



**Understanding the Impact of Societal Stigmatization on the Survival of Street Children: Creating a Pathway for Effective Intervention of Addressing the Plight of Street Children in Kampala city, Uganda.**

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**Disclaimer:**

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ERIC	Ethical Research Involving Children
CHOGM	Common Wealth Heads of Government Meeting
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CRC	Convention on Rights of the Child
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
Gov't	Government
HRW	Human Rights Watch
KCCA	Kampala Capital City Authority
NGOs	Non- Government Organizations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child
UNDRC	United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN	United Nations
WHO	World Health Organization

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## DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my lovely children Kato, Wasswa, Isaac, Martha and Racheal for your prayers and untiring support throughout this research process. May God bless you.

## **ABSTRACT**

Over the years, various scholars have produced relevant literatures that critically discuss street children, with recommendations on various types of intervention programs that can be used to remove them from the street. Rather than joining the dominant discourse of casual factors that led to children being on the street, this study brings stigmatization to the forefront of discussions about street children in order to help create more effective interventions that could either reduce their being on the street and/or improve their living conditions. Therefore, this study highlights how stigmatization – particularly categorization and labeling, and discrimination – negatively impacts street children’s wellbeing. It does this in relation to the extensively stated opinions of street children, adults in the communities, government officials and non-state actors in Kampala city of Uganda. Stigmatization, labeling, discrimination and prejudice encountered by street children in many ways will hinder the success of intervention programs if the actors did not critically assess the impact it has on the children they are planning to help. I argue that the lens through which the government or NGOs and CSOs view street children to a large extent influences the types of intervention they design to address the plight of the children. Most essentially, the intervention approaches of the government and NGOs are poles apart. While the government focuses on sanitation of the city, the NGO’s approach follows the rescue model. I recommend that government and non-state actors should initiate public awareness campaigns to address the negative perceptions of street children, by appreciating the realities of street children’s lives and considering the reasons why they engage in survival tactic.

## **RELEVANCE TO DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

Some research conducted about street children in Uganda and across the world has approached it as a problem that needs attention and solution. Rather than focusing on the causal factors that are responsible for children ending up on the street, this study focuses on the challenges that street children encounter as a result of stigmatization and prejudice and the strategies adopted in dealing with those difficulties. The study did not work on the assumption of already known knowledge of impact of stigma and labeling, rather the study took another approach of understanding the impact of societal stigmatization on the survival of street children in Kampala city as a pathway for effective intervention of addressing the plight of street children. This gives the children the opportunity to express their views and how they feel personally about the negative connotation and identity of “street children” in an adult society. Most importantly, how they respond to the stigma, and how they survive in the midst of thorny environment that considered them worthless. With hope, this study will inform development experts, government and civil society to critically assess and adjust policies on how to address street children’s particular situations and come up with decisions that will render their interventions effective.

**KEYWORDS**

Street Children, Stigmatization, Categorization, Stereotypes, Prejudice, Ugandan Government, NGOs.

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# Chapter One: Street Children: Looking Beyond the Factors Responsible for Street Children to be on the Street

## Introduction

The existence of street children is a sensitive issue that has provoked various stakeholders to address the problem and come up with a number of intervention programs (Bourdillon, 1994; Brick 2002). Over the years, various scholars have produced relevant literatures which critically discuss street children with recommendations for various types of intervention programs that can be used to remove them from the street. In the literature, several factors have been identified as catalysts that can make children to leave their homes and migrate to the streets of large urban areas. These factors include but not limited to: poverty and orphan hood (Jacob et al, 2004; Shobe, 2002), abandonment, child labour, armed conflicts, crime, neglect, boredom, loss of parental control, lack of basic education and life skills, and breakdown of extended family systems (Munene and Nambi, 1996; Lusk 1992). Other identified factors are community values, traditional, social and economic structures (Hecht, 2000), abuse and domestic violence (Besharov and Laumann 1997; Nunez 1998), and the impact of HIV/AIDS on the family and social contexts of orphaned children (Jacob et al, 2004).

However, few have studied the impact of stigmatization on street children's wellbeing, even though there are plethora of scholarships in the health sector on how deadly stigmatization can be on individual mental health. Even if we engage the debates from the psychological health point of view, there are well publicized global literatures on the undesirable effects of social stigma, both on physical and mental health among individuals that are stigmatized. However, the mechanisms through which the individual's quality of life and psychological health are affected by social stigma are not well understood (Wang et al, 2010: 84). The level of societal stigmatization encountered by street children can hinder the success of any meaningful intervention attempt if the actors do not critically assess the impact that it has on the children they are planning to help. The lens through which the government or NGOs and society view these children to a large extent influences the types of interventions they design to address the plight of the children (Conticini 2008). This explains why in Uganda, there are still about 10,000 street children who are staying as well as looking for continued existence on the city street (UNICEF 2011).

I have a fervent belief that understanding street children's plight will enable the government and civil society organizations to critically assess and adjust policies to more effectively address the problem of stigmatization and prejudice against street children in Uganda. Even though, it can be contested that understanding the impact of stigma on street children does not address the underlying factors that push them to the street in the first place. To be marginalized, discriminated against, excluded, criminalized, and considered as an unwanted weed to be removed from the

society is far worse than some factors that might be responsible for them to be on the street. It limits their chances of survival and forces them to adopt various coping strategies (good and bad ones) that might be too late for any intervention to address. By and large, once they are stigmatized when they are on the street, the stigma will follow them even when they are off the street because nothing changes just as described by Olsson (2013) in her work on ‘former street children’; “Once a Lion–Never a cat”. Similarly, children might not want to leave the street.

I argue that the stigma and prejudice street children encounter in their daily lives makes them more vulnerable, and surviving in the city of Kampala can become herculean task. Even without stigmatization and negative labeling, living with no shelter, exposure to drugs, alcohol, sexual exploitation, gang beating, foraging for scraps of food in the garbage, begging, stealing or doing the most menial of jobs is capable of denying them a normal life in comparison to other children with parental guidance. Street children face stigmatization and prejudice from both the society and the government as a result of their lifestyle, which in most cases leads to their arrest in a bid to get them off the streets. One of the respondents that I interviewed during my field study in Kampala said that he believed the government and the community see them as rebellious children that lack home training which derive pleasure from criminal activities.

*“They (government officials and the people in the community) look down on us as if we are not human beings;- , some kind of filthy rag that needed to be discarded and removed from the society. The moment they set their eyes on you around their shops or cars, even walking side by side with them on the street, they start abusing you and accuse you of trying to steal from them. They will threaten to get you arrested and sometimes beat you if you do not comply quickly. I remember the first time it happened to me and my friend, I cried that day because we were just resting before we went back to work. I felt worthless, nobody deserved to be ill-treated”*  
(Gonza, 17, male).

This negative perception was borne out of the survival strategies such as begging and prostitution that was adopted by these children, which are not acceptable to adults in society. Swahn et al, (2012a:254) reinforced this claim; they note that street children are habitually viewed as a societal nuisance and as a result are subjected to various forms of violence and maltreatment from police officers and other community members. For example, the Ugandan Minister of State recommended that the streets of Kampala city be rid of street children by carrying them off to prison (Munene and Nambi, 1996:343), evidently legitimizing the stigmatization and prejudice towards street children. Nevertheless, Luchini (1996) notes that street children that engage in legal work in accordance with adult values are accepted as part of the society. This idea was based on the image of urban streets being an adult space (Luchini, 1996 cited in Young, 2003:609).

The term ‘street child’ is conceptualized into two main categories in trying to identify who is and who is not a street child. UNHCR (2012:4) categorized street children as “children on the street, who worked on the street and went home to their families at night; ‘children of the street’, who lived on the street, were functionally without family support but maintained family links; or ‘abandoned children’ who lived completely on their own”. For the purpose of this study, I focus on the ‘children of the street’ who have no family link and left to survive on their own. Some of these children have spent most of their lives on the street therefore; they have concrete knowledge of their specific circumstances and life styles which enables me to have a clear analysis in regard to this matter. Against this backdrop, this study brings stigmatization to the forefront of discussions about street children in order to help create more effective interventions that could either reduce their being on the street and/or improve their ways of life. Therefore, this study highlights how stigmatization – particularly categorization, labeling, and discrimination negatively impacts street children’s living conditions, which I will discuss in details in Chapter four and five of this study.

### Situating the Problem

In Uganda the term ‘street children’ has a negative connotation, children living on the streets are seen as an eyesore, a pollution of the cities and towns and called names such as ‘Muyaaye’ which literally means hooligan, idler, criminal or deviant (UNHCR, 2014b). They can be found living or sleeping on streets of Kampala. They are ignored, rejected or abused by the surrounding community. The government of Uganda frequently offers very little attention and there are few NGOs that care for street children, leaving a large number of them abandoned (Mwebaze 2007). Despite the fact the UNHCR emphasized that “Governments should initiate public awareness campaigns to address the negative perceptions of street children, with a greater understanding of the realities of street children’s lives and appreciation for the reasons why they engage in survival tactic” (UNHCR, 2014: 4). On the contrary, the government of Uganda’s response to remove street children off the streets of Kampala is by carrying them off to Kampiringisa Rehabilitation Center designed for juvenile criminals<sup>1</sup>, a blatant disregard to the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child (Munene and Nambi, 1996: 343-344).

