Play, etc., specialize in the promotion of children's welfare. The ICRC provides assistance for the victims of war and other situations of violence.

#### **3.2.4. The current family support schemes**

It was contended throughout this text that material destitution and unhealthy relations in families are main causes of children's street involvement. This entails that materially/economically and relationally strong families are the main shield against the street children phenomenon. Therefore, strengthening families both materially and relationally must be the critical goal we all should strive for to prevent the phenomenon from occurring. A short review of the existing family strengthening initiatives is done in the following lines.

##### **3.2.4.1. Government sponsored interventions**

In general, all programs aiming to strengthen families economically and relationally may be expected to bring great contribution to preventing the issue of street children. One such program is the Early Childhood Development and Family (ECD&F) program of Imbuto Foundation. Launched in 2013, this program aims to ensure efficient growth and development of children 0-6 years benefit from efficient physical, cognitive, and social and emotional development and growth, and that families are empowered to become resourceful caregivers (October 19, 2017, from [www.imbutofoundation.org/Early-Childhood-Development-and-Family.html](http://www.imbutofoundation.org/Early-Childhood-Development-and-Family.html) date of access). In a discussion with a senior officer at Imbuto Foundation, it was revealed that families participating in ECD program are supported among others in the following areas: 1) training on positive parenting; 2) economic empowerment through training on entrepreneurship and cooperative and granting financial support to start an income generating activity; 3) training on ways to sustain harmonious relations in family; and 4) enhances parental nutritional skills enhancement.

Although the ECD and family program was initially designed to support early childhood development, it is of a particular interest for the prevention of the street children phenomenon. Indeed, by economically empowering families, training parents on positive parenting skills, and entertaining them on ways to improve family relations, the ECD program in the long run pre-empts the major root causes of children's street involvement. It averts the risk for participating families to be in conditions of material destitution, parental carelessness vis-à-vis their children, and chronic family conflicts which, altogether significantly contribute to the phenomenon.

On the other hand, the VUP is another important and relevant social protection program in the country meant to up-lift the most destitute households by providing them with a source of income. Three components of the VUP program are outlined in EICV 4, page 17. They include the following: (1) a direct cash transfer for very poor households with no labor capacity; (2) a public works program for very poor households that are able to work (cash for work); and (3) a microcredit scheme that provides small loans at low interest rates to individuals or groups. Only households of the two poorest categories 1 and 2 in ubudehe categorization are eligible for component 1 and 2. Households in ubudehe category 3, as well as those in categories 1 and 2, may apply for a financial services loan, and households in higher category 4 may also apply for a financial Services loan as part of a group containing ubudehe categories 1 and 2. The selection of VUP beneficiaries usually takes place during public gatherings in which all residents in a village are invited and expected to participate. According to EICV 4, by July 2014, 330 over 416 sectors (almost 80%) were participating in the VUP (NISR, 2015).

The Government initiated "Girinka" or 'One Cow per Poor Family' policy to enable poor households to own a dairy cow so that they can improve household nutrition and soil fertility through use of the manure (EICV4, page 33). Moreover, FARG and RDRC are also programs that grant financial assistance to support households with health and education expenditure (EICV 4, page 33).

Operational at the community level, "umugoroba w'ababyeyi" is a forum comprising made up of all residents in a village who meet once per month to discuss community-based issues and take appropriate action. The objectives of this forum include the following: (1) preventing and resolving family conflicts with a view to enhancing family relations and harmony; (2) ensuring care, education and rights of children; and (3) discuss the economic welfare of families (MIGEPROF, 2016; National Women Council, 2013).

### 3.2.4.2. Non-state initiatives to strength families

Non-state actors back the government in its efforts to strengthen the family both economically and relationally. Indeed, a number of church and/or NGO-initiated projects strive to increase entrepreneurship skills of the most vulnerable groups and support them with income generating activities. These activities provide the beneficiaries with alternative sources of income and strengthen their economic security.

On the other hand, several non-state actors promote peace / harmony in families and wage active fight against domestic violence. Programs that economically empower women respond perfectly to this concern. They give women the power to challenge abuse from their spouses by granting them the means to become financially independent and to contribute to household income. Interventions to fight gender based violence equally aim to reduce domestic violence. Not only they transfer knowledge on gender equality, women's rights and gender based violence policy, etc., but also they collaborate with the law enforcement and sensitize community members to halt domestic violence.

The beneficiaries of these programs are quite often members of organized structures, such as cooperatives, women solidarity groups, church-affiliated associations, etc. However, as one stakeholder observed, many among the poorest rarely participate in such organizations. Apparently, they may be very busy to make ends meet and therefore have challenges finding spare time and energy to participate. In addition, because they are plagued by high levels of illiteracy, wear dusty rags and have low self-esteem, they are likely to stay reluctant to appear in public gatherings or join organizations. As a result, they don't take advantage of existing opportunities, unfortunately at the detriment of their children. The stakeholder said: *"Abo babyeyi ntibakunze kugera aho abandi bantu bari, bigatuma za gahunda nyinshi zitabageraho. Ariko kubera impamvu zo kurwana ku nyungu z'abana, tugomba kubimenya kugirango tubone uko tubafasha."* In English this would translate: "Because these parents are reluctant to show up in public, they miss out many opportunities. Yet, for the sake of their children, we are required to understand this situation in order to help them (parents) out."

### 3.2.5. Overview of the 2005 strategic plan for street children

In 2005 MIGEPROF developed a 5 year strategic plan for street children to guide all interventions designed to support street children. The suggested strategic interventions are based on an analysis of the following prevailing three street children support approaches. The first approach analyzed is about the "long-term institutional care" whereby a child is kept in a child care institutions for a long period until he/she reach adulthood and has completed education or vocational training. While this approach moves children from the dangers of street life and fulfill their rights to the basic needs. However, this approach apparently

develops total dependency of the child to the center, and creates a situation where the parents and the community abdicate their responsibilities also to the center.

The **reintegration approach** was the second to be analyzed. The bottom line for this approach is to prepare and educate children before they are reunified with their families or foster families. Preparation of the child can be done in the open or in an institution. When it is in the open, the educator meets and prepares the children in the street. The methodology “in the open” does not develop any institutional dependency in children and seems less costly, but it leaves them vulnerable to the dangers and distraction.

On the other side, preparation in an institution entails for children a short period of stay in that institutions where they are provided with the basic needs (shelter, protection, food, clothing, medical care, recreation) and enough preparation and education for their return back into their families and communities. Preparation for family reintegration is done for both children and parents. This preparation may include psychological rehabilitation; catch-up and basic literacy/numeracy training; civic education; support for school/vocational training reintegration; family assessment, counseling and economic/material assistance. Preparation is followed by family reunification in the community. This approach not only keeps children away from form the direct dangers and distraction of street life, but also endeavors to take enough time for preparation for the reintegration. However, it may require higher costs.

The third approach analyzed in the context of the 2005strategic plan for street children, was the **prevention approach**. This approach aims to directly confront the family-based root causes of the street children phenomenon. The analysis acknowledges that, although the approach may enable to find a lasting solution to the issue, it has not attracted sufficient focus or concrete actions in terms of technical support or practical intervention guidelines. This may be due to the fact that, as the analysis has suggested, the prevention approach “is a long-term approach requiring sustained efforts without any immediate results”. Indeed, the 2005 strategic plan for street children comprises interventions to protect children from the dangers of street life, as well as actions to reintegrate them back into their families and communities. Nothing was planned on prevention.

