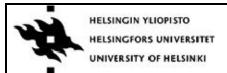GETTING CHILDREN OUT OF THE STREET?

Ethnographic study on children's perspectives and street children centres' strategies

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Työn nimi / Arbetets titel – Title		
Getting children out of the street? Ethnographic study on children's perspectives and street children centres' strategies		

Oppiaine /Läroämne – Subject		
Development studies		

Työn laji/Arbetets art – Level	Aika/Datum – Month and year	Sivumäärä/ Sidoantal – Number of pages
Master's thesis	12/2016	110 + appendix

Tiivistelmä/Referat – Abstract

Street children is a broad topic that has been studied by various researchers often focusing on some more specific part, for example street life and activities in the street. In the previous years, the voices of the children themselves have been increasingly taken into account. In this study the focus is on the ways of helping the children and how to support them to get out of the street. The aim is to find the best practices to support the children and to see if the strategies of the centres meet the needs of the children. Therefore, it is important to study why the children have ended up in the street at the first place and what kind of survival strategies they have. Also the reasons for them to run away back to the street again are discussed.

The study is an ethnographic case study. The methods used for data collection were interviews and participant observation. The field study was conducted in Lusaka, Zambia, in three different centres for street children. Some participant observation was done in the street too. For clarity's sake the perceptions of the children and the strategies of the centres are analysed and discussed in different chapters.

The findings show that there are various push factors for children ending up in the street, for example poverty and violence at home. Also not having anywhere to go to and the need to survive are pushing children to the street. Running away from the centres is linked to violence but also to freedom, addiction to drugs and alcohol as well as peer pressure. In the street the most usual activity is begging, which is considered as a mean of survival. Aside of begging, children do different kinds of piece works. Street life is hard and unsafe: there is violence, hunger, theft and addiction to glue and drugs. The friends in the street were seen as an important thing in order to survive. Among the children, the centres are generally considered as a good way to get out of the street, alongside education. However, the violence used in some centres is criticised and the child's willingness to go to the centre is considered as important. Children who are willing to come to the centres can be found through street outreach.

From the point of view of the centre staff children working and staying in the street is problematic because these children are deprived of their rights, for example right to education. Often the children do have parents or relatives but they are working in the street in order to support the families. The domestic work is considered as a normal thing whereas the work in the street is seen as abuse and exploitation. Sometimes the parents even send the children to the street to earn money. Work in the street often prevents the children from going to school but sometimes the work can help them to afford going to school. However, children working in the street are often taken advantage of. Both the street life and the work in the street has a lot of consequences for the child's health and well-being, both physical and psychological. Despite the hardships in the street, there is also friends, belonging and freedom. A simple solution to tackle the street child phenomenon is to stop giving money to the children in the street and direct them to the facilities, where they can obtain education and life skills. The staff of the centres have a consensus of home being the best place for the child.

The children's perceptions are somewhat similar to the strategies of the centres when discussing the best ways to help the children. One simple solution is to stop giving the children money in the street. For the child to integrate to the society he/she needs a place he/she can consider as home, family or guardians, rehabilitation and education. Also the government's intervention would be important in order to support the families to get help from the social welfare and to send the children to school.

This study contributes to the discussion of street children, their lives in the street and how to help them, both from the point of views of the children and the staff of the centres.

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Tiivistelmä/Referat – Abstract

Katulapsia ja heidän elämäänsä on tutkittu paljon, keskittyen erityisesti katulasten elämään ja aktiviteetteihin kadulla Viime vuosina lasten oma ääni on alettu ottaa yhä enemmän huomioon tutkimuksissa. Tässä tutkimuksessa keskiössä ovat keinot, joiden avulla lapset pyritään saamaan pois kaduilta. Tutkimus käsittelee sekä lasten omia että katulapsikeskusten työntekijöiden näkemyksiä katuelämästä ja lasten auttamisesta. Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on löytää parhaita käytäntöjä lasten paremman elämän saavuttamiseksi ja selvittää, kohtaavatko katulapsikeskusten strategiset tavoitteet katulasten tarpeita ja toiveita. Ratkaisuja etsittäessä on tärkeää tarkastella syitä, joiden vuoksi lapset ovat päätyneet kaduille sekä sitä, millaisia selviytymisstrategioita he käyttävät elämässään. Tutkimuksessa selvitetään lisäksi syitä sille, miksi lapset usein palaavat keskuksista takaisin kadulle.

Tämä tutkimus on etnografinen tapaustutkimus, jonka metodeina käytetään haastatteluja ja osallistuvaa havainnointia. Kenttätutkimus tehtiin Lusakassa, Sambiassa, kolmessa eri katulapsikeskuksessa. Osallistuvaa havainnointia tehtiin myös kadulla katulasten parissa. Analyysiosiossa lasten ja keskusten työntekijöiden osuudet käsitellään selkeyden vuoksi erillään toisistaan.

Monet tekijät, kuten esimerkiksi kotona vallitseva köyhyys ja väkivalta, ajavat lapsia kadulle. Huolestuttavaa on se, että myös katulapsikeskuksista lapset karkaavat väkivallan tai muiden syiden takia. Muita syitä kadulle paluuseen saattavat olla mm. vapauden tunteen kokemus, huumeet, alkoholi sekä kavereiden painostus. Kadulla lasten tyypillisin aktiviteetti on kerjääminen, joka nähdään selviytymiskeinona. Kerjäämisen lisäksi lapset tekevät mahdollisuuksien mukaan erilaisia yksinkertaisia töitä, kuten esimerkiksi autojen pesu tai ravintoloiden roskien tyhjennys. Elämä kadulla on rankkaa ja turvatonta. Lapset joutuvat väkivallan uhreiksi, he kärsivät nälkää ja joutuvat ryöstetyiksi ja osallisiksi varkauksiin sekä huumeriippuvuuksiin. Kavereiden merkitys korostuu kadulla selviytymisessä. Koulunkäyntimahdollisuuksien järjestäminen katulapsikeskusten ohella ovat hyviä keinoja edesauttaa katulapsia pois kaduilta. Lapset kuitenkin kritisoivat joidenkin keskusten harjoittamaa väkivaltaa ja painottavat, että lapsen tulisi saada mennä keskukseen omasta halustaan pakottamisen sijaan. Vierailemalla kadulla lasten parissa säännöllisesti voidaan löytää lapset, jotka olisivat halukkaita menemään katulapsikeskukseen.