Noticeably, the government strategy of rounding up street children and putting them in Kampiringisa Rehabilitation Center, which is not sufficient or lawful, hinders the children support and become unable to enhance their wellbeing (Bourdillon et al, 2010). This approach has failed to solve the problem of children coming out to live on the streets because over and over again, children continued to be on the streets notwithstanding government attempts to eradicate them. It has become a herculean task to convince children to get off the street and many of them sometimes opt for different means to survive, legal or illegal. Yet, street children still face criminalization fuelled by stigmatization, labeling and discrimination in Kampala city. This research is committed

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.kampiringisa.org/Kamp\\_We\\_do.html](http://www.kampiringisa.org/Kamp_We_do.html)

to investigate how the negative connotation impacts the livelihood of street children in Kampala, Uganda and most importantly how such negative connotation among the public inform the response of government and NGOs in their interventions to reduce and /or improve their conditions on the street.

### **Contextualizing the Research Problem: Why is it a problem?**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Uganda constitution define a child as somebody that is up to 18 years of age. Article 18 and 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) declares that the State shall support the parents with appropriate child raising assistance, and protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the child's care. Also, Article 34, of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda recognizes the need to protect the rights of children without discrimination. The Uganda Children Act; Cap 59 provides legal framework to protect and promote the rights of children. In addition, the Uganda Local Government Act; Cap 243 schedules 2, mandated local authorities to provide services to the children within their areas of jurisdiction without discrimination. This is contrary to the government approach and strategy of rounding up street children and putting them in orphanages, against the obligation of Uganda as a state party signatory to the ratification of the CRC and the Uganda constitution that emphasized on the right of children. Such 'approach restrict[s] the agency of children and fail[s] to value their experiences and hard work to advance their lives' (Bourdillon et al, 2010: 138).

The term 'street children' is a contested term, due to the fact that street children are not a homogeneous group and that the particular circumstance dictates who should be included in the definition (Owoeja et al, 2009: 10). Although the United Nations defined the term 'street children' to include "any boy or girl...for whom the street in the widest sense of the word...has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adults" (UNHCR, 2012: 4). Quite a number of Scholars (cf. Aptekar, 1994; Young, 2003; Owoeja et al, 2009; Gigengack, 2014) have argued that it cannot be taken for granted that every child on the streets is destitute or homeless because the vast majority of the children on the streets in several developing countries (Uganda included) live at home but are working to earn money for their families by working on the street. Gigengack (2014) critiques the categorization and typologies of street children outlined by scholars and UN because it reinforces stereotypes "within the framework of institutional discourse, street children have been represented with pitiable stereotypes and classified into categories such as;- 'children on and of the street' (Gigengack,2014: 266). With the increasing awareness among government and international agencies, "street children" are seen as a vulnerable group worth attention and intervention (Connally, 2004; Swanh et al, 2012b; UNHCR, 2014). This argument was supported by a woman that operates a small restaurant that I interviewed about her perception of children of the street said that,

*“These children need our help and deserve our pity. The condition in which they live in is not meant for human beings, they pick up food from the garbage and many of them do not take their bath for weeks. I am a mother and I will not wish such conditions for my children, that is why I give them free food anytime they come to my restaurant and sometimes allow them to sleep inside my store especially during the raining period” (Namubiru, 56, female).*

Beazley (2003:184) contends that “the definition of the street child only in terms of ‘victimization’ or of delinquency leads to a reduced conception of a reality which is in fact far more complex. This dichotomy generates the stigmatization of the child”. It is worth mentioning to emphasize that a number of scholars (Moura, 2002; Young, 2003; Beazley, 2003) have reasoned in favor of street children agency to decide on how they want to improve their lives. They contend that, it is misleading to assume that all street children are victims of abuse and/or economic hardship among other factors that have been identified as responsible for their continuous appearance on the street. Even though street children's lives are often represented in a unconstructive manner, and as a ‘problem’ which needs a solution, “their decision to leave an impoverished, boring or abusive home should, in fact, should be understood as the child’s own solution to a personal predicament... Street children do not lack agency, but take responsibility for their own actions and have some control over their lives” (Beazley, 2003:184). For example Kayonga, a 17 year old boy I interviewed has a clear future plan just like any adult, in fact he refused to accept the identity of Muyaaye and the stereotype associated with it.

*“Aunty, to say the truth, I am not bothered by what name people call me. I know that my name is not “Muyaaye” and I can never be Muyaaye because my name is Kayonga. I know who I am and the street is not a permanent place for me to live for the rest of my life. My brother and I only came to Kampala from Northern Uganda when LRA destroyed our home and farms that we used to work 4 years ago. We believed that if we both work hard and save enough money, we can go back home and assist our parents. I attend free evening lessons organized by Tiger club to get less privilege people educated, I know what I want for my life and nobody can tell me otherwise”.*

Although some children work to earn a living as opposed to survival on begging (Dobson, 2009), there are others that participate in criminal activities such as prostitution and drug trafficking (World Bank, 2006). Nevertheless, what is evident is that these children will be useful to the society if they are accepted like other children in the society; it is an open secret that street children are confronted with restricted life opportunities (World Bank, 2006: 37); to access decent jobs and any opportunity that can add value to their life however remain a difficult task (Bourdillon et al,

2010: 138). Street children have been badly failed by the adult world and have taken their lives into their own hands (ibid) inspite of the African saying that ‘It takes a village to raise a child’.

### **Study objective and guiding questions:**

The main objective of this study is to bring to the forefront of debates of policy intervention that aimed at reducing the number of street children in Uganda. It has become a matter of urgency and necessity to start looking beyond the causal factors that push/pull these children into street life. Instead, more attention should be given to the reasons why these children refused to leave the street despite all the effort of the Uganda government and non-state actors to remove them from the street. Understanding the impact of stigmatization and related concepts on street children is pertinent for an effective design of intervention programs, because children already stigmatized on the streets might have accepted the identity of hopelessness attached to them by the community. Any intervention programs that fail to address the effect of stigmatization might be running the risk of not been successful. To achieve this objective, the study was guided by one research question and two sub questions;

### **Research Question**

- What is the impact of stigmatization on the survival of street children in Kampala?

Sub questions:

- How does the negative connotation and views of street children by the public inform the response of government and NGOs in their intervention towards street children?
- How do street children respond to the label of “Muyaaye” that was attached to them and how does this label influence their behavior in an adult space?

### **Study Setting**

This Study is presented in six chapters. The first chapter of this study had already presented the overall view and introduction of the study which includes the objective of the study, research problem, contextual background, and research questions. The approach to the research is discussed in detail in chapter two. In this chapter I discuss the rationale behind the choice of the study area (Kampala), selection of respondents and the method of data collection which are focus group discussion and interviews. Also I emphasize on the limitation and ethical challenges as well as how the challenges were tackled. In chapter three, I examine the concept of stigmatization and related concepts such as discrimination, prejudice, categorization and labeling. This is done to create a space for alternative thinking on which this concept can further deprive street children of their chances of survival in an already hostile environment such as a street. Chapter four and five are made up of the findings and data analysis. While chapter four bring to the fore the impact of stigmatization on street children by giving significant importance to the voices and experiences of the street children themselves. Chapter five examined the effect of the perception of the adults in the communities on the intervention programs designs and implementation of both Uganda

government and NGOs. In the last part, chapter six of this study, I reflect on the study and come up with some positive conclusions that can be useful for future research.



## **Chapter Two: Approach to the Study**

### **Kampala: the city of opportunities for all**

This research was carried out in Kampala the capital city of Uganda between July and September, 2014. Kampala is the largest city of Uganda with a population of over 1.6 million. The city is also Uganda's governmental, communications, economic, and transportation Centre. I choose to conduct my research because just like any modern metropolitan city, it attracts a large number of people from various areas for commerce and tourism. The next stop for children that left their homes for various reasons is Kampala, the promise of city better life and hopes of better future make these children to see Kampala as there exist strategy from poverty or family abuse. This is amongst the reasons why, the city has the largest population and the highest number of street children in Uganda. On the other hand, Ugandan government has always directed their intervention program to Kampala city; such concerted effort was witnessed in 2008 during the CHOGM meeting and many other international conferences that were held after then. Yet, after such conferences and meetings, the numbers of street children go on the rise again. Apart from the government focus on Kampala, the majority of NGOs intervention program also focus on Kampala. It is significant to emphasize that conducting the research in Kampala presented a platform where wide range of data can be collected for the purpose of the study.

### **Study Procedure**

The approach for my study was embedded in the qualitative method via interview, focus group discussions and review of literature contents. Data was collected from different areas of the city which included; Kalerwe, Katwe, Kisenyi and Wandegeya. I could not access street children directly from the street therefore I gained an entry point to the children by acquiring permission from Retrack Uganda at Kisenyi - an organization which allows street children specifically boys to come in daily if they want to eat food, wash clothes, bathe and return to the street was a brilliant idea that resolves the problem of accessing the children for information, other appointments were arranged with Damba and Mulumba that are also former street children now volunteering with Retrack Uganda at Kalerwe – a branch which deals with both girls and boys which enabled me to gain access the girls and Elders of Kisenyi - Karamajong community permitted me to talk to the street children.

I also prepared appointments with NGOs officials of Retrack Uganda at Kisenyi and Kalerwe branches before engaging with the children. Adults were accessed through referrals by street children and I also contacted other adults at their work places and homes. Government officials where difficult to access, however the researcher interviewed two of the political aids of council chairman that will not allow their names to be known because they did not have the authority to speak to me officially. Even though, they could not give me any official statement or data, their responses really shed more lights on the response of the government's side.