In any case, the above described approaches inspire street children support interventions across the country. Indeed, some street children centers offer full time institutionalized interventions, including day care and boarding services, while others only offer daytime interventions. The table below illustrates the accommodating capacity of visited street children centers and the approach used in terms of day and night time interventions:

**Table 52: Street children centers and day and nighttime interventions**

N°	Street children centers	Daytime care	Nighttime care	Capacity	Gender of supported children
1	Les Enfants de Dieu - Ndera	YES	YES	80 children	Boys
2	Centre Marembo (for girls) - Ndera	YES	YES	50 children	Girls
3	Root Foundation - Batsinda	YES	NO	20 children	Mixt
4	FIDESCO	YES	YES	60 children	Boys
5	CPAJ - Kicukiro	YES	YES	50 children	Boys
6	Umucyo w'Ejo – Gikondo	YES	YES	20 children	Boys
7	Hope for Life Ministry – Masaka	YES	YES	30 children	Boys
8	Abadacogora-Intwari - Bugesera	YES	YES	65 children	Mixt
9	Mind Leaps – Nyamirambo	YES	NO	80 children	Boys
10	Bureau social - Muhanga	YES	YES	50 children	Boys
11	Nyampinga (for girls) – Huye	YES	YES	60 children	Girls
12	Intiganda – Huye	YES	YES	60 children	Boys
13	OPDE Huye	YES	YES	70 children	Mixt
14	Baho Neza Mwana – Rusizi	YES	YES	35 children	Boys
15	Point d'Ecoute – Rubavu	YES	NO	40 children	Boys
16	APIB - Musanze	YES	YES	10 children	Boys
17	Hameaux des Jeunes – Musha	YES	YES	35 children	Boys
18	Imizi Children's Village -Rwamagana	YES	YES	80 Children	Boys
19	SACCA – Kayonza, Kabarondo	YES	YES	55 children	Mixt

Source: Primary data, 2017

### 3.2.6. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats/Challenges

By way of a summary for the situational analysis, the following lines are presented to highlight the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges that the Rwandan community has and /or faces in its efforts to solve the street children issue for all.

#### Strengths

- Strong political determination to work out a lasting solution to the street children phenomenon as repetitiously reminded in national policy instruments, such as Vision 2020, NTS1, National Leadership Retreat Resolutions, related policies and strategies;
- Clear policy guidelines relative to children's welfare and rights protection;
- Existence of NRS, the government agency mandated to coordinate this strategy implementation;
- Relevant sectoral departments ready to bring contribution through functional partnership and collaboration;
- Clear guidelines as elucidated in different sectoral policies and strategies regarding children rehabilitation and reintegration, family empowerment economically and relationally;
- State and non-state social protection and poverty alleviations programs;
- Experienced street children service providers, including street children centers;
- Local NGOs and other CSOs prepared to provide assistance;

- IZUs operational in 30 districts;
- A pool trained social workers and psychologists capable of delivering needed professional services.

### **Weaknesses**

- Lack of guidelines regarding prevention of the street children issue;
- Lack of guidelines relative to support to street children not yet in care of street children centers;
- Limited involvement of local leaders.

### **Opportunities**

- Several Development Partners committed to bring their financial, material and technical contribution (UNICEF & other UN agencies, INGO etc.).

### **Threats / challenges**

- Negative public image of street children;
- Extent of poverty.

## **3.3. Street children reintegration and prevention strategy**

### **3.3.1. Vision and Mission**

#### **Vision:**

A society that is responsible, caring, respectful and protective of children rights and develops the human potential of all its children.

#### **Mission**

To set up a framework and guidelines for the provision of an enabling environment where all Rwandan children, especially street children and children at risk of going to the street, will enjoy adequate physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

### **3.3.2. Guiding principles**

#### ***Best interest of a child***

The principle of "best interest of children" implies that planning and delivery of services to a street child should aim to promote and enhance his/her security, well-being, mental health, positive development and happiness ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Best\\_interests](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Best_interests)). Yet, because a child flees home due to specific economic and relational circumstance in his/her family, assessment of his/her best interests should be done case by case. Therefore, though the ultimate objective of the strategy is family reintegration of all street children met in the street, it may not be the case in certain circumstances when, for example, after thorough assessment

of the family situation and child's wishes, it is deemed not suitable to reunify his/her or foster family.

### ***Building on gained experience and know-how***

There is no need to re-invent the wheel, but rather to take advantage of the three decade experience of assistance to street children. Numerous ex-street children have been reintegrated into their families, and many more have today stable living as they are productive in society in different qualities: technicians, hair-dressers, tailors, teachers, businessmen/women, government officers, etc. It looks wise and worthwhile to take into account the lessons learned in the design and implementation of the strategy to reintegrate street children in to families and/or prevent against the phenomenon.

### ***Relying on relevant existing institutions***

Across communities there exist government-sponsored and non-state structures involved in family promotion and support, at economic, relational and child protection levels. Not only these arrangements have organized ways of functioning, they also have gained operational experience and expertise. There is already a wide wealth of institutional memory and community networks to take advantage of. So, it looks rational and pragmatic to actively engage them in the implementation of this strategy, at least to avoid redundancies and wastage of energy.

### **3.3.3. Strategic objectives**

Two strategic objectives are fixed for this strategy:

- (1) Reintegrate into their families and communities the 2,882 enumerated street children and eventual new arrivals;
- (2) Prevent children at risk of going to the street.

### **3.3.4. Family and community reintegration of street children**

#### **3.3.4.1. Institution-based rehabilitation and preparation before family reintegration**

##### ***Basic services for street children and their families in the context of reintegration***

##### ***Physical rehabilitation***

The basic needs, including adequate shelter, nutrition, health and hygiene care are what street children need in immediate terms. After lengthy outdoor sleeping, starvation, illnesses, injuries, drug addiction, etc., they need to be in security and good health. Physical recovery is prerequisite before anything else can be done for them.



Moreover, children should have access to personal hygiene and self-care knowledge. Proper personal hygiene is important because poor hygiene can negatively affect children's health and relationships in society. Likewise, children must be made aware of basic health related knowledge, skills and practices to encourage them to keep and improve their health, prevent diseases and reduce health-related risk behaviors. Similarly, there is great interest to make of them aware of sexual and reproductive health and HIV/SIDA and ways of preventing it. In the same vein, they must be aware of the dangers of drug abuse both to their physical and emotional health and to society.

Some children were found to live with untreated disabilities, including physical and mental handicaps, deafness, blindness and speech problems. It is important to treat professionally these children's disabilities.

### ***Psychological healing***

Following psychological traumas, pains and lots of humiliations, children need to develop self-esteem, self-confidence and feel good about life. They need psychological/emotional recovery. This will result from professional counseling and listening, care and support and show of affection.