Katulapsikeskusten työntekijöiden mukaan katulapsilta riistetään lasten oikeuksien lisäksi mahdollisuus koulunkäyntiin. Huolimatta siitä, että useilla katulapsilla on vanhemmat tai muita sukulaisia, joutuvat lapset työskentelemään kadulla osallistuakseen perheen toimeentulon hankkimiseen. Kotityöt nähdään normaalina osana lasten elämää, kun taas kadulla tapahtuvaa työtä pidetään lasten hyväksikäyttönä ja siksi haitallisena. Lasten työskentely kadulla usein estää heidän koulunkäyntinsä mutta joissakin tapauksissa voi myös edistää lapsen kouluun pääsyä. Katuelämällä ja kadulla tehtävällä työllä on epäedullisia vaikutuksia lapsen fyysiseen ja psyykkiseen terveyteen ja hyvinvointiin. Huolimatta katuelämän ankaruudesta, on todettava, että kaduilla lapsilla voi olla myös ystäviä ja he kokevat tietynlaista vapauden tunnetta. Tutkielmani pohjalta yksinkertaisena ratkaisuna katulapsi-ilmiöön ehdotetaan, että ihmiset lopettaisivat antamasta rahaa katulapsille. Lisäksi lapset tulisi ohjata katulapsikeskuksiin, joissa he voivat aloittaa koulunkäynnin ja hankkia elämään tarvittavia perustaitoja. Katulapsikeskusten työntekijät ovat yksimielisiä siitä, että mikäli mahdollista, on koti paras paikka lapselle.

Katulasten ja katulapsikeskusten työntekijöiden näkemykset tavoista auttaa lapsia ovat yhteneväiset. Yksinkertaisena ratkaisuna molemmat ryhmät näkevät sen, että ihmiset lopettaisivat rahan antamisen katulapsille. Jotta lapset voisivat sopeutua yhteiskuntaan, he tarvitsevat kodin, perheen tai luotettavan huoltajan. Katulapsia tulee vieroittaa huumeista ja alkoholista ja lapsille tulee turvata mahdollisuus koulunkäyntiin. Valtion tuki sosiaalihuollon muodossa olisi perheille tärkeää, jotta perheet voisivat saada lapsensa kouluun.

Tämä Pro-Gradu tutkielmani ottaa kantaa katulasten elämään ja pyrkii nostamaan esiin käytäntöjä, joiden avulla lasten joutumista kaduille voitaisiin ennaltaehkäistä. Tutkielmassa huomioidaan sekä lasten että katulapsikeskusten työntekijöiden näkemyksiä.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Selection of the topic

This Thesis investigates the topic of street children in Lusaka, Zambia. My first encounter with a child begging in the street was in 2009 in Cambodia when I encountered a little girl begging money for food from tourists around a tourist attraction. The way the little girl and the other children were spending their day begging got me interested in the reasons behind begging and child work in the street.

I wrote my Bachelor's thesis on the topic of child work in general, and decided to continue under the same topic in my Master's thesis. Selecting the street children in Lusaka, Zambia, as my case study was natural, since I had been staying in Lusaka before during my exchange program at the University of Zambia. I also had a chance to visit two of the centres participating in this study already a year before on my holiday.

My initial plan was to study the work and activities the children are doing in the street and their experiences and perceptions. In addition, I wanted to know what kind of perceptions the staffs of the selected centres have on the topic. However, during the interviews several interesting issues and viewpoints on the strategies to help the children were raised up, so I changed my research question while I was in the field. The new focus was on the perceptions and experiences of the children[1] on street life and the ways to help them and the strategies implemented by the selected centres[2].

1.2 Street children

Street children as a general issue has been extensively studied in the previous research. Under the broad topic of street children, research focuses on more specific parts of the phenomenon, for example on child work and begging or street life and children's perceptions (see for example Abebe 2008, 2009; Kilbride et al., 2000; Liebel, 2004). In

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[1] In my study I use 'child' and 'children' when referring to children and youths, even though many of the informants in the study were teenagers. But since a person under 18 years is generally defined as a child (Bromley & Mackie, 2009, 142), I decided to stick to the use of 'child'.

[2] Two of the three places were actual centres whereas one was more like children's home with a home kind of setting. However, for clarity I use the word 'centre' to refer to all of them.

my master's thesis my focus is on the ways to help the children to get out of the street and how to keep them from going back there. Therefore, it is inevitable to discuss the reasons why children end up in the street at the first place, what kind of activities they have in the street and what makes them run away back to the street again.

Street children as a concept has different definitions (see for example Bromley & Mackie, 2009; Manjengwa et al., 2016; Pinzón-Rondón, Hofferth and Briceño, 2008). In my study I use it as a broad category including both children staying in the street and children working in the street. The reasons for children ending up in the street are various, poverty being one of the biggest push factors. In order to survive in the street the children are involved in different activities, for example begging.

When discussing the ways to help the children to get out of the street, it is important to know the reasons why they keep on running away from the centres and homes. The strategies of the centres and other facilities for the children should be discussed critically. Also the perceptions of the children themselves should be taken into consideration. Therefore this is a relevant and important research topic in the discussion of child work and street children in the field of development studies.

1.3 Purpose of the study and research problems

Street children and street life are well studied topics (see for example Abebe, 2008; Ennew, 2002; Manjengwa et al., 2016; Kilbride et al., 2000). Also child work and the activities of the children in the street have been studied in different researches (see for example Bourdillon, 2006; Liebel, 2004). A current trend in the research has been to give more value to the perceptions and experiences of the children (see Kilbride et al., 2000; Omokhodion et al., 2005).