The researcher employed a participatory approach which involves the children in some stages or in all stages of the research process, a departure from the traditional research process (Cahill, 2007: 297-298). The voices of the children provided a platform for their views on issues such as stereotypes. As of Punch's view which he argues that there is a potential difference in research that involve children and that of adults primarily because of adult views of children and the position of children marginalized in adult society. I placed the children at the forefront in this study which enabled me to understand how street children feel about categorizations, labelling and discrimination and how this informs interventions for addressing their plight. Punch maintained that "the way in which researchers perceive childhood and the status of children in society influences how children and childhood is understood, that the difference for research with children is that it is difficult for an adult researcher ever to totally understand the world from a child's point of view" (Punch, 2007: 321-325). In order to accommodate the views shared by Punch and Cahill, and to conform to the guiding principles of Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC) (Graham et al, 2013), I chose qualitative methodology because it does not only involve the researched (children of the street) but also provides a chance to the researcher to participate actively in the data compilation (Wimmer and Dominick 1997:84).

#### **Formulation of a sample: Purposive and snow ball sampling techniques**

Purposive sampling method was used to select the focus group discussion for street children that are living permanently on the street on the one hand. On the other hand, Snow ball sampling technique was used to conduct interviews with adults living in the community, children of the street, government and NGO officials. I used focus group discussions because of their distinctive benefit for addressing such contemporary issues as empowerment and diversity (Morgan 1996: 149), and most importantly participant interaction is the core of all focus group findings (Belzile and Öberg 2012: 470), participation of every member was central in all the discussions. This enabled the voice of every member to be heard in the discussions. My aim was to have diverse views on the impact of stigma on their survival and how they deal with all the other negative connotations they face from the society.

I organized three (3) focus group discussions with children of the street. Respondents were mainly boys because the places I went to had boys as the majority. They argued that they mostly receive boys as compared to girls. For instance; Retrak Uganda at Kalerwe had both boys and girls but it had only five girls and twenty seven boys. I can relate this to Young's point of views that; girls can also be found on the street, but their numbers are small and less visible in comparison with the boys (Young, 2003: 611). I did not conduct focus group discussions with girls because only three (3) were available yet it would have been great to have significant numbers of girls to participate in the process to examine if the girls also face the same stigmatization and prejudice in their daily activities. However the used them for in-depth interviews. Because focus groups sometimes are difficult to manage and might to be rowdy, each focus group consisted of six (6) participants.

I made the discussions as an informal conversation and recorded them following consent from the center manager. Non-verbal behaviors were jotted down as children responded in order to include situations that a mere conversation could not offer. The conversations created a free environment for the children to open up during the discussion and interact freely amongst members of the group. To a large extent, the approach offered the researcher the opportunity to understand the impact of stigmatization on street children, how they survive under the label as Muyaaye, and how they react to such categorization and labelling. As pointed out by Kvale & Brinkmann (2009), Focus group discussions remained the best methodological approach to answer my research question(s) “[...] from a discourse-theoretical point of view, focus group interviews in particular are capable of bringing into play important discourses that people use to establish social bonds and identities” (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009: 158).

I preferred interviews because they were suitable in acquiring opinions on specific areas of my study; that is “interviews are a useful tool which can lead to further research using other methodologies such as observation and experiments” (Jensen and Jankowski 1991:101). However, interviews can be time-consuming, difficult to transcribe, and analyse in some cases. Yet I chose interview because they greatly enabled me to probe for more information and acquired more insights in understanding children opinions on their circumstances and adults’ perceptions on street children.

I interviewed Eight (8) adults in Katwe, Wandegeya and Kalerwe to understand the reasons behind the community’s negative perceptions about children of the street and why they hold certain opinions. Their views assisted me to understand if the opinions of adults in the community are reflected in the interventions designed by both government and NGOs to reduce the numbers of street children in Kampala. Eight (8) boys and three (3) girls were also interviewed so as to understand the strategies they adopt to survive societal stigmatization and prejudice they encounter on their day to day activities. Most of the information I could not acquire from focus group discussion was probed by the interviews. For instance Children would refer me to their friends with specific experiences.

Two (2) governments’ officials and three (3) NGOs officials were interviewed on their efforts to keep the children off the street, and to investigate if there is any relationship in terms of program collaboration between non-state actors and government on their approach to respond to the plight of street children. The Interview methodological approach encouraged participation and involvement of the researched because it is a purposeful conversation which clarifies points that need to be made clearer, something which a questionnaire cannot offer (Frey and Oishi 1995:01-03).

## Subjectivity and Problems encountered

I grew up in Kampala, to be precise; I have spent my entire life in Kampala and acquired some knowledge about the lifestyle of street children. There are some children that we used to live together in the same neighborhood that ended up on the street for various reasons. I remember how my parents would not let me chat with any of these children, clearly to my parents and members of our society, a street child was 'Muyaaye' with no family values. I had no idea that what people were doing to them was stigmatization and this study has really challenged my assumptions about street children. However, irrespective of how I position myself on this topic, it is imperative that I deal with my subjectivity so as to produce a credible research in this study. This was the real motivation behind my decision to hear directly from the children, listening to them speak with passion full of ambition and future plans was significant to my re-orientation about street children. Even though, there are some of the children that engage in criminal activities, the experience of children that I interacted with during the focus group and interview sessions helped me to understand that most of these children were forced to engaged in anti-social vices as a means of survival.

Graham et al (2013) guiding principles and charter of Ethical Research Involving Children emphasized on the need for the researcher to consider the ethical issues when conducting research on children. Apart from the fact that the study must be in the interest of the children, just and equitable, promote children dignity and rights, must not put the life of the children at risk, and the voice of the children through participation must be heard (Graham, 2013: 23). Graham et al maintain that, it is important for the researcher to have clarity on the necessity of children participation in the research, availability of resources such as money and possible local knowledge to carry out the research and if not what are the plans put in place to manage the situation. They also note on the safety of the children, the readiness of the researcher to meet with children and most importantly, how the researcher will deal with a situation where the children become upset or distressed (Graham et al, 2013: 51-52).

The incidents that occurred during two of the focus group discussions are in consonant to the argument of Graham et al. In the first focus group, I noticed that two of the participants became restless and started to show lesser interest in the discussion, they were no more active and kept quite all of a sudden. When I inquired what the problem was, they replied in unison "we are hungry". Apparently, they have not eaten that day and the focus group discussion started around 3pm, I had to call for a 15 minutes recess to find something for them to eat and we eventually resumed later. The second incident that occurred in another focus group discussion is a little bit violent in nature. Three boys became so hostile to each other during the discussion, although I was unaware that they belong to different rival groups with hostile history towards each other in the city. I intervened and talked to them as a sister and not as a researcher, I made them realize that the kind of behavior that they displayed was responsible for the way the society tagged them as

‘Muyaaye’. Something they all detested so much. The issue was resolved and they surprisingly hugged each other. The meeting was only disrupted for 10 minutes, throughout the focus group discussions that witnessed some unexpected circumstances. There was calmness, peace and the meeting was well coordinated which offer all the participants equal opportunity to express their views.

Interviewing street children is another challenge because they are always on the lookout for any job opportunity that can earn them money or food for survival. For instance, I made an interview with a child and it started to rain heavily. I realized something was distracting him from concentrating. He eventually told me that I had to let him go because he was missing out on a big opportunity at the water channels of getting plastic bottles which flow on water when it rains. I let him go with the promise that he will come back the next day for interview but he never came back. I resorted to interview others who were available at that time.

The mandate of Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) and its need to get rid of street children off the street was a great obstacle that made it difficult to access street children in Kampala. The children gave examples of KCCA officials camouflaging as researchers to trick them into giving their details, making it easy for the government to carry out unsuspected targeted raids on them and transport them to Kampiringisa Rehabilitation Center located outside the city, according to the children, it is unable to offer the kind of life they desire which makes them want to stay on the street. To address the issue of safety, I organized a safe place through the assistance of two friends (Damba and Mulumba) that are also former street children, now volunteering for Retrak Uganda to ensure the anonymity of the participants for focus groups discussions or respondents of the interviews. I made the respondents to realize that, my interest is just to understand the impact of stigmatization on their daily survival and how they deal with stigmatization and nothing more. Collaborating with Damba and Mulumba was a good idea that resolves the problem of accessing the children for information.

Gaining access to relevant government officials was a herculean task. After constant visit to the Ministry and local government council for weeks, I ended up talking to two of the political aids of council chairman that will not allow their names to be referenced because they did not have the authority to speak to me officially. Even though, they could not give me any official statement or data, their responses really shed more lights on the response of the governments which I will discuss in details later.

## Chapter three: Understanding the Concept of Stigmatization and Labeling.

### Introduction

The argument of this chapter is embedded in the theoretical analysis of the concept of Stigma and other related concepts. This includes Labeling, Categorization, Discrimination, Prejudice and Stereotypes. Although, these concepts are not new, there are years of robust studies that have critically engaged with the impact of stigma on people or individual, however, most these studies focused more on the health sector. Nonetheless, for the purpose of this study, I find it more relevant to relate with these concepts in order to give an in depth understanding why the concepts are germane in addressing the plight of street children in Kampala. This is because stigma can be seen as negative thoughts or prejudices about people from particular groups or with certain characteristics, such as the one street children have been labelled with. Intervention programs are likely to be successful if the state and non-state actors put into consideration that street children are not immune to the negative effects of these concepts that I am going to discuss herein after this section.