### ***Character education***

Because of street hardship and hostile environment, street children develop aggressiveness and anti-social behaviors. This is why they need to develop moral values and solid social skills so they can interact and collaborate with community members in peaceful ways. Not only they need to enhance their aptitude to adapt from agitated street life to a more stable and structured home environment, but also they need to become responsible citizens that can get along well in society.

### ***School integration and/or reintegration***

Before street involvement, street children have never been to school or were school drop-outs, and they don't go to school during street life. This situation does not equip them to become productive, take care of themselves and useful to society. They dearly need to steer interest for learning and support for school integration and/or reintegration.

### ***Sustainable family reintegration***

The ultimate objective of assistance to street children is their sustainable family reintegration. They must be resourcefully sensitized and prepared in order to accept to return and stay home, while in turn, families must equally be sensitized and prepared to accept them back. Family mediation and support is important.

## ***Needs of families***

It was argued at length that children seek refuge in the street due to economic/material and relational failures at home. In order to change the course of events, it is important for families to pre-empt the root causes for children street life. The capacity of families must be strengthened in such a way they can be able to care for their vulnerable children, both materially and emotionally.

Families need support in several areas where the pivotal aim is not only to provide their children with the basic needs, but also ensure a welcoming and sociable environment for children to feel home is a better place to stay. Support is needed in the following areas: (1) household economic empowerment through access to employment, capital, source of income; (2) family conflict resolution; (3) positive parenting and/or step-parenting; (4) family planning; (5) stress management; and (6) anti-alcohol/drug education.

### **3.3.4.2. Transit and street children rehabilitation centers at the heart of the street children family reintegration action**

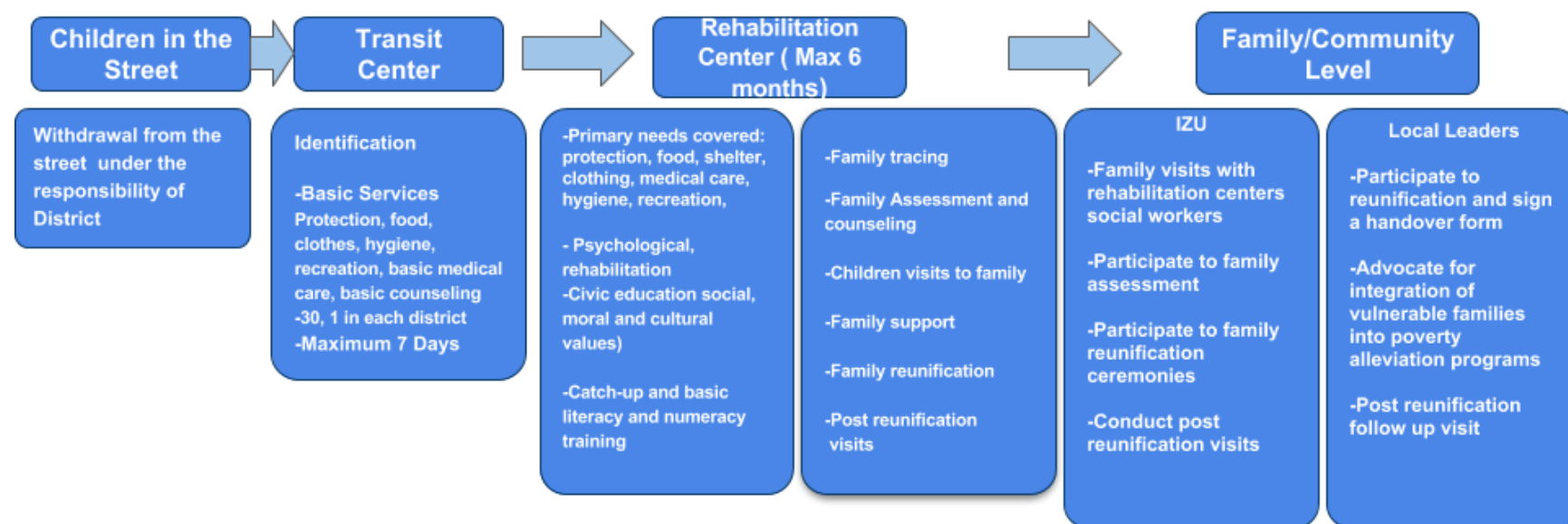
This strategy acknowledges that it is important and pragmatic to rehabilitate street children and prepare them with their respective families for reunification before any actual family reintegration can be organized. Indeed, because of the physical and emotional damage suffered while in the street, a street child needs healing and care services. On other side, because relations between the child and his/her family have been severed, the two parties can willingly live together again, only following efforts to identify and remove the root causes for resentment and separation, and after time for family counseling and mediation. This must be done in a professional institution by experienced and specialized staff.

This strategy counts on street children centers to help reintegrate the 2,882 enumerated street children and eventual new arrivals back into their families and communities. Nonetheless, street children centers are required to deliver the necessary services, including physical and psychological rehabilitation services, civic education, preparation for family reunification and family reintegration, whereby all is done in the context of full time institutional custody of children meant to ensure better results of the rehabilitation process by preventing children from being distracted by street life contact.

On the other side, district-run transit centers will play an important role in the rehabilitation process of children. Indeed, they are today mandated to receive all the people in situation of irregularity that are rounded-up during police raids. Following separation of children from the adults, and after the necessary verifications, individuals identified as street children will be transferred to street children rehabilitation centers where they are expected to benefit from

rehabilitation and family reintegration services. The chart below illustrated the major steps of the process to reintegrate children back into their families and communities.

## Steps of the street children reintegration process



The withdrawal of children from the street falls under the District responsibility, specifically the Unit in charge of children issues. The District will collaborate with its partners including, MINALOC/NRS (Psychologist/Social worker officers), MIGEPROF (Gender and Family Promotion Officer), and Rwanda National Police. The National Police at District level will make available trained and proficient staff that will take part in the action.

#### **3.3.4.3. For individualized interventions**

Although street children causes may appear common, the way every child interacts with and reacts to each of causes is unique and depends on his/her particular family circumstances and history. Besides, every child's street life experience is unique, depending on the particular life conditions he/she has been subjected to. Furthermore, the family situation that a child faces after reintegration is also unique. This is a move to join Volpi (2002) call for individualized attention and services tailored to the specific needs of former street children awaiting family reintegration and to the particular needs of families with the risk of street involvement for their children.

Indeed, street children rehabilitation interventions and duration should differ according to the nature of initial root causes and the gravity of damage endured on the street which, in turn, may depend of child's form of street life, length of stay in the street, sex, age, the nature of traumatic event, and the character of abuse encountered. Indeed, children that stay on the street during day time but go home in the evening maintain relatively good relations with parents and family members, unlike those who stay in the street on day and night time, and therefore have totally cut ties with their families. While the partial street goers may need less preparation time for family reintegration than children staying on the street day and night time, because the partial street goers never completely cut relations with their families, while permanent street goers did. While explaining the causes for their street involvement, the partial street goers pointed out family material deprivation, such lack of food, lack of school fees and material, etc., but the permanent street goers evoked different kinds of maltreatment and abuse to which they had been subjected in their families.