In the same vein, in my study I want to present the perceptions and suggestions of the children themselves. In addition to the experiences of the children, I am interested in the perceptions of the staff members of the selected centres on the topic and the strategies the centres have. Finally, my purpose is to study whether the strategies of the centres meet the needs of the children. Therefore, this study intends to answer the following research questions:

1. How do street children perceive their life in the streets and the ways they could be helped?

2. What kind of perceptions and strategies the selected centres have in order to help the children working and staying in the street?

I will approach these questions through an ethnographic case study conducted in Lusaka, Zambia. The qualitative research material used in this research contains interviews and participant observation in three different centres and observation in the street between November 2012 and March 2013.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is structured in the following way. In chapter two I will present the discussion and previous research on the topics of childhood, street children and their activities in the street. This will provide the background and concepts for my analysis. In chapter three I will present the methodology I used as well as the ways I used for data collection and analysis. Chapters four and five are the chapters of the results. In chapter four I will present the results from the point of view of children and in chapter five the strategies and perceptions of the staff members of the centres. Finally, I will present conclusions including some suggestion for future practice.

2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES: DEBATING CHILDHOOD, STREET CHILDREN AND CHILD WORK

In this Chapter I will position my study within relevant literature. In this investigation, I do not draw from one particular theoretical framework, rather, my empirical investigation is inspired by the previous research touching the topic. I have selected the following themes: the concept of childhood; street children and children in the street; and work and livelihood. These three themes are all relevant when studying the ways to help the children in the street. I was reading recent articles on these themes and chose the most relevant ones for this study, mainly the ones in the context of Africa. In what follows, I will discuss the theories, concepts, and previous research on these themes, and describe their relevance to my particular study.

It is important to define who is a child (especially in Zambian context) and who the street children are, what does the term 'work' include and how begging can be seen. How children understand their activities is also a question to be considered; whether they feel that they are going to work or do they think that their daily activities are not work but survival strategies of everyday life.

Since my study geographically takes place in Lusaka, Zambia, I start with a short contextualization in regard to the city and especially the status of children in the street.

The Zambian context

Zambia is a landlocked country with rapidly growing population. In 2013 the total population of Zambia was 15,246,086 whereas in 2015 the population was 16,211,767. (World Bank, a). Lusaka, the capital of Zambia, is physically scattered and socioeconomically divided city. The socioeconomic landscape of Lusaka is still undergoing transformations that offer ramifications for young people (Hansen, 2005, 5). As the capital of Zambia, Lusaka is a regional hub and is experiencing rapid growth and population growth, both because of natural urban population increase and rural-urban migration. In 2015 the number of urban population in Zambia was 6,634,18 (The World Bank, b).

The demographic structure in African countries – also in Zambia – is very young. At the same time many countries in Africa are suffering an economic decline and the future

prospects for young people are not very good. Gough (2008) reminds how the extended family was affected under colonialism and that many families have also been affected by HIV and AIDS. (ibid., 244-245). HIV and AIDS are big challenges in Zambia too. Although HIV prevalence in the country is slowly decreasing, in 2014 prevalence of HIV was still 12,4% (of the total population ages 15-49) (World Bank, a). Gough (2008) sums that the factors leading to the downward social mobility of the youth in Lusaka are loss of relatives – usually through HIV/AIDS –, lack of employment, and overall declining economy (ibid., 253).

The economic situation in Zambia has been poor since the mid-1970s. Despite of this the country still exports copper and other minerals. Many agricultural exports have increased through the global economy. (Hansen, 2008, 100). The opportunities for formal employment and education in Lusaka are poor and there is insufficient housing stock and a rapid growth of informal settlements with inadequate infrastructure. (Hansen, 2008, 14).

The education sector in Zambia is governed by the Education Act of 2011 (MESVTEE & Unicef, 2014, viii). However, poverty is a significant factor for out-of-school children. They are also in higher risk of repeating classes. Also child labour is also a factor keeping children out of school. In rural areas 95% of out-of-school children are involved in agricultural sector child labour. The risk of dropping out of school should be addressed adequately because prevention is better than bringing the drop-outs back. (ibid., 77).

Lusaka city planning, including housing and infrastructure, was affected by the general economic decline in Zambia in the early 1970s (Gough, 2008, 246). The squatter settlements were formed during the British colonial era when the urban population needed to find solution to the housing shortage (Hansen, 2008, 149). Hansen (2008) sees that the colonial urban planning still has the imprint in Lusaka. Today it is income that differentiates residential areas, their infrastructure and services provided. (ibid., 6). The fall in copper prices has forced many young people to leave the towns in the Copperbelt and many of these youth and their families have moved to Lusaka. People are also moving between rural and urban areas in search for employment. Some of these young people feel they are stuck in Lusaka and unable to leave back. In addition to

moving between places, young people also move within Lusaka. (Gough, 2008, 250-251).

Hansen (2008) has researched the processes constraining and enabling young people to change their lives in Lusaka. He describes the way the young people in Zambia are facing both inclusion and exclusion to the global economies. The economic situation of the country is closely linked to the country's political and economic colonial history as a mining centre. Hansen is looking at the era of neoliberal politics and economics that was launched when the one-party state yielded to multi-party rule in 1991. The new liberalized economic development priorities sharpened socio-spatial polarizations that are particularly visible in urban areas: street vendors have been displaced by shopping malls and low-income families are living at the edge of the city. (ibid., 98-99). Structural adjustment programs (SAPs) and privatization have pushed many people from formal into informal economy. Young people have challenges in entering jobs even in informal economy and this is the reason they end up doing low-level jobs. (ibid., 101). Most of the youth face both exclusion and inclusion in their urban life (Hansen, 2005, 5).