### Stigmatization

According to Khan and Loewenson (2005:3), “the term stigma originated in ancient Greece where slaves and criminals were branded to show that they were outcasts. Stigma can be experienced internally (self-stigma) or externally (discrimination)”. The concept of stigma is extensively used in different viewpoints notwithstanding the definitions that are often vague (Parker and Aggleton 2003:15). Stigma has a high level of cultural multiplicity and complexity. Goffman defines stigma as “an attribute that is significantly discrediting, which, in the eyes of society, serves to reduce the person who possesses it” (1963:12). Goffman maintained that stigmatized individuals and groups are often so discredited – ‘reduced in our minds from whole and usual persons to tainted, discounted ones’ – that they are excluded from the spaces that would allow for encounters and from real opportunities to survive. Remarkably, persons who accept or feel unable to confront the stigma may opt to exclude themselves.

Although Goffman and Foucault tend to emphasize that stigma and discrimination operate in relation to differences, Parker and Aggleton (2003) argued that beyond relation to differences, stigma functions more clearly in relation to social and structural inequalities. They maintained that stigmatization is part of multifaceted tussles for power that are embedded at the core of social life. To them, “stigma is deployed by concrete and identifiable social actors seeking to legitimize their own dominant status within existing structures of social inequality” (Parker and Aggleton, 2003: 18). This explains why the adults as discussed earlier, hold certain perceptions about street children in Uganda based on their own dominant morals, values, and lifestyles (see Young, 2003 and Bar-On, 1998). However, there are other concepts that are products of stigmatization; they are intertwined to the extent that they reinforce each other. In the next two session of this chapter, I shall discuss the concept of labelling and categorization and that of discrimination and prejudice.

## Labeling and Categorization

To facilitate this analysis and, particularly, to emphasize the implications of stigmatization on street children, the study also looks at the practices of categorization and labeling of street children in Kampala, Uganda, which are now common in most cases that is tantamount to stigmatization. Moncrieffe (2006) notes that labels have the power to stigmatize dehumanize and discriminate, and that the stigma theories can be used in ways that generate fear (ibid). It has been argued that the label street children is so emotional, does little to serve the interests of the children in question. "The term has a stigmatizing effect, since the child is, as it was, allocated to the street and to delinquent behavior, the term neither gives consideration to the experience or testimony of the children in question nor to other facets of their identity, which do not necessarily have any relevance to the street" (Invernizzi 2001,79). Therefore it becomes the foundation of discrimination of the children which in turn initiates or reinforces undesirable societal reactions. In brief, the label contributes to the societal response towards these children (ibid: 81). Even programs of intervention for street children can result in their discrimination and stigmatization (Panter-Bricks, 2002:151-152).

According to Leuda et Al's (2004: 244-245) analysis of categorization, average understanding about people is organized in membership categories, in which the activities that are category-bound together with the rules for their application. "Knowledge about people as it is locally invoked and reproduced...stresses that categorizing is normally done to accomplish something other than just categorizing" (Hausendorf, 2000 cited in Leuda et al, 2004:244). The concept is used to create a platform of dichotomy such as 'Us', 'Them', 'We', 'Ours', among others. Even though the activities bound to a specific group of people might be a contradiction to what the other group considered to be most positive about themselves, Leuda et al argued that this type of contrary presentation was not just representation but used in particular circumstances to realize rejection of another's interest. This provides an explanation to why street children are considered as a problem, because they occupy the same space with the adults in the city for their survival. For example, they are not allowed to work in wealthy areas such as hotels and restaurants in Kampala because they put-off customers (Young, 2003: 612), coupled with the perception that they are a moral danger and considered to be out of place in a 'purified' space ( Cloke et al, 2000 cited in Young, 2003: 612).

In the words of Goffman, "society establishes the means of categorizing persons and the complement of attributes felt to be ordinary and natural for members of each of these categories ...The routines of social intercourse in established settings allow us to deal with anticipated others without special attention or thought"(1963: 11–12). Consequently, categorization and labeling are unavoidable because they are central to the construction of identities: how one perceives others and vice-versa. It is evident that people may gain or lose depending on how they are categorized (Bourdieu, 1980 cited in Moncrieffe, 2006: 41). The problem here is that these labels and categorization may have very different meanings for the persons charged with managing policy on

the ground; for communities and the subgroups among them; and for the labeled groups themselves. Without a doubt, children of the street in Uganda have been categorized and stigmatized as criminals, hooligans and menaces to society with a negative identity for example 'Muyaaye'. It is significant to stress that social categorizations are extremely powerful in the construction and reproduction of social identities (Jenkins, 1994: 197). However, Jenkins maintained that “the impact on identity of categorization depends not simply on cognitive internalization, but also on its consequences, and the capacity of actors to make their identifications of others counts” (Jenkins, 2000: 7).

### **Discrimination and Prejudice**

Just like the other concepts that I have discussed earlier, discrimination have a great effect on the survival of street children, not only in Uganda but all over the world. Discrimination is any adverse distinction which deprives a person of equality of opportunity or behavior, and which is created by focusing on race, color, ill health, gender, belief, political view, or social origin (McKean, 1983). Discriminatory behaviors include actions ranging from exclusion to physical attack, and it can be delicate and confusing, or unambiguous and overt (Brown & Bigler, 2005). Elusive methods of discrimination are more difficult to detect but are just as harmful as explicit forms to the victims (Swim & Cohen, 1997). Although young children may be unaware about discrimination is, they may be affected by the biases, opinions of the society and discriminatory beliefs through socialization, in which a number of studies indicate that stereotyping and prejudice exist by as early as the age of four (Bigler & Liben, 2007).

Discriminatory attitudes will hinder children’s development and achievement with regard to learning and livelihood. Discriminatory conducts will also be strengthened from one generation to the next. Young children learn and absorb information at a rapid pace; it is important to instil the values of equal opportunities and positive behaviour while they are still young to eliminate discrimination in our community. This is because the discrimination and prejudice against street children is socially constructed which need to be deconstructed gradually. To eliminate discrimination as well as prejudice, a person should recognize how the discriminatory attitudes develop. And how it developed was embedded in categorization and labelling as a result of stigmatization.



## Chapter four: The Impact of Stigmatization on Street Children

### Introduction

The main argument of this chapter is embedded in the critical assessment of the impact of stigmatization on the survival of street children in Kampala. It discusses street children respond to the label of “Muyaaye” that was attached to them and how the label influences their behavior in an adult space. In order to have a clear picture of what life on the street look like for these children, this chapter discusses the findings that were drawn from the personal accounts of street children in Kampala. This chapter is divided into four sessions, the first session look at how the negative connotation of street children deprive street children from opportunities that can enable them to earn a living, most importantly how they are considered as the first suspect to any crime committed in the city. The coping strategies adopted for survival by these children are presented in the second session and the third session engaged in the analysis of the acceptance of the negative label of muyaaye attached to them by the community. While the voices of the girls are less visible as compared to those of the boys. The last session of this chapter ends up showing that in the discourse of impact of stigmatization on street children, girls are equally as much as the boys vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

### First suspect to crimes committed in the community

Byamugisha, a 15 year old boy, elaborate on how stigmatization and prejudice against street children in Uganda negatively impact on their survival in the city. In my discussion with him, I discovered that he was not really bothered about the difficulties that comes with the street life, his main concern was the limitation of survival that the negative connotation that “Muyaaye” carry with it. For Byamugisha, the label distinguishes them from other children that are under their parents care. He said that, the labelled of Muyaaye is enough to deprive them (street children) all the opportunities the city can offer. He described how Muyaaye is synonymous to thieves, untrained and uncultured children, and reckless lifestyles that carry a degree of insult to dehumanize them because they do not have parental guidance. In his words:

*“There are many children that help their parents to hawk goods on the street just like us but the government gives them special treatment. Anytime the government officials raid the street and arrest us, the first thing they do is to separate those that are living with their parents and us that do not have any guidance. They release them with their goods but for us the case is different. They confiscate our goods and take us to police stations or Kampiringisa Rehabilitation Centre outside the city because we are considered a stain to the society”.*

Kasenyua, one of the most vocal and oldest participants of one of the focus groups, in fact he has been in the street since the age of 9 years. He expressed his view on the negative impact that

negative connotation and labelling have on them. The stigmatization is so strong that people considered it a great insult to call them Muyaaye in Kampala. He said that if one wants to see a negative and aggressive reaction from anybody or children that are not living on the street, just call them Muyaaye and the reaction will be explosive. He explained further:

*“Living on the street would not be so difficult; it is not different in any way to the kind of life that everybody else in the city endures. But living on the street with the label of Muyaaye on your head is a terrible experience that I wish I never experienced. You are the first suspect to every crime committed in the community, they arrest you for a crime you did not commit, beat you and call you names such as ‘ebyana by’okunguudo’(children of the street). What I just do not understand is how people can be so cruel to think of children in such manners”* (Kasenya, 17, Male).

Most of these children surviving on the street have legitimate work and did not participate in any crime, yet they cannot enjoy the basic facilities or live a decent life that any other person will enjoy even if they have the money to pay for the services. Bogere, another participant during the focused group express how stigmatization has marginalized them and limit their movement. He was very sad about one of his experience when sharing it with the group.

*“Even though, I work so hard and earn money that can take care of my basic daily needs, I cannot eat at restaurants of my choice and visit play grounds that I desire. The moment I show up to buy food or to play with other children, the shop owners or the manager of the playground will chase me away like a wild dog”* (Bogere, 14, Male).