Interventions to rehabilitate the two types of children before their reintegration will slightly differ both in content and time. The partial street goer may need psychological rehabilitation support to heal the trauma endured in the street, re-education to positive societal values, and material satisfaction to his/her family. His/her time in the center is expected to be shorter than the permanent street goer who will need family mediation and psychological support to both the child and his/her parents. Similarly, cases involving poor parenting skills or torn relations between a child and a step-parent may need more time for mediation and psychological support for both sides.

To determine the form and content of interventions that are suitable for every child, professional social workers and psychologists will assess every individual situation, identifying the root cause or causes; evaluating the gravity of the relational fracture between a child and his/her family, determining the progress in the psychological healing process of the child and the level of readiness to return to his/her family. Volpi (2002) insists that “promising programs invest time and multidisciplinary expertise in assessing the individual situation of each participant and in designing tailor-made life plans and services”.

The table below illustrates the basic services expected for a child’s family reintegration for permanent and partial street goers, based on the damages suffered in the street and the root causes of street involvement.

#### **Damages suffered in the street and main causes of children’s street involvement**

<b>Damages suffered &amp; root causes of street involvement</b>	<b>Basic services for a child's family reintegration</b>	<b>Children of the street (permanent street goers, day and night)</b>	<b>Children in the street (partial street goers, day in street but home at night)</b>
Physical damage	Physical rehabilitation	YES	YES
Psychological damage	Psychological rehabilitation	YES	YES
Loss of positive social and moral values	Education to positive social and moral values	YES	YES
Lack of education	School / vocational training integration or reintegration	YES	YES
Family economic/material deprivation	Family economic/material support	YES or NO	YES
Family unhealthy relations	Family conflict resolution	YES	NO
Parental/extended family irresponsibility	Positive parenting skills	YES	YES

A long stay of a child in the street can generally be expected to result in more damage to the child’s physical and emotional health, due the likelihood for encountering more traumatizing events. Similarly, a short stay is generally expected to entail less damage. Basing on their experience, social workers and psychologists in street children centers have indicated that the length of stay in the street for a child influences a lot his/her rehabilitation and reintegration process. They highlighted that the less time spent by a child in the street, the greater the likelihood for a speedier rehabilitation and reintegration process for him or her. Similarly, the younger the child, the greater likelihood for a speedier rehabilitation process for him / her.

Moreover, cases will be treated differently according to the nature of violence and abuse children have been subjected to. It was indicated that 84.3% of street children have been beaten and injured; 3.3% of all children and 19% of girls have been subjected to sexual

abuse; 2.9% have been forced to carry heavy loads; 0.6% had worked without being paid. Cases of girls that have been sexually abused may need professional of trauma healing support.

In any case, the form, content and duration of specific interventions will be determined according to the initial assessment case by case and monitoring assessment of individual progress conducted by the centers' professionals.

#### **3.3.4.4. Special treatment for children in special situations**

Children living with disabilities, those that have been sexually abused and those that have abused drugs, should receive special psychological and medical treatment. They include 79 children with physical disability; 22 with mental disability; 14 with hearing impairment; 6 with vision impairment; 4 with speech problems; 60 that were subjected to sexual abuse; 557 that indicated to have used drug. Moreover, 106 children that indicated to have HIV/AIDS should be supported with particular care and treatment according to the national HIV protocol. Similarly, 15 children indicated that they came from the neighboring countries. NRS will partner with UNICEF, IOM and ICRC with of view to their family tracing and reintegration.

#### **3.3.4.5. A two-year street children reintegration program**

In accordance with the new strategy for national child care reform, it is believed that with adequate financial, material, technical and human resources, all the children in the street may be taken out of the street, rehabilitated, prepared and reunified with their families within a 2 year period, after a rehabilitation and family preparation process. The main activities to be undertaken in the 2year program are as follows:

1. Strengthening the capacity of District transit centers so they can receive and provide proper care to children taken off from the street during their identification process;
2. Withdrawal of the children from the street by trained police and their placement in transit centers for identification purposes;
3. Transferring children from transit centers to professional street children centers  
Strengthening the capacity of these centers for rehabilitation;
4. Rehabilitation (physical, psychological, social, and moral) and civic education of children in street children centers.
5. Preparation of children and families for family reintegration (family tracing and assessment visits; counseling, support and mediation);
6. Family and community reintegration whereby a child is handed-over to his/her family or foster family, in the presence of the community leadership and child protection structures. One important feature of children's reintegration in the community is placing them into school / vocational training, with support from parent and community

educational structures. Furthermore, NRS will collaborate with its partners (UNICEF, IOM) for the reintegration of children that indicated to come from Burundi, DRC and Uganda.

The table below shows the timeframe for the execution of the main steps. Detailed activities are illustrated in the log frame.

#### Timeframe for the execution of the main steps

N°	Main activities	Trimesters							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Strengthen the capacity of District transit and rehabilitation centers (infrastructure, human resources, equipment and materials)								
2	Withdrawal of children from the street to transit centers by trained police								
	Identification of street children in transit centers								
	Transfer of children from transit to professional street children centers								
3	Rehabilitation of street children in professional centers (children currently in centers and new recruits)								
4	Family tracing, visits for preparation of children's family reintegration								
5	Family assessment and resolution of root causes /cases management								
6	Family reunification								
7	School reintegration/vocational training/Starting an economic activity								
8	Follow up visits								

#### 3.3.4.6. Basic tools

Every street children center should open a file for each and every upon his/her entry into the center. This file shall serve to keep the baseline information to describe the situation of the child at the time of entry, including data on his/her physical, health, hygiene, psychological, relational status. The file will also serve to collect and keep on-going monitoring data so as to allow tracking changes and progress. It is on the basis of assessment of progress that the centers professionals will determine whether or not a child is ready for family reintegration. The content and form of the file document needs to be developed.

Moreover, MIGEPROF is reportedly in the process to finalize two basic tools to be used for the children re-education and rehabilitation program, but also for family visit, needs assessment, psychological support and support to strengthen parenting skills. The two documents include a manual on psycho-social support manual and a manual on positive parenting. Once approved, these two documents will be very useful for children reintegration processes. Likewise, the following technical tools should be developed and availed, including the (child and family



assessment process guide and form; the reporting form; conflict resolution guide; positive parenting booklet; etc.)

### **3.3.5. Community-based prevention**

#### **3.3.5.1. Identification and support to families and children at risk**

Households' poverty, family conflicts and parental/extended family irresponsibility were pointed out as the main underlying drivers of the street children phenomenon. Other causes are aspects of direct/indirect of one of these three root causes. It was equally underlined that all the causes of the phenomenon are rooted in the family. Yet, as pre-empting the issue implies removing away the drivers, the family must imperatively be at the center of a prevention strategy as the primary target. Preventing against the street children phenomenon entails long-term and on-going actions to identify families at risk of being separated from their children to the street, and take supportive measures. Families at risk are plagued by rampant unemployment, inadequate housing conditions, deficient food security, and insufficient access to health care and poor hygiene. Also, they are prone to an extremely abusive environment, drug/alcohol addiction, violent family conflicts and poor parenting skills. By extension, children at risk of street involvement are children living in situations of poverty or extreme poverty, limited access to the basic needs, drug/alcohol addiction by parents, physical maltreatment, emotional abuse, neglect, poor parental supervision, and school drop-out.