All in all, the context of this study, the rapidly-growing capital of Zambia, Lusaka, is characterized by socio-economically divisions, slowly decreasing HIV/AIDS rates and poverty. All these are significant factors for children to be out of school and on the streets. Not only children but also several young people are facing challenges to have an impact on their own lives. The research is done in the streets of Lusaka and at the centres for the children who have been or still are in the street. Depending on the case, the children are either staying in the centre or visiting the centre facilities during daytime.

2.1 The contested concept of childhood

Emergence of "childhood" as a separate stage of life – historical debate

To discuss about street children and their lives, it is essential to view the different conceptions of childhood first. Childhood has been described all the way from thirteenth century for example by Philippe Ariès (1962). The term childhood can refer to different stages in a person's life. Ariès has written about childhood already in the 60's and introduces different life stages: childhood, puberty, adolescence, youth, senility, and old

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age. Each of these describe different periods in person's life. (ibid., 19). The ambiguity between childhood and adolescence on the one hand and youth on the other hand has remained even though a vocabulary relating to infancy has expanded during the time and awareness of youth became a general phenomenon after the First World War (ibid. 29-30).

Legal definitions of "child"

Usually it is understood that a child is a person under 18 years old, unless national legislation has different limits. However, this definition seems to be more important among the researchers than in developing world. This is because in the developing world childhood is often seen continuous and for example child work is really commonplace. (Bromley & Mackie, 2009. 142).

There are also firm arguments stating that childhood is not only an immature stage of preparation for adult life but it involves important tasks for society. Liebel (2004, 77) sees the work of children as a good example of this. This also shows that the Western view of childhood, that also international agencies like UNICEF and ILO are using, is very restricted.

Contemporary definitions

Childhood is a socially constructed category and in the late-modern Western society childhood has been debated both in academic and public discussions (O'Connell Davidson, 2005, 20). Bourdillon (2006) finds two different approaches of childhood. One approach sees childhood as *"a time to be cared by others, free for learning and leisure, without care or responsibility, outside the market forces of the adult world"*. According to this approach, employment and gainful work do not belong to childhood; only working for learning is acceptable. This approach, which is often typified as the Western liberal view, also sees all different kind of childhoods as lost or stolen. Another approach Bourdillon presents understands different childhoods and conceptions of them. The approach sees childhood as continuous with the adult world and children are gradually moving into the adult activities. In this movement work is normal to the development of the child. There are also different material and cultural conditions and these vary according to the age, capability and gender. The division of adulthood and childhood is problematic because it is difficult to say when a person is passing from one

state to another. Some studies see childhood to be radically different from adulthood. In some societies the authorities pay more attention to the agency of children but some societies stress a universal normative concept of childhood. (ibid., 1202, 1205).

Many adults in Zambia – including parents, teachers and government workers – define young people in dependency terms that imply problematic terms. Youth see themselves as getting ready for adulthood. Their entry to adulthood depends on the socio-spatial space where they are. (Hansen, 2005, 13). In Zambia youth is usually defined broadly as the period from 12 or 15 to 35. Youth can be distinguished from children by their maturity – socially and sexually. The distinguishing factor can also be the dependence or relying on others for food, shelter, and clothing. (Hansen, 2008, 102-103.) In sub-Saharan Africa the term "youth" is seen differently when it comes to young men than in the case of young women. The term is usually associated with young men from 15 to 30 years of age whereas girls face youth as a short term between puberty and marriage and motherhood. (ibid., 9). Often the young people are considered as adults when they are moving out of their childhood homes (ibid., 127). However, in the context of street children, moving out of the childhood home can happen at very a young age when the person is still clearly a child. When trying to define what it is to be a child in the modern era, Abebe (2009) has noticed that working and street childhoods contradict when looking at them from the cross-cultural research point of view (ibid., 276).

In Zambia HIV/AIDS has left many young children orphans. Children can also live in extended families with their parents, grandparents or other relatives. Some children continue living in a household headed by themselves. Many children have also lived in several different households. Orphans living with relatives often feel that they are a financial burden and taking space in an already small home. These children often become school dropouts as there is no money for them to continue schooling, especially if they are unable to find work to cover the school fees. (Hansen, 2008, 143).

One way to discuss childhood is to scrutinise it in context of domesticity - the place for childhood to be played out is inside the family and society. Children are conceptualized as vulnerable and banished from the streets. This leaves street children to be outlaws of the society. (Ennew, 2002, 389). O'Connell Davidson (2005, 1), in turn, criticizes the

way in which children are separated from economic, social and political problems and to be defined as a special case.

2.2 Street children and children in the street

Who are the children in the streets?

When discussing work that children are doing in the streets it is important to understand that not all of them are street children in the strict meaning. All children working in the streets do not live there. Pinzón-Rondón, Hofferth and Briceño (2008) have studied children's work in the streets in Colombia and according to them there are at least two different kinds of populations in the streets: homeless children and working children. (ibid., 1417). Bromley & Mackie (2009) also find two separate classes of street children: 'children on the street' and 'children of the street'. According to them, children on the street are children who work in the street but are not living there but with their families. Children of the street are also living in the street. Children working in the street are more numerous than children living in the street. (ibid., 143). Even though the researchers are using different names for the groups, the way they categorize the populations in the streets is the same. Also Kilbride et al. (2000, 2) recognize this definition. Manjengwa et al. (2016, 54) use a broad definition "children living and working on the streets" to describe children under the age of 18 who are spending most of their time on the street. According to them, children's circumstances were complex: there were children who lived with their families and worked on the streets during the days to those who were living full-time on the streets and being completely alone. There were also some children who sometimes went home. (ibid., 57).