When the community makes plans, it does not take into consideration the street children’s’ plight. Street children tend to be excluded from participating in most of the activities and facilities of other children. This is one reason why street children often do not have access to health services, schooling, social amenities and employment opportunities. They face problems such as lack of immunizations; ill health, education with no skills needed for finding jobs (WHO, 2000:11). As a result of stigmatization, labeling, and prejudice, street children continue to live in the street with perpetual fear of being arrested or attacked by the hostile community. In line with Young's (2003:612) argument, street children's movements in the city of Kampala are restricted to some certain places; they are not allowed to be seen around some wealthy areas and locations such as hotels and classy restaurants. Young maintained that their removal from certain areas in the city is related to marginalization.

The survival of street children is deeply entrenched in the public space they occupy. Considering the experience of street children, in particular those that did not fall into the moral concept of the

adult, they easily fit into the picture of marginalized children. Taib (2014: 2) defined marginalized children “as children who are outside and peripheralized from the mainstream group or center of the society, they have little control of their lives, little resources available to them and subjected to stigmatization with negative public attitudes”. The greatest challenge children of the street encounter is dealing with the perceptions of those around them and the treatment they are consequently subjected to. It should be borne in mind that the majority of these children have already experienced multiple violations of their rights before spending time on the streets, whether at home or in care, including in institutions such as orphanages, detention centers, rehabilitation centers and juvenile justice institutions (UN, 2012: 7).

### Survival by solidarity.

There are several coping strategies that street children in Kampala adopted to survive in the face of stigmatization. This includes; - spending the whole night working - child labour, washing dishes in a restaurant, selling of empty boxes and the most common one is begging on the street. But not all of them are strong or old enough to fend for themselves; many rely on the supports of others because that is the only family they have. For instance, Ejau, 11, male said that,

*“It is very difficult to survive in Kampala without supports and one can be lonely and frustrated to the extent of losing hope. I am only alive today because my friends share with me their food when I don’t have any because on many occasions I can go for a whole week without finding a job to feed myself. The love and care I get from my friends is what makes me believe in myself and the confidence that I am not worthless”.*

Peers can be individuals who share common interests and needs. Peer groups tend to be homogeneous in age and gender. The peer group has a strong influence on street children because of the child's need for acceptance, belonging and protection. The group often determines the process of change, socialization and development among street children by providing emotional and material support. They help each other to survive and join together to form emotional and material support networks. “Experienced street children teach new comers how to survive. Members of the group share food, clothing, shelter, information and psychoactive substances” (WHO, 2000:17). Because street children are under persecution from both the government and the larger society, many people tend to cheat them when they work for them. The experience of Kibuuka, 13 years old boy explains how vulnerable these children can be. In his words,

*“There was a day I worked for a man that owns a business in Nakawa and he agreed to pay me shs.3000 after I finish the work. To my surprised he gave me shs.500 and said to me that I was lucky that he even paid me at all, he threatened me with police or to beat me up. I left in sadness because there was nothing to eat that day. My friends were angry and they decided to teach the man a lesson and*

*make an example of him because we have no rights and police protection against exploitation. We went back to his shop with refuse dumps and make a mess of his shop, we were about 20 in number holding sticks and he could not do anything. I was so happy to see the expression of shock on his face. I heard later that two other groups emulated us and since then nobody dare short-charge us, they will not want their home or shops to become refuse dump site (laughs)”.*

While some of the children rely on friends to protect each other, there are those who opted to join organized gangs. These gangs are led by adults, in most cases a child that also grew up in the street to adulthood, use drugs and engage in all sort of criminal activities. They even have their own designated territories where a certain gang is not supposed to cross over to other territories. Mukasa, a 13 years old boy relies on gangs and drugs for protection and to be able to sleep. He said that there is nothing painful than someone to feel worthless and unaccepted in his country because there is no way anybody can think clearly and make progress in such circumstances. He further shared his experience on the street;

*“I was around 8 years old with my brother when I came to Kampala, I was so young and older children use to collect my money and food, I don’t have a choice to join a gang even though it was painful. I deal with this pain by using drugs so that I can sleep overnight and to be honest after using drugs for more than a year now, I am more confident and whatever anybody say does not affect me any longer. I feel good, happy and more focused, the feeling is so good”.*

These mechanisms could be related to trade or activities in the streets and tend to be hierarchical. For example, there may be a leader and a spokesperson. The roles of group members can vary depending on their strengths and weaknesses. The members tend to protect each other in the face of gang wars, police arrests or other risky situations (WHO, 2000:18).

### **Acceptance of Street Child Identity:**

There are three main factors that determine the acceptance of the negative label placed on the street children by the society. This was evident in all the focus group discussion that I conducted. In fact it was the most heated discussion in all the focus group. The findings shows that acceptance depends on many factors which includes the age of the child, reason for the leaving his home and the number of years he has spent on the street. Although, labelling processes that stigmatize can and often do produce the conditions and living experiences that teach behaviors that are consistent with the labels. This need does not mean that people accept the meanings associated with the labels. For example, Kiwanuka a boy from one of the focus group discussion maintained a strong position about his identity; he argued that he is not a criminal, worthless or creating problem for other people.

*“I am a peace loving person, hardworking and trying everything to make my life better. I am not different from any other children and I have survived so far in the street for 2 years since I lost my parents to HIV/AIDS. It is a choice to or not accept the names people call you, anytime people call me thug or tout, my response to them always is that in what way I have hurt you? Many people have apologized to me after asking them the question and since then iam treated well” (Kiwanuka, 16, Male).*

Kiwanuka view about acceptance was supported by another participant of the focus group discussion,

*“I have my own business and am not working for anybody, I sell recharge cards on the street and the goods are mine, whatever profit I made is mine. I am saving a lot of money so that I can rent a shop that I will be using for my business at least in the next two years if I did not lose my goods to government raids. Many of these people that call me Muyaaye are jobless or working for somebody, but me I am working for myself with a chance of becoming a boss that will have employees in the future. Now tell me who is now a Muyaaye between me and those people” (Godfrey, 16, male).*

Perhaps the most useful idea developed in the course of the recent paradigm shift is that street children have "careers" on the street: moving out of family to the street, via different stages, relying on capability and increasing age to the processes of moving from the street, and far away from being always the result of adult intervention (Beazley 2003; Butler and Rizzini 2003; Invernizzi 2001). But there are those that have accepted their destiny as a street child and believed that it can never change again. This is the thought of Bayinda a 15 years old boy,

*“I have seen a lot in my seven years of living on the street and there is nothing I can do to change the perception of the people about me or other children like me. It is a waste of time trying to fight the label, when I was younger I always felt bad the way people treated me but now I am used to it so it does not affect me anymore. I think it is my destiny and I have to embrace it if I am going to have any chance of surviving on the street”.*

The transformation from victim to delinquent occurs as children turn to adolescents. There characters on the street also transform. It becomes easy for small children to make a living by begging. As street youths grow up, their standard of living raises whereas their earnings reduce, their part often being reduced looking after younger children in a street group. They also find that community acceptance of their street presence is reduced and life on the street may become increasingly dangerous for them. However, stigma is most effective when persons come to accept

the negative perceptions of them (Moncrifere, 2006: 42). Considerably, the ‘weak’ may indeed have weapons to counter the stigma but public resistance and bravado can coexist with private shame, which may be revealed, as described by Goffman (1963: 18). This is what exactly happened in the case of Abdallah, 14 years old boy,

*“Five years ago when I started living on the street, I used to abuse anybody that called me Muyaaye or any other negative names. I stopped because I realized that it does not change anything, they will still consider you as a nuisance to the society if you are still living on the street without your parent guidance or protection so I started to be more careful on how I behave. I remembered a day that one boy was helping his mother to sell pineapples and bananas on the street and was abused by a man, the boy went back to his mother’s shop to report and the whole family came back with police to arrest the man. Since that day, I realized that if you do not have parent or anybody to protect you like myself, you will always remain a Muyaaye and a victim to abuse”.*

Labelling processes reproduce conditions that facilitate the behaviors that the public expects. There is ample evidence that the alienation, forced exclusion, poverty and the techniques learnt for survival on the streets substantially increase the opportunities for ‘antisocial’ behaviors. These behaviors are, in turn, taken as justification (prime proof that the labels are not misplaced) for the categories and the labels (Moncrifere, 2006: 42). Time may be a more important factor in determining the categorization of street children. This can refer to the length of time living on the street- short stay, transient or long stay (Richter and van der Walt 2003). It can also be important to consider the age of a child leaving the family to street, and also to know that puberty is a moment of “career crisis” (Beazley 2003). It is not a surprise that children that have spent longer years on the street have come to accept the label and identity of a Muyaaye while the ones that have limited street life experience still fight against such label.

## **Gender Matters**

As I discussed earlier in Chapter two of this study, out of all the children I talked to both in focus group discussion and interviews, only three of them were girls. Although, visible on the street with lesser numbers in comparison with the boys. Street children are commonly discussed as if they were a homogeneous group with no difference in age or gender. I argue that there is a clear distinct in experience of a male and that of a female because they have diverse upbringings and experiences, diverse difficulties and indeed, not the same desires.

In order to have a clearer picture of the experience of street children on the street, the dissimilarity in treatment concerning gender is a noble place to start. In my discussion with Agnes, 16 years and Grace, 14 years old girls, I discovered that the stigmatization affected the girls in a many different ways. The two of them have different stories but with the same end result of abuse. For Agnes, she

came to the street with her two brothers from Gulu 7 years ago, and during those times she used to enjoy the protection of her brothers. However, her situation became worse when her brothers were arrested during the street raids and taken to prison two years ago. In order to survive she was forced into prostitution and she blamed the government for taking away her hope.