Once children and families at risk are identified, preventing against the street children phenomenon will involve simultaneous outreach work and support to the children and parents. The idea is to strengthen the capacity of families to protect and care for children at risk by providing economic, psychosocial and other support, both to parents and children. For example, children will be provided with psychosocial support, facilitation for school reintegration, etc. on the other hand, families may be facilitated not only with access to household social protection/poverty reduction/economic empowerment mechanisms or with support to improved income generation, but also with family conflict resolution and access to positive parenting resources.

Contrary to street children family reintegration for which a 2 year timespan is set, prevention of the street children phenomenon will entail an ongoing action. A 5 year timespan is set for an intensive prevention campaign action. At the end of this period, NRS will organize an assessment to determine the outcome, enabling factors, challenges, best practices, lessons learned, and the way forward.

### **3.3.5.2. Rigorous public sensitization and awareness campaign**

The general public needs to understand that street children are normal children who just fall victim of family circumstances and that, with proper care and support, they become well-behaving children. The public representation of street children must positively change because this public is called upon to play a positive role in the suggested ex-street children community reintegration strategy implementation and in the execution of the issue prevention. This is why an appeal is made for a rigorous and well thought of public to raise awareness and sensitize on the street children problem.

This campaign is to target parents and educate them on the rights of children, their responsibilities as parents and on basic parenting skills. Also, it will target the public at large and remind them of their responsibilities vis-à-vis their neighbors as good citizens. In addition, it should inform the public about concrete interventions they are encouraged to make when they are in face of street children and families at risk of having children in the street. For example, the public campaign should educate market goers against employing street children to transport goods.

Moreover, in order for the public awareness and sensitization campaign to reach the maximum possible of people, it should be multi-sectoral and implicate different actors, including religious and civic society organizations, government departments and private sector operators.

### **3.3.5.3. Need for professional service delivery**

The determination to reintegrate all street children after a rehabilitation and preparation process, coupled with the resolve to avert the street children phenomenon before it actually occurs, call for supplementary rehabilitation services and more effective outreach work. This will entail family visits, assessment and counseling; intensive psychological and support to individual children and parents, enhanced advocacy efforts and collaboration with referral services and the authorities, etc. Performance will significantly depend of the use of specific professional skills in social action and psychological support to restore confidence in street children and in parents, and recreate trust between the two parties.

### **3.3.5.4. Accountability of local leaders**

Because the root causes of the street children issue reside in families and communities, its prevention cannot succeed without commitment and the dynamic, pro-active and supportive implication of the local authorities. To make local leaders accountable and responsive, interventions related to the reintegration of street children and prevention of the street

children phenomenon should effectively be part of Districts' action plans and performance contracts "Imihigo".

Local leaders will be accountable at least at the following five levels. **Firstly**, as is always the case regarding government programs, active involvement of the local leaders will be required for the community sensitization and mobilization concerning this strategy implementation.

**Secondly**, the process to reintegrate street children back into their families and communities will start with taking children off the street and placing them in transit centers whose managerial responsibility lies in the hands of districts. Indeed, districts will be responsible for organizing the withdrawal of children from the street and for the financial and technical administration of transit centers.

**Thirdly**, at the end of the rehabilitation process, former street children will be reintegrated back into their families and communities and the hand-over will be executed in the presence of IZUs and representatives of the local authority. This entails a commitment by IZUs to do whatever is their power to make sure that the reintegrated children and their families receive the necessary support in such a way children will remain in the families. Yet, districts are required to support, monitor and facilitate the work of IZUs.

**Fourthly**, prevention of street children phenomenon will entail actions to identify and support families at risk of being separated from their children. Moreover, it will not only involve direct support by IZUs and/or Sector/District professional staff, but also referrals to appropriate relevant structures operating inside Sectors or Districts. At the end of the day, Sector and District will be answerable for the services directly delivered by IZUs and/or their staff and through referrals made.

**Fifthly**, Sectors are expected to plan, organize and administer all the local public awareness and sensitization campaign events. They will preferably use locally resources, for example by inviting a professional staff member or a local opinion leader to give a public talk on one aspect of children's street life.

### **3.3.5.5. Effective cross-sector partnership, roles and responsibilities**

Sound implementation of the strategy will necessarily depend on effective coordination and partnership between all the cross-sector institutions involved with the promotion of family welfare and protection of child rights. They have separate but complementary roles and responsibilities regarding this strategy. Yet, this is important for the strategy to obtain support, compliance with and respect of norms and standards and optimal use of available resources. The following are the relevant key institutional players:

## **Public institutions**

### **1. MIGEPROF / NCC**

As the technical lead ministry, MIGEPROF and its child rights protection branch, NCC, will monitor and advice on all issues related child rights and welfare protection in general.

IZU will be involved in the following:

- Identifying families and children at risk;
- Organizing family mediation;
- Reporting information to the IZU coordinator at sector level;
- Involving in family assessment, support and conflict resolution;
- Contributing to awareness and mobilization campaigns at community level.

### **2. MINALOC / NRS**

Through its operational agencies, MINALOC will:

- Extend and increase the capacity of poverty reduction and of social protection programs;
- Facilitate the mobilization of resources at local level through budget allocations for child protection at local levels, and support

**NRS** will be responsible for the overall coordination and monitoring and evaluation of this plan. Its roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the implementation of this strategy will entail the following:

- Leadership, coordination and M&E;
- Mobilization of the necessary resources;
- Provision of technical guidance, tools, and standards;
- Capacity building and adequate staffing;
- Documentation; research sharing of the best practices;
- Establishment of functional partnership with relevant stakeholders;
- Organize and coordinate national awareness campaigns to inform and sensitize parents and community members about children rights and about harmful effect of children's street life, and mobilize them to make active contributions in preventing it.

### **Provinces**

- Political mobilization and support.

### **Districts**

- Coordination and M&E at District level and lower levels;

- Support to school / vocational training reintegration for school drop-outs and children that have never been to school;
- Financial & technical support to the work done by IZUs for family reintegrated children and families at risk;
- Provision of direct professional counseling to families and children;
- Referrals to appropriate and relevant service delivery departments;
- Advocacy for integration of families at risk into government poverty alleviation programs.

### **Sectors**

- Collaborate with IZU coordinators to monitor and support work performed by IZU members at lower levels;
- Contribute to resolution of risks and case management, through family conflict resolution, psychosocial support, referrals and/or advocacy for integration of families at risk into government poverty alleviation programs.

### **IZU:**

- Identification of children and families at risk (IZU)
- Reporting cases to appropriate relevant structures

### **District transit centers**

- Provide basic needs to children during their stay in centers;
- Conduct identification of children.

### **3. Ministry of Health**

- Ensure medical care and services for children and their families.

### **4. Ministry of Education**

- Ensure universal, quality primary education, especially for vulnerable children
- Ensure the effective implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy

### **5. Ministry of Justice and National Police**

- Assistance in withdrawing children from the street to be taken to District transit centers.

### **6. MINAGRI**

- Promoting agriculture-based productive activities for families

## **7. UN agencies and INGOs**

- Complement the efforts of government by advocating for vulnerable families and street children;
- Assist in resource mobilization for street children protection initiatives;
- Provide financial and technical support;
- Participate in local and national coordination activities;
- Facilitate information sharing.