Also the parental status of the children varied. There was a significant difference between the genders regarding the sleeping arrangements: majority of the girls went home whereas only a quarter of boys went home in the evening. (ibid., 2016, 58). Also street children consider sleeping inside safer than in the streets. In Kenya it is, however, normal to sleep apart from parents, for example with friends. It is also typical to change the sleeping place every once in a while. (Kilbride et al, 2000, 34). This indicates that not all children living apart from their parents are street children. However, not all the children make a big difference between living in the street and living in a slum hut. Others, in turn, state that a slum dwelling at least provides protection from cold weather

and the police. To Kilbride et al. (2000), evening activities and sleeping outdoors are actually the factors that distinguish street children from working poor. In Nairobi, street children often sleep together, except the older boys. Street boys have noticed to sleep commonly with age cohorts and also with the ones doing the same work with them, like begging or paper collection. For all children in the street of Nairobi it is common to move to new sleeping locations. This happens often after the roundups done or planned by police. (ibid., 85-86).

Kilbride et al. (2000) see Kenyan street children rather as members of the working poor than as actual street children. These working children have much in common with adults working in Kenya. Street children, like many other children in Kenya, are working in exploitative tasks. Girls working in the streets in Kenya usually work in survival prostitution and boys, in their part, work as car tenders, carriers of loads, and collectors of garbage for recycling. Both girls and boys also labour in begging. Many street children in the study of Kilbride et al. were very imaginative and creative in their adaptive strategies. This made their lives and attitudes to look more mature than their age. But again, Kilbride et al. remind that physically and mentally they are children and they should be treated according to that. (ibid. 6-7).

Interestingly, Kilbride et al. (2000) see that being a street child is "an event" that culminates in a transition into some adult status. They also consider the status of a street child as a temporary label endured by specific children. Street life is composed of specific recurring events. These events include for example work strategies, recreational routines, and romantic involvement. The social life of street children is much more complex than people usually assume. (ibid.8).

Even though there are many differences between street children in different parts of the World, there are also similarities. Differences between street children are mainly variation in terms of personality, temperament, and life choices. (Kilbride et al., 2000, 4). When considering street children and how to help them, this variation among individuals is important to be taken into account. As Kilbride et al. (2000, 6) highlight:

> There can be no typical street child or typical street child population. The individual person must always be at the forefront.

Why do children end up in the streets?

The reasons for the children ending up in the streets were discussed by many researchers and there are many studies on street children. The ones I found very relevant to my study are Abebe (2009), Kilbride et. al. (2000) and Manjengwa et al. (2016), who have been researching children staying and working in the streets in different African capitals.

Poverty was mentioned as one major trigger for children to be forced to work in the streets (Abebe, 2009, 282). Frankling (2002) reminds that a quarter of the world's children live in poverty and that childhood and poverty often go together (ibid, 1). In that kind of countries we cannot expect the same levels of adult care for children as we expect in developed countries (Bourdillon, 2006, 1206). *"Poverty is usually the main reason why children work instead of going to school"* (ibid., 1219).

Also Manjengwa et al. (2016) reported poverty and lack of money for the family to be the main reasons for children ending up to the streets (ibid., 64). They also state that the most common reason driving children to the streets were economic constraints. Almost half of the children participating in their research went to the streets to earn money for themselves or their families. (ibid., 57).

Other reasons for children ending up in the streets are the failure of rural livelihoods, harmful traditional practices, hostile step-parents, peer pressure lack of opportunities for social mobility and uncaring home environments. Many children in Abebe's (2009) study reported abusive step-parents, especially step fathers, being one reason for ending up in the street (ibid., 282). One reason why especially girls end up in the streets is violence at home (Kilbride et al., 2000, 123). In Nairobi for example, street children are also a result of massive migration to urban areas of Nairobi (ibid., 6). Moreover, the changing role of the father as a provider and the absence of father have increased the amount of street children in Kenya (ibid., 24). Many street children believe that they are in the streets because they were sent there by their parents (ibid., 79). Also social problems, including abandonment, orphanhood or abuse by parents or guardians were mentioned (Manjengwa et al., 2016, 57). In Harare, Zimbabwe, the HIV and AIDS epidemics have been one significant cause for children being orphaned and ending up in the streets (ibid., 54).

Despite of the popular belief that most children who beg in the streets are orphans due to AIDS, the majority of the children in Abebe's (2009) study live with one (80%) or both (67%) parents. In these cases children are securing the family livelihoods, which Abebe thinks implies "intergenerational interdependence". Begging is also a solution for children who are responsible of their own welfare. The poverty in the household is one of the main justification for begging in the street. Contributing to the family income by begging ensures the basic needs of the children can be met. This also helps the children to fulfil a socially meaningful role in everyday life. Moreover, they avoid being dependent on their parents. In addition to the income, the children sometimes end up in the streets because of social factors: they are bored at home and in the streets they can spend time with their friends. Often the friends are the ones influencing the children to go in the streets. (ibid., 283-284, 286).

Street children can be understood as one consequence of the rising culture of capitalism. Also the declining significance of indigenous values has been one cause behind street children. (Kilbride et al., 2000, 24). In urban Ethiopia the sustenance of begging is inseparable from interrelated social, economic and cultural transformations taking place in the country. These transformations have created job losses and unemployment and also raised the cost of food and social services. (Abebe, 2009, 280).

Kilbride et al. (2000) argue that the reasons behind the fact that there are street children extend to the time of colonialism. The rise in Africa's street children has been caused by specific macro causes, along poverty of global economy and structural adjustment programmes. These macro reasons are for example civil war and famine. The cause can also be in the micro level, for example troubles in the family or family breakdowns. (ibid., 4-5). Kilbride et al. state that the structural adjustment projects had clear effects to the lives of the poorest populations in developing countries, especially women and children (ibid., 3).

Challenges and vulnerabilities of the children in the streets

When talking about street children, whether they are children of the streets or children on the streets, it is important to keep in mind that they are children with the needs of a child, as Kilbride et al. (2000, 1-2) remind. This is often forgotten when analysing their activities that usually belong to the world of adults. Manjengwa et al. (2016) remind

that children working and living in the streets is one of the most vulnerable groups in Zimbabwe and they are exposed to violence, exploitation, abuse, diseases and crime. They are also lacking adequate food and sanitation. These children experience different forms of deprivation and are not reached by national child protection programmes. (Manjengwa, 2016, 54-55). Many street children live in the situations where they are physically and economically abused and exploited (Kilbride et al, 2000, 25). Street children can be abused by their parents but also by for example police. These children are in danger to be abused sexually and have to tolerate homelessness and marginal social status. (ibid., 36).