*“Before my brothers and I came to Kampala, things were difficult in Gulu. Our father had died and left us in the hands of my mother who also became ill and died years later. This left us with no choice but to come to the city. KCCA arrested my brothers, I had no one to run to. One day a friend promised me to take me to a place where I would be able to get a job. She took me to a bar and she told me I would make lots of money to sustain myself if I slept with men at the bar. I ended up into prostitution but I later quit after realizing that it was a risky venture. I was paid little money and at times I was not paid at all and what hurts me most even though I no longer sell my body people still call me Malaaya- a prostitute”* (Agnes, 16, female).

Grace also had this to say,

*“I came from Bombo where I used to stay with my family until my father decided to sell our land and told me to go and stay with my grandmother. I could not stand the living conditions there. Our neighbor made me escape from home and brought me to Kampala to work for a certain family as a house maid but I ended up being raped by the husband of aunty. I decided to run away from home and ended up on the street although the conditions here are terrible especially at night”* (Grace, 14, female).

Girls are not treated different anymore as it were in the past where they were more protected than the boys within the same family circle, this contributed to the low numbers of girls that are visible on the street. “Those who did find their way onto the streets were quickly taken up by ‘aunties’ who would give them a home and clothes in exchange for their services as prostitutes”( Rurevo & Bourdillon, 2003: 150). Rurevo and Bourdillon maintained that, despite the fact that girls who elect to live on the streets independently are extremely vulnerable to exploitation, especially sexual abuse. Like the boys, the girls, have shown that they can manage within networks that offer them some security (ibid).

## Chapter five: Interventions: Right-Based (Rescue model) vs Repressive/Protective (Sanitation model)

### Introduction

This chapter discusses the dissimilarity in the approaches of Uganda government and the NGOs in their response to the alarming increase of street children in Uganda. The data collected from the field demonstrates that while the NGOs are more into right-based approaches to rescue the children from their undesirably pitiable conditions, the government follows repressive approaches in order to ‘sanitize’ the city. In order to understand why the two major actors follow different path towards the wellbeing of the children, this chapter first discusses the views expressed by the adults in community on what they think about street children. This is because in any society, the call for government or NGOs response to any issue, be it positive or negative will first come from the society in most cases the adults. It is the community that will complain about insecurity in their area, or the needs for better welfare package.

### Community Perception Shaping Intervention Policies

In formulating policies, the government first listen to the society or else such policy will face a strong resistance from the public. Apparently, in Uganda, the policy of government and NGOs to address the problems of street children were influenced by diverse perception of the public on the street children. During my 6 weeks in Kampala, it was evident that the vast majority of the public stigmatized street children. There is no where you go that you do not hear people talking about them in negative way, even though some try to caution them towards generalization of all street children as criminals. Labels that have the power to stigmatize are propped up by discourses (Goffman’s stigma theory) that dehumanize and discriminate, and that explain the labeled group’s inferiority in terms such as inherent/essential biological differences, status/breeding or just reward for prior action (Moncrifere, 2006: 42). One man that I interviewed at a cyber café speaks of street children with disdained and fury despite the fact that he did not have any personal negative encounter with any of the street children. He yelled,

*“Those boys are criminals and the government needs to do more in removing them from the street. My friend had a terrible experience with them last year when he was going for a job Interview at Entebbe. These boys are very smart, two of them approached him begging for money at the bus station but he was not aware there was another one behind him with evil intention. After they left, he discovered that his wallet was missing when he wanted to pay for the bus fare, his wallet and that of other people were recovered by police during a night raid on where they stay three weeks later”.*



Another respondent also have this to say,

*“I used to tolerate them around my shop before but it got to a stage that I started losing customers because of their presence around my canteen. They wear dirty cloths and smell, and many of them involved in criminal activities such as pick pocket and using drugs”.*

Society usually perceives street children as difficult children who are a source of trouble. In general, the public thinks that street children are uncontrollable and violent, have no morals, have lost all the ability to feel emotions such as love and that they turn into terrorists and rebellious. They tend to be inconsiderate to the street children’s’ plight. (WHO, 2000: 12)

*“What is the business of 12 years old boy on the street if not of bad influence from the older ones? I used to work with one of the homeless center that the government created for taking care of these children and I will tell you that these children are rebellious children that do not want to be corrected. They enjoy the freedom of doing whatever they like without restriction, and you will agree with me that children need adult guidance to become better people. On many occasions, they will go out in the morning without coming back for months, we only see some of them again when the government officials raid the street and bring them back”* (Joyce 37 years, female).

This social reaction leads to stereotypes related to gender, ethnicity, and age; for instance, that all street girls are prostitutes (Lucchini 1994: 6) and street boys are junkies, and that younger children should be pitied but youths, particularly dark-skinned ones, ought to be feared (Huggins & de Castro 1996). However there are some members of the communities that treat street children with kindness and passion, they offer them free food, give them money and clothing. One of the respondents that interviewed said that,

*“Anytime I encounter people maltreating these children on the street, I always come to their rescue because I am a parent too. These children are on the street for various reasons; some of them are on the street because of poverty, abuse from home or even worse lost their parents to war or HIV/AIDS. I do not see any reason anybody should discriminate against them because it is not of their own choosing they are on the street. If the government is doing what it is supposed to do, they will not be on the street begging or trying to survive, these children deserve a better lifetime”* (Kyaligonza, 45, Male).

According to Human Rights Watch report, sometimes shop owners, market vendors, and others ask street children to undertake small jobs to earn money, offer them places to sleep off the streets, or assist them when the children are sick or injured, helping them get medical treatment. Some community members have even come to the aid of a street child when police demanded bribes for their release from detention. However, such assistance is few and far between, as community members have verbally abused, spat on, kicked, or slapped street children who pass by their businesses or homes (HRW, 2014:39). In the main, my encounter with the adults in various communities got me thinking and have a clearer understanding why the actions of the government are wildly supported on one hand, on the other hand, why the NGOs adopted the right-based approach. But before I discuss the clear differences in the intervention policy of the government and the NGOs, it is imperative that I discuss briefly the conditions for a good intervention and the two approaches I mentioned earlier.

### **Negotiating between children's needs and City image**

In designing intervention programs to support children that are living outside of family care, Ager and colleagues argued that, it is fundamental to understand what the children needs and the impact the care will have on the children (Ager et al, 2012: 732). This suggests that, interventions to address the care of street children should put into consideration both physical and psychological needs. Ager and colleagues notes that, various actors need to be thoughtful in using categories to distinguish children circumstances in their intervention programs (ibid: 738). This is because children that the interventions aim to help may be stigmatized as a result of labeling and categorizing beneficiaries (Gulaid, 2004), harmful to the children (Henderson, 2006), and may invoke pity or aggression towards the children (Cheney, 2005). The best way to avoid stigmatizing these children through intervention programs by governments and NGOs is through a rights-based approach that will look in-depth to the need of the children and not what the interventionist wanted.

During the design, implementation and evaluation of intervention to address the plight of street children, scholars (Ennew, 2003: Thomas de Benitez, 2003) have argued for a rights-based approach that is more participatory. This school of thought argued that, it is vital to pay attention by listening to street children who are most knowledgeable about the factors that send children to the street rather than viewing them as dangers or impending threat to the public order. Having this negative perception about the children, Berckmans et al (2012: 1260) argued that “the intervention will therefore be repressive towards them (for example; forced removals and lawful agreements)”. This approach is assumed as sensitive/ repression-oriented protective model which ignore the structural causes of problems (for example; poverty and social exclusion) but focus on immediate sources of problems (for example; basic needs) rather than on their structural causes (ibid). Even though the rights-based framework is universally acknowledged, it is not universally realistic, at least not in Uganda.

According to Bordonaro and Payne (2012), agency of the street children can hinder the social intervention programs put in place by actors. Even though, social intervention for street children are mostly assumed to participatory and child-focused, which enable the children to be part of decision making that recognized their capability for self-sufficiency and self-reflection. Bordonaro and Payne argued that there is a need to put the agency of the children in intervention in context “where children and youth threaten and challenge the existing moral and public order, at times in forceful ways, or when their very freedom and self-confidence mark them out as ‘deviant’ and contest established and normative notions of a ‘global childhood’ (Bordonaro & Payne, 2012: 366). The response of the Uganda police to the Human Right Watch Reports of 2014 on the abuse that street children suffered in the hands of the police officers and other government officials with total disregard to their agency is in consonant with the concept of Ambiguous Agency propounded by Bordonaro and Payne: This implies that children agency have limitation the moment it is considered harmful to the overall structure of the society. This is how the police responded to the Human Right Watch report of abuse:

*“The HRW focuses on the violation of Human Rights rather than the growing problem of children roaming the streets especially at night. They carry dangerous weapons like hand knives, metallic prick, iron bars, and have formed gangs and neighborhood cliques that control the city suburbs at night. They loot laptops, cell phones, wallets from persons and vandalize cars; sexually assault women isolated at night and in extreme cases participated in Murder” (New Vision, August 2nd 2014).*

### **Kampala City deserves a better look: Government Sanitation Model**

In Uganda, the intervention approaches of the government and NGOs are poles apart and in some cases the government tends to negate the intervention of the NGOs. Arbitrary arrest and rounding up of street children in Kampala is a common activity of the government. If the children were fortunate, police could handle them over to local NGOs. According to Human Right Watch (2014) “Ministry of gender, labour and social development regularly orders police to ‘clean the streets’ which includes getting children off the streets. These roundups of street children usually occur ahead of national events, formal visits, global conferences, or when communities express being tired of them” (HRW, 2014:29).