## **8. Faith-Based Organizations and other local opinion leaders**

- Provision of care and support services to street children, children and families at risk and serve as their advocates (for example, conflict resolution and mediation);
- Promote positive parenting and positive family values;
- Participate in national and local co-ordination activities;
- Contribute in awareness campaigns.

## **9. Street children centers**

- Provide physical and psychological rehabilitation services;
- Prepare and organize family reunification for children;
- Grant family economic support when available and needed;
- Organize family follow up visits in collaboration with local structures (IZU, local leaders).
- Participate in awareness campaigns;
- Collaborate with other relevant service providers to avoid duplication of resources;
- Facilitate referral of the children to the relevant services.

### **3.3.5.6. M&E, accountability and reporting arrangements**

#### **National level**

At the national level NRS will oversee the implementation of this strategy and will ensure that all the planned activities are executed. NRS and street children centers have already established coordination and reporting arrangements to regularly monitor what is being done regarding withdrawing children from the street and reintegrating them into families. However, given the 2-year ambitious plan to take all children off the street and reintegrate them into families, reporting and the M&E meetings should be tighter and more inclusive to ensure that all the resources are rationally used and everyone is on board. To this end, it is suggested to hold quarterly meetings of all the key public and administrative players, service providers, and financial and technical partners.

Moreover, coordination meetings at the national level will be analyzing the success factors and challenges met in the processes to withdraw children from the street, rehabilitate them, prepare them and their families for reintegration, and ensure that children reintegrated children remain in families. On the other side, attention shall be on measures to support families and children at risk so as to ensure that no child goes to street again.

With regards to children's family reintegration, discussions in coordination meetings will center around the number and status of the withdrawal of children from the street, progress in children's rehabilitation process, progress in children and family preparation for reintegration, school integration and /or reintegration where relevant, support to families of reintegrated children, and how children are coping with family life after reintegration.

At the end of the two years it is expected that the children currently in the street, those in centers and eventual new arrivals will have all been taken off the street and reintegrated back into families on in the community. Coordination at local level will continue, focusing on the prevention component of this strategy. Monitoring information and data will be about the number and socio-economic and relational conditions of families and children at risk, measures taken to support them and outcomes of these measures.

### **Local level**

At the local level, the reporting and accountability system will start from the grassroots, in families and communities, where IZUs will report on any issue related to former street children reintegration into families or any other issue related to families and children at risk. IZUs will report to their coordinator at sector level through cell level. IZU sector-based coordinators will report to District directorate in charge of social affairs. The latter will compile all reports from sectors into one District report to be submitted to NRS M&E Unit every month. Simplified and adapted reporting tools will be developed for each report level from family and community level up to national level. Feedback will follow a reverse way (if need).

Families and children at risk will be identified by IZUs in the community. IZUs will refer cases to relevant professional staff for support, including social workers and psychologists. Local partners and opinion leaders may also be called upon to provide assistance as needed.

The District Social Affairs Directorate will be directly responsible for critical case management, as well as other issues related to the reintegration of former street children into families, and to families and children at risk. Referral and reporting tools will be developed at all levels.

### 3.4. Logical framework

**Goal:** All Rwandan children, especially street children and children at risk of going to the street will enjoy adequate physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

**Outcome 1:** All street children are reintegrated back into their families and communities

**Outcome Indicator 1.1:** Proportion of street children reintegrated into families and communities sustainably.

**Outcome2.** Families at risk of being separated with their children and community members at large are empowered to provide children with the basic needs, care and protection and adopt positive parenting.

**Outcome indicator 2.1:** Proportion of families identified to be at risk of being separated with their children that manage to prevent their children from going to the street.

**Outcome 3:** Implementation of the street children rehabilitation and street children phenomenon prevention strategy is efficiently coordinated, monitored and evaluated.

**Outcome indicator 3.1:** Level of achievement of the objectives



Activities	Baseline	Verifiable activity indicators	Target	Mean of verification	Assumption	Responsible	Costs In Rwf	Source funds
<b>Output 1.1: Transit centers are empowered to receive children from the street and provide them with the basic needs</b>						<b>NRS, Districts</b>		<b>GoR, DP's</b>
1.1.1. Renovate and extend District transit centers		# of transit centers renovated # of transit centers extended	30 transit centers	Activity reports	Districts provide basic infrastructure for transit centers		450.000.000	
1.1.2. Furnish District transit centers with needed equipment and material for: kitchen; water, sanitation and hygiene; sleeping; and recreation.		# of transit center provided with needed equipment and material	30 transit centers	Activity report			131.400.000	
1.1.3. Recruit and train staff for transit centers: coordinators; nurses; social workers; psychologists; cooks; and security guards			30 transit centers: 1 Coordinator 1 Nurse 1 Social worker 1 Psychologist 2 Cooks 2 Security guards	Activity report			632.796.000	
1.1.4. Develop and distribute the necessary working tools for the transit centers		# of forms developed and distributed to transit centers	Identification forms Transfer forms In the 30 transit centers	Identification form Transfer forms			200.000	
1.1.5. Provide food stuff to transit centers		Quantity of food provided to every transit center	30 Transit centers	Activity report			22.500.000	
<b>Output: 1.2. All children currently in the street are moved to transit centers</b>						<b>Districts/NRS/RNP</b>		<b>GoR</b>
1.2.1. Train police staff that supports in withdrawing children from the street on basic child rights and care		# of police staff trained	360 staff	Activity report			14.046.000	
1.2.2. Organize withdrawal of children from the street to transit centers	967 children	# of children withdrawn from the street	1915 + new comers	Activity report			10.000.000	
<b>Output 1.3: All children in transit centers are prepared to be transferred to rehabilitation centers</b>						<b>Districts/ Transit centers</b>		<b>GoR, DP's</b>

1.3.1. Train staff on identification and care to children		# of trained staff	8 staff in every transit center, 1 transit center in every District (30)	Activity report			14,046,000	
1.3.2. Provide children with basic needs: food, protection, clothing, hygiene, recreation, medical care, basic counseling		# of transit center with basic children needs provided	30 transit centers	Activity report	All District provide transit center space		27,535,000	
1.3.3. Conduct identification of street children	967 children	# of children identified	1915 +new comers	Activity report			To be done by recruited staff	
1.3.4. Transfer of street children to rehabilitation centers	967 children	# of children transferred	1915+new comers	Activity report			9,750,000	
<b>Output :1.4: Children in centers receive physical, psychological, moral and social rehabilitation</b>								
1.4.1. Provide children in rehabilitation centers with the basic needs: food, medical care, hygiene, clothing		Quantity of food provided; health status of children;	2,882 children	Activity reports	Effective partnership between NRS and all relevant stakeholders		350,100,500	
1.4.2. Open a file for every child and conduct their screening: physical, medical, psychological		# of children individual files opened # of children with screening fully conducted						
1.4.3. Provide trauma healing services (psychological counseling, leisure and recreation, cultural activities (drama, dance, music, games, etc.)		Psychological health status of children	2882 children	Activity report			3,000,000	To be done by recruited professional staff
1.4.4. Organize civic education, and educate children to positive cultural, moral and social values		Changes in attitudes and behavior of children	2,882 children	Progress report			This will be done by recruited professional staff	
1.4.5. Educate children on the sexual and reproductive health			2882 children	Activity report			This will be done by recruited professional staff	