Kilbride et al. (2000) found out in their research in Nairobi that street children are having a growing conflict with the ones they are sharing the street as occupational space. They have also become a target of widespread public antagonism and there is a growing threat of violence especially among street boys and their working neighbours. (ibid., 87-88). Manjengwa et al. (2016) have similar results from their research. They remind that the children living and working in the streets are very vulnerable to dangers and suffer various forms of abuse and violence. The most common forms of violence were verbal and physical. Sometimes they were abused by street adults, but also by for example taxi drivers. However, much of the abuse occurred among the children themselves; more than half the children had reported having been attacked by other children in the streets. Also sexual abuse was reported, by both boys and girls. New arrivals, especially girls were also vulnerable to abuse by street adults who either sexually abused the girls or hired them out to the public for sexual favours. (ibid., 62).

In Kenya, girls didn't seem to have that many violent encounters during daytime as street boys. This is mainly because the work of girls is usually begging and survival sex, which is occurring during night time. Violence is very common for girls involved in survival sex. Usually the violent encounters are inflicted by street boys, night watchmen or wealthy males. Street girls are regularly victimized by the police. (Kilbride et al., 2000, 87-88). The social position of street girls is very low and they are at the bottom of the status hierarchy in the streets and they are facing sexual exploitation frequently. Also harassment by police is not uncommon. Street girls can earn money with survival sex but it also exposes them to diseases and beatings. Street girls also live in a constant fear of getting raped by street boys. (ibid., 123.) Many street girls are afraid of getting

raped and for this reason many of them sleep during day time and stay awake at nights. Staying awake at night makes it possible to avoid the rape attempts but also to work at survival sex, which mainly takes place in the night. (ibid., 85-86.)

In Kenya, the majority of the street children are boys (Kilbride et al., 2000, 2). This is often the case in other countries too. Not only girls are witnessing violence in the streets but also boys encounter violence, usually from members of the public (ibid, 124). Interestingly, Manjengwa et al. (2016) state that despite the abuse the children faced, they regarded the streets as relatively safe. They also add that the sense of security of the children probably stemmed from having formed cliques and gangs that protected and fought for their members. (ibid. 62-63).

Street children, both children of the street and children on the street, are often carrying a stigmatizing symbol. In Kenya, for example, street children are at the bottom of the national status hierarchy. These children are often harassed and abused by police and the general public. Children have also experienced fearful and annoyed attitudes and reactions by adults. Often street children are regarded as thieves or pickpockets. Kilbride et al. (2000, 78-79) describe the status of the street children as follows: *"The prevailing public view is one of fear, stigma, and avoidance."*

There are several hardships in living in the streets. Children and youths are, for example, facing the struggle to find food. Therefore a usual behaviour of children in the streets is food scavenging. (Kilbride et al., 2000, 2). Interestingly and quite surprisingly, some street children who are well off enough can be even choosy when it comes to food and also reject the food given to them. Not all of them are scavenging dustbins to find food but to find items for sale. (ibid, 90). However, Manjengwa et al. (2016) found out that while the children sometimes received food from the drop-in centre, they said they preferred to be on the street to be able to beg for both money and food at the same time (ibid., 59).

Also the climate causes challenges for children working and/or living in the streets. For example in Kenya, there are two wet seasons, during which it is impossible to work in waste paper collection, because buyers won't buy wet paper. During cold season children in the streets of Nairobi suffer from respiratory infections and also feel cold. However, the respiratory infections are not only caused by the cold weather but also by

air pollution. (Kilbride et al., 2000, 48). Children living or working in the streets face also many other illnesses than only respiratory infections. In Nairobi, for example, children get cuts in their feet because shoes are luxury. They also suffer from skin infections as well as diarrhoea and other intestinal complaints. Also sexually transmitted diseases as well as malaria are common in the streets. The causes of these medical conditions are unhygienic food and unsanitary water, cold weather, violence among boys, and unavailability or unwillingness to use condoms. (ibid., 120-121).

Glue sniffing has proven to be common among street children both worldwide and in Kenya. Street children are often addicted to glue and other substances, for example alcohol. (Kilbride et al., 2000, 3-4). Also in Nairobi, a major health hazard in the street is glue addiction which causes psychological dependence. This addiction is one reason why many street boys and girls stay in the street even though there sometimes are also other alternatives. The reasons for inhaling glue are various, but the most common ones are depression, shyness in begging, hunger, and cold. Street children have proven to be resourceful when trying to earn money for glue. Children can, for instance, beg for shoes but the money obtained for them is used for glue. (ibid., 121-122.) This kind of hazards are not limited to Kenya only but are common in other developing countries too. The children working and living on the streets in Harare were reported to be involved in negative behaviour such as crimes and abuse of alcohol and other addictive substances (Manjengwa et al., 2016, 63).

Institutional actors and their strategies to address the "problem of children in the streets"

Ennew (2002) is looking at the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) from the perspective of street children. From this perspective it is clear that street children do not enjoy rights of protection and provision as they are supposed to. Ennew (2002, 402) states:

> *The Convention on the Rights of the Child was drafted with a particular type of childhood in mind and treats children outside this model as marginal.*

Street children often become unnatural children as a consequence of not enjoying their rights. Their status also remains ambiguous because their participatory rights are not taken care of. (ibid., 399).

Going through the rights of the child article by article, there are many deficiencies to be found. Article 2 (CRC, 1989, 2) state the State should give the children protection without exception, also against all forms of discrimination, and the rights must be granted to each child. Street children do not get protection against discrimination and are even stigmatized by the street child status. State provision does not usually treat street children according to their best interest: instead of getting care and provision, many street children are placed in adult prisons, violent reformatories or orphanages staffed by unqualified personnel. (Ennew, 2002, 390). In the case of street children the Article 3 (CRC, 1989, 2), that puts the State under obligation to work for the best interest of the child, is not followed.