Stigma is often an open ticket to rights abuses. Individuals considered ‘barely human’ can suffer bodily and mental torture, apparently without remedy. Indeed, an adult with a negative label on his/her head will surely find it difficult to survive and live a normal not to mention a child that might not understand why the community is so cruel to him/her. When I asked the government officials if they realized that government response to get rid of street children from city of Kampala is tantamount to stigmatizing them which in turn makes the children to be vulnerable. Surprisingly, they did not see government actions as reinforcing stereotypes and stigma on the children rather;

they considered the presence of street children in Kampala as a stigma on the city. One of them reacted by saying,

*“If you are travelling to Kampala from other part of the country, the first sign that will tell you that you are in Kampala is the presence of street children. They are mostly from the Karamoja- Eastern Uganda, they can be found at every corner of the city streets. I know you call them homeless, but homeless people in US or other part of Europe do not litter the streets of capital city like this. It is an eye sore and the government is trying every possible means to get rid of this stigma on our city”.*

In Kampala, authorities took street children not charged with any crime to government-run centers for children charged with crimes or children who had already been charged and convicted of crimes. In other cases, the Ugandan police, or other authorities like KCCA in Kampala, forcefully returned children to their homes without considering the reasons why the children left their homes in the first place (HRW, 2014: 29). The government apparently is less concerned about the plight of the street children. In fact the government response to the plight of street children reinforced the negative perception of the community towards street children. Going by the responses I got from the government officials that I interviewed and the NGOs officers that are in charge of providing alternative housing to these children, it was clear that government partly contributes towards stigmatizing these children. In another interview that I had with the government (KCCA) official on the condition of his identity is kept confidential said that majority of the children on the street engaged in anti-social vices that is not befitting to a city like Kampala.

*“These children are nuisance to the society and they are making the effort of the government to be futile. The government provided housing centers and equipped it with the necessary facilities that will give them a better life than that of the street but they prefer to stay on the street because of the benefit that comes with their unlawful actions”.*

There is prevalent certainty within both the community at large and the police that street children are all criminals. Street children are often the first suspect when a crime, such as theft, is committed. Many street children expressed fear of the authorities and a total lack of protection on the streets. Police and officials from the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) threaten them at night, and beat them with batons, whips, or wires while demanding money or as a form of discipline for vagrancy. (HRW, 20014:5). Often, authorities react by rounding them up and dumping them in orphanages and sometimes return them back to their homes but they still flock back to the streets. According to Conticini (2008), when it comes to intervention policies and programs to reduce child poverty, street children are, without a doubt, the most misaddressed and misunderstood population in the world. However, “prejudice remains widespread in society, above all and among those who are leading interventions” (Bourgois, 1995 cited in Conticini, 2008: 414).

Conticini argued that street children have expressed their deep dissatisfaction against the type of services and programs that are designed for them, this is because of the understanding attached to the public beliefs around rehabilitation programs are nothing but arbitrary.

It is incomprehensible why government response or so called intervention is to arrests and takes them to Kampiringisa Rehabilitation Center. Kampiringisa Rehabilitation Center, the most feared place all parents in Uganda use to threaten their children when they are misbehaving has the status of a stinking, filthy place deprived of any future prospects. The center population has around 300 kids with age range between three and seventeen years with just seven staffs to look after them. Despite the fact that Ms. Karooro Okurut, the minister for Gender, Labour and Social Development acknowledged that little attention has been paid to the juvenile detention center by the government, which eventually puts the lives of the offenders at risk (Daily Monitor, 23<sup>rd</sup> October, 2013). The center lacks all the basic facilities that is befitting for any human habitation. If the center is originally meant for Juveniles that committed crimes, how come, this center is full of street children arrested by police during raids in the city? If no relatives are found, the street children remain there until their 18th birthday. Arguably, the government and the policy makers generalized that all street children are offenders, stereotyping them as criminals and that is why the only place they can take them to is a center meant for criminals. This action did not in any way address the underlying factors that push or pull the children to the street; this study has shown that street children can be resourceful and hardworking irrespective of the militating factors of street life.

Labeling people in a destructive way has a long-lasting negative bearing on individuals who experience the prejudice. Prejudice have lingering effects on the person that suffered the prejudice, and the impact of being stereotyped is beyond the moment when stereotyping transpires (Inzlicht et al, 2011: 234-239). Inzlicht and colleagues maintained that stereotypes effect can condition the behavior of the stereotyped, it can affect whether or not somebody act aggressively where it is recommended that “stereotype threat could contribute to the controversial issue of a “race-gap” in criminality” (ibid: 236). Whereas the government is focused on removing street children with all means necessary, the NGOs approach is distinctive in nature and participatory. Although, as discussed earlier, their response was also influenced by the perception of the public that shown concern and pity towards these children.

### **Non-State Actors: Rescue Intervention Model**

Local NGOs are at the forefront of providing protection and services to street children throughout many small towns in Uganda. Some end up “facilitating” the costs for police and district officials to carry out their ‘child protection duties’, means of transportation, and sometimes cash for services. According to the Human Right Watch (2014), district ordinances, in various cities of Uganda have criminalized providing support to street children because such assistance is considered to be a pull factor to the street. Even though it is a possibility that charitable donations given by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and private individuals also act as an

additional pull factor to entice children to come to and stay on the streets as supported by Wiehler (2002). These provisions, designed to protect children, should not be implemented in a way that curtails the work of local NGOs providing assistance such as food, education, and rehabilitation programs for street children given the multiple gaps in available government services. (HRW, 2014:8). Contrary to the government claim of providing housing centers for street children, Henry, a Volunteer for an NGO express his dissatisfaction with government response and attitude towards street children,

*“The government is doing absolutely nothing for the street children. The basic need for human being is not only shelter or food, it goes beyond that. You cannot keep children in rehabilitation centers where the government staffs beat them and talk to them as second class citizen. Even facilitation in these centers is inadequate. They will definitely run away, most of the children that we have helped out off the street said that they ran away from the centers because of maltreatment. No child will not want to sleep under the roof of a building if he has an opportunity to sleep in a healthier environment”.*

However, it appears that only the NGOs in Kampala shown concern about the welfare of the street children rather than how the city looks, a major concern of the government of Uganda. The NGOs complain about government threatening them with sanctions if they continue to accommodate street children that are supposed to be in government centers. Mrs. Kaweesa lamented that,

*“The government is not providing adequate care for these children and yet implements laws that will restrain us from helping them. I do not understand how a government will only be concerned about the beautification of the city when the future of the city is rotting away. I guess the beautification and transformation of the city is not meant for human beings because these children are the future of these country and they are being treated like trash”.*

Clearly, it is the NGOs that care about and in some cases try to save these children from the sorry state in which they live in both street and Kampiringisa Rehabilitation Center. For example, every week, Food step an international NGO visits Kampiringisa Rehabilitation Center with food items, cloths. They show love and affection with singing and most importantly give medical care and hygiene to children. In addition, they pay school fees for more than 100 children and have taken more than 25 children away from Kampiringisa to give them a better home in an apartment rented for the children monitored by two social workers. The only way a child can respond to any intervention program is to be loved and cared for; stigmatizing or stereotyping towards children is taking the hope for a better future away from them.

## Chapter six: Concluding Reflection

Generally, any attempt to intervene in people's lives is always difficult, complicated and can be considered a very complex venture, even if one's intentions are noble. In certain situations, such as those related to street children, the probability that intervention programs will be stimulated by emotion and fraught with moral obligations is very high. This is because street children are persons with specific life experiences and stories that cannot just be lumped together into one huge category in anticipation that they will respond in unanimity to a certain type of policy or programs of intervention. Reasonably, any policies and programs of intervention must be purposefully designed to meet the needs of a specific group of children, with careful consideration of all available variables in the context. Evidently, it is crucial and vital for various actors saddled with the responsibility of intervention programs and policies implementation to draw critical lessons from the failure and successes from other places with similar challenges of reducing the number of children in the street. At the same time, they must be ready to take risks and courageous in trying out new ideas and concepts, with continuous assessment of their performance in order to ascertain if they have failed or succeeded.

This study has been able to show that the most complex and difficult encounter street children are confronted with is the herculean task of dealing with the opinions and perceptions of people around them and the treatment they are subsequently subjected to on the daily basis. It is imperative to bear it in mind that vast majority of these children have one way or the other experienced various violations of their rights (whether home-based or in care institutions such as orphanages, rehabilitation centers, juvenile detention centers) that preceded their decision to move into the street. The state of Kampiringisa Rehabilitation Center described in chapter five is more than enough reasons for any child to refuse government gestures of intervention. Apart from the fact that the centers lack adequate facilities such as portable water, beds, standard health provisions, nutritious food rations, sources of income for children, or potentials to acquire vocational skills and quality educations to improve their standard of life. Perpetual harassment, beating and name calling by the staffs in the centers are a catalyst for children to risk the danger of staying in the street and consider street life as more suitable and palatable than the government intervention programs.

Street children, like any other children have dreams and ambitions and this study has shown that being on the street is not the end of the world. Even though, one can argue that the street is not a place meant for children, in reality children will continue coming to the street for various reasons. If the negative perceptions about street children continue to stigmatize them, they might end up getting stuck on the street with no hope of getting out. It should be borne in mind that; - 'street children' is a socially constructed category, which will eventually make policy-making and intervention design difficult because 'street children' is not a homogeneous population. In reality,

the characteristics of street children in Kampala are very diverse (age, language, sex, ethnicity, social origin and economic status), most importantly; - the reasons that made them choose street life are distinctive in nature. Yet, street children in most cases are portrayed as boys that engaged in the use of drugs, premature sexual activity with criminal behaviour. This study was able to bring to the fore the voice of the girls in Kampala city. They are subjected to various forms of abuses and stigmatized just as the boys.