<b>Output: 1.5. Children with special needs (those with disabilities, HIV/AIDS positive, sexually abused, drugs addicts) are provided with appropriate support</b>					A partnership with appropriate health centers and hospitals is developed	<b>NRS</b>		<b>GoR, DPs</b>
1.5.1. Organize medical and psychological diagnosis		# of children diagnosed and treated	Physical disability: 79 children; mental disability: 22 children; deafness: 14 children; blindness: 6 children; speech problems: 4 children; sexual abuse: 60 children; drug abuse: 557; HIV/AIDS: 106 children.	Medical and psychological diagnosis report  Activity reports		Street children centers	Health Insurance covered in basic needs	
1.5.2. Cover medical and psychological care and treatment		# of children treated	2,882 children	Activity reports		NRS	Health Insurance covered in basic needs	
1.5.3. Provide assistive devices to children with disabilities		# of children with disabilities assisted	99 children	Activity report			1.860.000	
1.5.4. Provide ARV to children affected by HIV/AIDS		# Of HIV positive children under ARV		Activity report		Rehabilitation centers	To be cover through the ARV protocol	
1.5.5. Provide psycho-social support to drug addicts		# of drug addict children assisted	29.2% of children of 842 children	Activity report		Rehabilitation centers	To be provided by professional staff in collaboration with the nearest health facility	

<b>Output: 1.6. Children are prepared for school reintegration / vocational training</b>								Street children centers		GoR & DPs
1.5.1. Organize basic literacy and numeracy training		# of children integrated in school	334 children that have never been to school	Activity reports					To be done by staff	
1.5.2. Organize catch-up program for school drop-outs		# of school dropout children in catch up program	1537 children	Activity report					To be done by recruited staff	
<b>Output: 1.7. Children and families are prepared for reunification</b>								<b>NRS and Street children centers</b>		<b>GoR &amp; DPs</b>
1.7.1. Prepare children for family reunification (counseling sessions and talks)		# children fully prepared for reunification	2,882 children	Activity reports					To be done by staff	
1.7.2. Conduct tracing of children's families (transport for Social workers)		# of families traced and found	2,882 children	Activity reports					72.050.000	
1.7.3. Identify potential foster families for children whose families are not found		# of potential foster families identified		Activity report					3.750.000	
1.7.4. Conduct family assessment visits		# of family assessment conducted	2,882 families	Activity reports					72.050.000	
1.7.5. Organize children visits to their families		# of children who visited their families before reunification	2,882 families	Activity reports					72.050.000	
1.7.6. Conduct counseling sessions for families		# of counseling sessions conducted	2,882 families	Activity reports				Rehabilitations centers	To be done by staff while visiting families in collaboration with IZU	
1.7.7. Provide family reintegration package		# of families supported to reintegrate their children		Activity report				NRS	97.500.000	

1.7.8. Advocate for vulnerable families to be integrated into Government poverty alleviation programs		# of vulnerable families integrated into government poverty alleviation programs	833 families	Activity reports		IZU	To be done by staff	
<b>Output: 1.8. Children are reintegrated back in their families and communities</b>								
1.8.1. Organize family reunification		# of family reunification done	2,882 Children	Activity reports			72,050,000	<b>DPs</b>
1.8.2. Provide children with reunification kits		# of children who received reunification kits	2882 Children	Activity reports			1 51,016,800	
1.8.3. Organize hand-over ceremony (in presence of local authorities and IZUs) with a hand-over document to be signed by the center, the family, the child and the representative of the local authority)		# of handover documents signed	2882 documents	Activity reports & handover documents			To be done by staff	
<b>Output: 1.8. Children from Burundi, DRC and Uganda are reunified with their families in their respective countries</b>								
1.8.1. Document all information possible provided by the children in relation to their origin		# of foreign children documented for	Burundi: 8; DRC: 4; Uganda: 3	Activity reports		<b>NRS</b>	To be done by staff	
1.8.2. Partner with UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF and ICRC with the view to facilitate their family tracing and reintegration		# of children repatriated	Burundi: 8; DRC: 4; Uganda: 3	Activity reports	Families may not be traceable		To be done by DPs	
<b>Output: 1.9. All reintegrated children are supported to remain with their families</b>								
1.9.1. Conduct post reunification follow-up visits		# of follow-up visits	2,882	Activity reports	Effective partnership and collaboration between all relevant stakeholders	<b>Districts</b>	72,050,000 To be done by Social workers from Rehabilitation centers in collaboration with Izu and Local leaders	<b>GoR &amp; DPs</b>

1.9.2. Integrate / reintegrate reunified children into schools and vocational training centers		# of children reintegrated in schools vocational training	2882 of whom 1200 in vocational training	Activity reports		180.000.000	
1.9.3. Advocate for vulnerable families to be integrated into the Government poverty alleviation programs			833 families	Activity reports		To be done by staff	
<b>Output: 2.1. Reintegrated children and children at risk are supported</b>							
2.1.1. Develop and avail the technical tools for identification and support to children (child and family assessment form; reporting form; conflict resolution guide; positive parenting booklet)		Technical tools are provided to all IZU	30 districts	Activity reports		7.735.000	
2.1.2. Identify families at risk of being separated from their children and children at risk of going to the street		# of families at risk identified		Activity report		To be done by IZU	
2.1.3. Provide counseling and information as needed (by IZU)		# of families that received counseling session by IZU		Activity report		To be done by IZU	
2.1.4. Visit former street children who have been reintegrated into families (by IZU)		# of families visited		Activity report		To be done by IZU	
2.1.5. Advocate for families with special needs		# of families advocated for and whose needs are covered		Activity report		To be done by IZU	
<b>Output: 2.2. IZUs coordinators at sector level are strengthened to advocate for issues driving children to the street</b>							
2.2.1. Develop training manual and tools on street children phenomenon		Training manual and tools developed		Activity report		11.200.000	
2.2.2. Train IZU coordinators on street children phenomenon		#IZU coordinators trained	416 IZU coordinators	Training report		17.010.000	
2.2.3. Refer complex family conflict cases to sector social affair officer and/or to professionals at District level		# of complex cases referred		Activity report		To be done by IZU	
2.2.4. Provide bicycle to IZU coordinators at sector level (to facilitate transport and also as motivation)		# of bicycles provided	416 bicycles	Activity report		31.200.000	



3.2.2. Organize quarterly coordination meetings at national level		# of coordination meeting organized on quarterly basis at national level	1 meeting in a quarter	Activity report		<b>NRS</b>	7.500.000	
3.2.3. Organize a monthly IZU coordination meeting at sector level		# of IZU coordination meeting organized on monthly basis at sector level	1 meeting in a month	Activity report			712.368.000	
3.2.4. Conduct cross-verification visits to families of reintegrated children (once a year)		# of survey conducted	1 survey a year	Survey report		<b>NRS</b>	18.000.000	
3.2.5. Conduct cross-verification reviews to assess the progress on prevention of the street children issue (once a year)		# of survey conducted	1 survey a year	Survey report		<b>NRS</b>	36.000.000	