Articles 7 & 8 (CRC, 1989, 3) focus on the child's right to have a name, nationality and care by his parents. There is also an obligation of the State to assist the child to re-establish his identity. However, street children are often denied their rights to name, nationality and identity. This is because their families may be so marginalized that their births never get registered. Street children are also frequently in danger of being taken off the streets. They may be placed in institutions or adoption without even attempts to trace their natal families. All this is easier if the children lack their documents. Street children have often faced abusive or neglectful parenting and also society has failed to protect them. Also in the street they are abused and neglected (Ennew, 2002, 391). Articles 9 & 10 clearly state the right of the child to non-separation from parents and the right for family reunification (CRC, 1989, 3-4). Article 18 (CRC, 5), in turn, calls for parental responsibility and Article 20 states that in the absence of parents the child should have alternative care, and Article 20 concerns adoption (CRC, 1989, 5-6). Article 27 (CRC, 1989, 8) emphasizes the standard of living, which is not met with the children in the street. Some children end up in the streets because of a disability. In those cases, again, their rights have been denied. (Ennew, 2002, 392). Article 23 (CRC, 1989, 6-7) states that disabled children have the right to benefit from special care and education.

Each child has the right to health care (Article 24, CRC, 1989, 7) and also to social security (Article 26, CRC, 1989, 8). In the streets the children have to face unhealthy and unhygienic conditions and have challenges in accessing medical care (Ennew, 2002, 392). In Zambia HIV/AIDS, malaria and cholera are significant problems in the markets

and townships, especially during the rainy season (Hansen, 2008, 100). Also the social security and social assistance are weak in the case of street children. Street children often end up working in informal sector illegally, below the minimum age of work. (Ennew, 2002, 392-393). The Articles 28 & 29 focus on the right to education and the aims of education (CRC, 1989, 8-9). The Article 31 is the right to play and recreation whereas Article 32 states that the child has to be protected against harmful forms of work and against exploitation (CRC, 1989, 9). Street children work for survival but they are not protected from economic exploitation (Ennew, 2002, 392-393).

As the Article 33 (CRC, 1989, 10) states, the child has the right to protection from the use of narcotic and psychotic substances. Many street children are using drugs, especially solvents, but there is no consistent policy at national or international levels to protect them from drug abuse (Ennew, 2002, 393-394). Street children also get involved in prostitution. As a consequence of this, they face further discrimination because of the HIV. They are also doing all this for very low price since they do not have power to ask for a higher fee from adult customers. (Ennew, 2002, 393-394). All this is violating the Articles 34, 35 and 36, consider the protection from sexual exploitation – and other forms of exploitation – as well as protection from abduction, sale of traffic (CRC, 1989, 10). There is a common assumption of street children as criminals, which easily leads to them being deprived of their liberty (Ennew, 2002, 393-394). However, the Articles 37 & 40 (CRC, 1989, 10-11) state the obligation of the State to protect the child from torture, capital punishment, and deprivation of liberty and the right to juvenile justice.

Ennew (2002) suggests that street children and other children living in exceptionally difficult conditions would need special rights or special considerations within the rights as written in the UN convention. To this Ennew (2002, 399-401) would include the following rights:

> *The right not to be labelled; The right to be correctly described, researched and counted; The right to work, and to do so in fair conditions and for fair wages; The right to have their own support systems respected; The right to appropriate and relevant services; The right to control their own sexuality; The right to be protected from secondary exploitation;* and *The right to be protected from harm inflicted by "caring" social agencies.*

Manjengwa et al., (2016, 64) in turn, suggest that the financial reasons forcing children to the streets could be addressed through implementing pro-poor policies and scaling up social protection. These would include basic family grants and educational and health assistance. Also free education or assistance with school fees would help keep children off the streets. Also Abebe (2009) calls for interventions to improve the lives of the children in the streets. According to him, the structural constraints of poverty and exclusion, children's mobility, transient experiences, and social skills should be taken more seriously. (ibid., 275). Agnelli (1986) highlights how poor the national institutes are in relation to taking care of street children. She states that children have been taken to the institutions several times (ibid. 63). This seems to be a problem also today. Often the authorities have been able to provide food and shelter, but genuine human relationship has been lacking (ibid. 73).

The children in the study of Manjengwa et al. were able to get many kinds of support from the drop-in centre in Harare, e.g. toilet facilities, food, hospital care, toilet facilities (Manjengwa et al., 2016, 59-60). Also in Addis Ababa the children benefit a great deal from the different services available. They are able to access different NGOs according to their own needs, for example to get free meals from street drop-in centres. (Abebe, 2009, 286). In addition to different centres, also churches have a role in helping the street children. Zambia is a Christian nation and religion is visible in everyday life. The Catholic Church is the largest denomination, and also Pentecostal churches attract young people. Many Pentecostal churches are involved in skills training and programs for street children and orphans. (Hansen, 2008, 113).

Establishing more orphanages and increasing support to institutions based on the family model was suggested by Manjengwa et al., (2016, 64) stating that this would help to protect abandoned children and prevent them from going to the streets. Drop-in centres can only provide a short-term safety net but are often not financially sustainable. The conclusion Manjengwa et al. made in their research is that a long-term solution requires concerted efforts that succeed in getting children off the streets, rather than inadvertently encouraging them to stay (ibid. 64-65). Also Agnelli (1986) highlights the need for residential care but cautions also that they create dependency for charity and also encourage the children to remain passive. Parents may even abandon their children if they hope them to be part of this kind of programmes. (ibid. 75-76).

2.3 Work and livelihood

For the topic and subjects of my research, involvement in income-generation activities in the street is central. I will next discuss the meaning of work and livelihood strategies. There are fairly many studies on street children and children working in the streets, and a number of contestations over what counts as "work" and whether child participation in such activities is acceptable.