In this study, the stereotypes that were captured from the adult's attitudes in the community towards street children are more than the reality of individual children's lives. Such images are tricky because they fail to capture different realities of street children. It is true that some of the children engaged in criminal activities such as stealing, pick-pocketing, drugs and other anti-social vices. In this study, we have been able to show that there are those that are driven by ambitions which are engaged in noble works to earn their income legally. In Uganda, the majority of street children are seen as delinquent, which in turn made them to be subjected to violence and end up in Kampiringisa Rehabilitation Center. In the cases where they are seen as victims, they are treated as passive objects of welfare and rescue mission, ignoring the facts that some of them are doing better in the street compared to welfare package that they are offered.

This study highlighted the dissimilarity in the approaches of Uganda government and the NGOs in their response to the alarming increase of street children in Uganda. While the NGOs are more into right-based approaches to rescue the children from their undesirably pitiable conditions, the government follows repressive approaches in order to 'sanitize' the city. The importance of community perceptions in shaping policies and interventions programs designed for street children by government and non-state actors was critically discussed in this study. I argued that, in the process of policies formulation in relation to street children in Kampala, the government listens to the yearning of members of the society. Since the vast majority of the public stigmatized street children as criminals, the government approach was nothing less than brutal and repressive. Even though the government of Uganda is expected to play the role of the primary duty bearer for all children which includes street children. On the contrary, this study has shown clearly that the government is apathetic towards the well-being of street children.

On the whole, I argued that, even without stigmatization and negative label, living in the city of Kampala with no shelter, exposure to drugs, alcohol, sexual exploitation, gang beating, foraging for scraps of food in the garbage, begging, stealing or doing the most menial of jobs is capable of denying them a normal life in comparison to other children with parental guidance. The stigma and prejudice street children encounter in their daily lives make them more vulnerable and surviving in the city of Kampala a herculean task. The study established that societal stigmatization encountered by street children can hinder the success of any meaningful intervention attempt if the actors did not critically assess the impact that it has on the children they are planning to help. The lens through which the government or NGOs and society view these children to a large extent influences the types of intervention they design to address the plight of the children. And children that have already suffered from mental torture of stigmatization and labeling might not want to



leave the street which will eventually render all Government and NGOs' intervention to remove the children from the streets ineffective. It is time to look beyond the causal factors that push children to the street, successively including children experience on the street in the design of intervention program will make intervention programs to be more effective.

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Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the protection and promotion of the rights of children working and/or living on the street, 2012

[http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session19/A-HRC-19-35\\_en.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session19/A-HRC-19-35_en.pdf)

Government to give Kampiringisa children's home facelift

<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Govt-to-give-Kampiringisa-children-s-home-facelift/-/688334/2043246/-/gco4kn/-/index.html>

## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### List of respondents

No.	Interviewee(Not real names)	Sex Male/Female	Age	Category of interviewee	Participation	Place of interview	Date of interview
1.	Byamugisha	Male	15	Street child	Interview	Kisenyi	18 – July – 2014
2.	Kasenyia	Male	17	Street child	FGD	Katwe	21 – July – 2016
3.	Bogere	Male	14	Street child	FGD	Katwe	21 – July – 2016
4.	Ejau	Male	11	Street child	Interview	Kisenyi	18 – July – 2014
5.	Kibuuka	Male	13	Street child	Interview	Kisenyi	18 – July – 2014
6.	Mukasa	Male	13	Street child	Interview	Kisenyi	18 – July – 2014
7.	Kiwanuka	Male	16	Street child	FGD	Katwe	26 – July – 2014
8.	Godfrey	Male	16	Street child	FGD	Katwe	26 – July – 2014
9.	Bayinda	Male	15	Street child	FGD	Katwe	26 – July – 2016
10.	Abdallah	Male	14	Street child	Interview	Kisenyi	18 – July – 2014
11.	Kayonga	Male	17	Street child	Interview	Kisenyi	18 – July – 2014
12.	Gonza	Male	17	Street child	Interview	Katwe	21 – July – 2014
13.	Agnes	Female	16	Street child	Interview	Katwe	21 – July – 2014
14.	Grace	Female	14	Street child	Interview	Kalerwe	21 – July – 2014
15.	Ritah	Female	14	Street child	Interview	Kalerwe	21 – July – 2014
16.	Opio	Male	15	Street child	FGD	Wandegeya	26 – July – 2014
17.	Egesa	Male	16	Street child	FGD	Wandegeya	26 – July – 2014
18.	Tugume	Male	11	Street child	FGD	Wandegeya	26 – July – 2014
19.	Kirabo	Male	11	Street child	FGD	Wandegeya	28 – July – 2014
20.	Sekisaka	Male	16	Street child	FGD	Wandegeya	28 – July – 2014
21.	Dumba	Male	14	Street child	FGD	Wandegeya	28 – July – 2014

22.	Musa	Male	17	Street child	FGD	Wandegeya	28 – July – 2014
23.	Masika	Male	14	Street child	FGD	Wandegeya	28 – July – 2014
24.	Joloyo	Male	15	Street child	FGD	Wandegeya	28 – July – 2014
25.	Kamoga	Male	-	Adult	interview	Kisenyi	01 – September – 2014
26.	Otto	Male	-	Adult	interview	Kisenyi	01 – September – 2014
27.	Sanyu	female	-	Adult	interview	Kisenyi	01 – September – 2014
28.	Pius	Male	-	Adult	interview	Kisenyi	01 – September – 2014
29.	Dan	Male	-	Adult	interview	Kalerwe	02 – September – 2014
30.	Nabwire	Female	44	Adult	interview	Kalerwe	02 – September – 2014
31	Joyce	Female	37	Adult	interview	Kalerwe	02 – September – 2014
32.	Patrick	Male	-	Gov't official	interview	KCCA	04 – September – 2014
33.	K.P	Male	-	Gov't official	interview	KCCA	05 – September – 2014
34.	J.D	Male	-	Adult	interview	Kalerwe	02 – September – 2014
35.	Kaweesa	Male	-	NGO worker	interview	Kisenyi - Retrack	03 – September – 2014
36.	Namubiru	Female	56	Adult	interview	Wandegeya	02 – September – 2014
37.	P.N	Female	-	NGO worker	interview	Kalerwe- Retrack	08 – September – 2014
38.	Ben	Male	-	Adult	interview	Wandegeya	02 – September – 2014



## **Appendix B**

### **Interview guide**

#### **Street children**

Name.....Age.....Sex.....Date .....

1. Where did you come from to Kampala? And whom did you come with?
2. Are your parents alive?
3. Why did you leave home?
4. Why did you come to Kampala in particular yet we have other towns?
5. For how long have you been on the street?
6. Where do you sleep? Do you have any challenges you face at night?
7. What are you doing for survival?
8. How are you treated by employers if any? And how much are you paid?
9. Do you have friends on the street? Boys or girls or both? In what ways do friends help you?
10. Which names do your friends call you? And how about other people- I mean adults in this community?
11. What do you do when they call you such names?
12. How do people see you and treat you and why do you think you are treated like that?
13. Have you been denied certain things because you are a street child, which things and why?
14. How do you make sure that you access them?
15. Have you ever been rounded up? By who and when?
16. How were you treated? And where were you taken?
17. Whom did you find there and how were you treated?
18. What are your future plans?

#### **Adults in the society**

Name.....Age.....Sex.....Date.....Marital status.....

1. Do you have children? Has your child ever ran away from home to the street? If yes why? And what do you think of that child?
2. Do you make all possible ways of returning him/her home?
3. What is your perception about street children?
4. Do you agree that they are a threat to people? Why?
5. Do you think they are different from other children? Why?
6. Has a street child ever begged you? How did you react?
7. Do you support the roundups made by the government to get them off the street?
8. Has the government strategy worked in reducing the numbers?
9. If not why and what could be done to have an effective strategy?
10. NGOs have provided aid for these children. What do you think about it?
11. Has it reduced or increased the number of children on the street?

**Government officials**

Name.....Tittle.....Position.....Date.....

1. What is your stand on the increasing number of street children in Kampala city?
2. Are these children part of your strategy to clean up the city?
3. Are you aware of the stigmatization street children face on the street?
4. If yes what have you done to fight it?
5. Where do you expect them to be because most of them are not willing to go back to where they came from? And rehabilitation centers are not in favorable conditions?
6. How do you intend to succeed and do you feel satisfied with your intervention? If yes why? If no why?
7. Do you face any challenges in effecting your intervention? If yes how do you deal with it?
8. What would you recommend as strategies in ensuring that street children are not stigmatized as you intervene to get them off the street?
9. Do you think you have done enough? How do you determine your effort?
10. How have you involved the street children in your effort to get them off the street?

**NGOs officials**

Name.....Tittle.....Position.....Date.....

Name of organization.....

1. What is your perception on street children?
2. How long have you been working with street children?
3. How have you intervened to help in getting street children off the streets of Kampala?
4. Do you agree that these children are stigmatized? If yes in which ways?
5. What can be done to fight this stigma they face?
6. Do you support the existing strategy of getting children off the street? And have the existing interventions worked? If yes why? If no why?
7. Do you think you have reduced the number of street children on the streets of Kampala? If yes why? If no why?
8. Do you think the government intervention in getting street children off the street will work?
9. What would you recommend the government to do in getting street children off the street?

Thank you for sharing your views with me.