## **ANNEXES**

### **Annex 1: Documents consulted**

#### **Books, Reports, Articles and other publications**

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## Annex 2: List of visited sites

Provinces	Districts	Sites
Kigali City	Nyarugenge	Nyamirambo; Biryogo; kuri 40; Nyabugogo ; Kwa Mayaka; ku Ryanyuma; Kitabi; mu Miduha;Cyumbati; Nyabugogo ku ma Cooperatives; Nyabugogo-Gare; Nyabugogo-feux rouges; Debandi; Tarinyota; Mutangana; Marathon; La fraicheur; Giti cy'inyoni; Kiruhura; Kimisagara; Ntaraga; Chic
	Gasabo	Gisimenti; Gatsata; Karuruma; Nyacyonga; Jabana; Kimironko ku isoko; Zindiro; Masizi; Kabarezi; Nduba; Gasanze; Batsinda; Gisozi-Kigarama; Migina; Nyabisindu; Kacyiru; Kaninja; Kamutwa; Kagugu;
	Kicukiro	Giporoso-Corridor; Kabeza ; Kicukiro-Sonatubes; Sodoma; Kicukiro centre; Zeniya; Gikondo-CGM ; Gikondo mu gishanga ; Kigarama ku isoko; Masaka; Kabuga ku isoko; Rugende kuri kaburimbo; Masaka-Biryogo; Rusheshe; Gasogi – Mulindi ku isoko ; Remera-Giporoso; Karembure ; Gashyekero
Southern	Kamonyi	Mugina; Nkoto-Bishenyi; Remera-Rukomo; Musambira; Kayenzi ; Kamonyi; Rugobagoba; Gihara-Runda.
	Muhanga	Muhanga-Ville ku isoko; Muhanga mu kivoka; Rutenga; Alimentation Alice; Restaurant la Planete; Gahogo; Nyabisindu; Cyakabiri; Misizi; Kinini; Mubuga; Karama; Mubuga; Ku iramba; Cyeza (Karama, Kivumu, Cyanika; Musagara Takwe).
	Ruhango	Ruhango ku isoko (ku gitaji); Gitwe-Buhanda; Gitwe centre; Byimana-Kamuseriyi; Byimana-Mpanda; Ntenyo; Mbuyi-Mwendo-Vunga; Mbuyi-Kabuga-Mponda;Kinazi-Rwintama; Kinazi Centre; Nyabinyenga Centre
	Nyanza	Busasamana-mu Mujiy hafi y'isoko; Kabusheja-Ntyazo- ku isoko; Gatagara kuri Cercle; Busoro Centre
	Huye	Huye-Ville; Rango; University; Matyazo; Gahenerezo; Rwabuye; Kinazi kuri Arete; Rusatira; Mukura; Mpare; Cyarwa ku gateme
	Gisagara	Save-Rwanza ku isoko; Gikonko; Ndora; Musha; Mugombwa; Nyanza-Nyaruteja
	Nyaruguru	Kibeho; Ndago; Ngoma
	Nyamagabe	Gasaka ku maduka and kuri gare; Gasarenda center ku maduka; Kitabi center ku maduka; Kaduha center ku maduka
Western	Rusizi	Burunga; Ku Badive; Kamabuye; Tuwonane-Rugabano; Kije; Budike; Kamembe-Centre Ville; Gakoni; Giheke-Kaburyogoro; Bugarama Cite Rond Point; Bugarama-Ku isoko; Muganza-Gakoni; Muganza-Cimerwa
	Nyamasheke	Bushenge; Shangazi; Ntendezi; Buhinga; Gisakura; Tyazo; Kirambo; Karengera; Mugonero
	Karongi	Rubengeru ku giti kinini; Rubengeru ku isoko; Bwishyura-Kibuye Ville; Gashari-Birambo.
	Rutsiro	Manihira-Muyira; Tangabo; Terimbere; Congo-Nil; Mushonyi-Maziba; Kivumu-Rwinyoni
	Rubavu	Rubavu center ku soko; Mbugangari ku soko; Brasserie; Cyanika- Gihira; Mahoko ku isoko
	Nyabihu	Kora; Mukamira; Rambura; Shyira-Vunga
	Ngororero	Cyome; Rusumo; Gashubi; Birembo; Ngororero center Rususa ku isoko; Gatega; Kabaya center ku isoko; Gasiza center; Rubaya center; Gasiza ku isoko
Northern	Musanze	Ville ku isoko; Tete a gauche; Carriere; Yaounde; ku Ngagi vers Kinigi; Byangabo
	Burera	Cyanika; Kidaho; Nyagahinga; Gitanda; Kirambo
	Gicumbi	Byumba-Ville ; Yaramba; Kageyo; Gaseke; Rutare
	Rulindo	Base; Rusine; Kajevuba; Shyorongi; Gasiza; Buyoga; Tumba;
	Gakenke	Gakenke-Ville; Janja; Masha-Cyabingo; Rushashi-Muhondo- Kinyari;
Eastern	Rwamagana	Nyagasambu; Ntunga; Rwamagana Gare (ku isoko, gare); Karengere;
	Kayonza	Kayonza ku soko; Kabarondo ku soko

	Gatsibo	Kiramuruzi centre; Ngarama centre; Mugeru centre
	Nyagatare	Nyagatare centre; Rwimiyaga centre; Matimba; Mimuri centre; Rukomo centre.
	Ngoma	Rukira; Kibungo; Gashanda; Karemba; Sake; Rukumberi.
	Kirehe	Gahara; Cyunzi; Nyakarambi; Kiyanze; Rusumo ku border.
	Bugesera	Nyamata centre; Ruhuha centre; Gashora centre; Biryogo; Kabukuba ku isoko; Nyabagendwa centre;

### Annex 3: Persons interviewed

#### Street children centers

N°	Name	Function	Center
1	Umutesi	Director	Hope for Life
2	Musabwa Cyprien	Social worker	CPAJ
3	Ildephonse Niyongana	Assistant Director	Centre Marembo
4	Josiane Mushasi	Coordinatrice	Abadacogora-Intwari
5	Ntirushwa Alexis	Secretary	Karibu
6	Mukamuyenzi Valentina	Director	SACCA
7	Nteziryayo Celestin	Director	Imizi Children Center
8	Claudette	Director	Baho Neza Mwana
9	Kiruhura Patrick	Director	Root Foundation
10	Mwongereza Clément	Supervisor	Point d'Ecoute
11	Nkonji Polycarpe	National Coordinator	OPDE

#### Public officers

N°	Name	Function	Institutions
1	Muhongerwa Patricia	Vice Mayor, Social Affairs	City of Kigali
2	Niyitegeka Jean Marie Vianney	Youth Sexual & Reproductive Health	MYICT
3	Niwemukobwa Gloriose	Youth Entrepreneurship Development	MYICT
4	Umuhire Christiane	Director of Family promotion a/nd Child Rights Unity	MIGEPROF
5	Karekezi Alfred	Family Promotion and Child Rights advisor	MIGEPROF
6	Umubyeyi Christine	Director, Legislation	NCHR
7	Hitimana Ildephonse	ECD Officer	Imbuto Foundation

### Annex 4: Distribution of street children by District of enumeration and origin