Many researchers nowadays take opinions and experiences of the children into account, and listening to the views of the children as well as their participation seems to have more importance now. For example Liebel (2004, 51) states that it is important to highlight children's own will and self-interpretation especially in relation to working children and emphasises the importance of not overlooking children's own decisions. Children also take the initiative to create forms of work that benefit themselves (ibid. 230). Abebe is discussing different topics related to street children based on his studies in Ethiopia. These topics include themes such as begging, livelihood, the interface between begging, religion and poverty. He also takes into the consideration the children's own perceptions of these topics. (Abebe, 2008; 2009).

Work as a harmful practice or a right?

The different ideas of childhood relate to two different kinds of opinions about child work. One perception sees the work of children as harmful and suggests keeping children out of employment. Another perception, in turn, highlights vulnerable children's right to work and sees that children are actually harmed rather than protected if they are not allowed to work, especially to earn money. (Bourdillon, 2006, 1201-1202).

Child work has faced hard criticism internationally, but Bromley & Mackie (2009, 142) remind that there can be also benefits in child work. It should also be kept in mind that the children have right to work. In public discussion there are, still, many opinions against child work. These perceptions see child work as barbaric, backward and harmful for children. However, Liebel (2004, 5-6) notes that there are many things that are not taken into account in these opinions. The work children do can be anything from forced labour to self-determined work. It is also important to keep in mind that working children are subjects who can affect on their own situation. This can be seen also from

the opinions of the organizations of working children who emphasize children's right to work. Bourdillon (2006, 2101) questions the discourse on "abolishing child labour" because it may not meet children's interests. However, there are opinions stating that children should be kept out of employment to protect them from harmful work. Nevertheless, Bourdillon (2006, 1207) stresses that work is an important element of children's participation. He also presents criticism against this kind of views.

Liebel (2004, 73) adds to the discussion that only very few children under fifteen years see the legal prohibition of child work helpful. Bourdillon (2006, 1213) also stresses that work is not only an economic issue but it also has impact on status and participation in society. Also Liebel (2004, 7) shares this opinion of child work as a form of social participation. Hence, he stresses that to improve the situation of working children we should expand their working rights and introduce work and education alternatives that would meet their conditions and needs. Strengthening the position of working children would improve their situation the most. (ibid., 214). One way to improve the situation and conditions of working children is to give them knowledge of how to affect their own situation (ibid., 234-235).

However, it is important to remember the fact that children are not usually able to decide what kind of work they want to do (Liebel, 2004, 10). The children themselves also criticize the working conditions, which are harmful to their health or even lives or their dignity. In spite of this they also find many advantages of their work. (ibid., 73). Many of the youth in Hansen's (2005, 12) research seemed to consider a person who works in self-employment and small scale trade as "respectable" on the contrary to the ones who are just home and are not working.

Distinguishing child work and child labour: Participation or exploitation?

It is important to make a difference between child labour and child work. There is still no consensus on the definitions of child work even within the NGO's focused on children (Liebel, 2004, 43). Child work can be understood as part of the training of the children whereas child labour is often considered exploitative, but the difference between these two is not always clear. Nowadays the work of many children can be considered as child labour. (Omokhodion et al. 2005, 281). In Zimbabwe, for example, economic activity by children under 15 years of age is regarded as child labour.

Therefore, the children taking part in economic activities (in the street and elsewhere) are severely deprived of their basic rights. (Manjengwa et al., 2016, 62).

In the South the self-determined forms of work are mainly a consequence of poverty. Self-determined work can be seen as a side effect in situations in which children have to take their survival into their own hands. (Liebel, 2004, 225). This could be the case for example among the children living and/or working in the streets. Bessell's (2009, 529) research shows that working children in Jakarta see their work as part of shared livelihood strategies. Their work is rather contribution to their family's livelihood than helping. These livelihood strategies are closely linked to poverty. Also Liebel (2004, 204) emphasises poverty when he is writing about child work and exploitation of children. Poverty does not necessarily lead to exploitation but when the poverty is severe, there is more pressure to neglect the negative consequences of the work. Children's work can interrelate with the income of the whole family.

Child work should be seen as a continuum. It is important to keep in mind that work can contain elements that are both harmful and beneficial for the child. In this perspective there is no fundamental difference between work and other activities, even school. (Bourdillon, 2006, 1213). Usually helping at home is not considered as harmful. It has also been noticed that time spent in work is taken from passive activities rather than from time spent in school or in social activities. For children who have failed in school learning at work can offer some kind of compensation. Both working children and their parents considered the work of the children as positive. (ibid., 1215-1217).

Child work in the context of informal economy

The most common livelihood strategy for many children and their families is combining begging with other informal works (Abebe, 2009, 286). Begging in the street can be considered as a livelihood strategy. Historical roots of begging are ambivalent and controversial but it is also a common practice in many public spaces. Begging can also be seen as a win-win situation between the alms-giver and the beggar. (ibid., 273).

> *Many children view begging as a shameful activity that they would prefer to avoid if they had alternatives. However, a large majority also consider it as a central part of their lives – as 'work' – through which they can fulfil the*

expectations of their parents and share responsibilities as members of their households. (Abebe, 2009, 275).

Begging can be seen as contributing to the family's income and livelihood strategies even though it is one of the marginal jobs in the hierarchy of street career. Children beg mostly for money but sometimes they may receive other things, for example clothes. (ibid., 275-276, 278). Sometimes people may give them equipment like a shoe-shining box to work with. This can be seen as encouraging them to take up a small-scale job instead of begging. Also leftover food from the restaurants can be given to the children in the streets. (ibid., 285). Nonetheless, UNICEF does not regard begging as work but includes it as illegal work (Liebel, 2004, 43).

Begging is often intermittent. When children grow older, they start feeling embarrassed when begging and gradually withdraw from it. They feel that their potential for generating income from begging is limited by their age and size. (Abebe, 2009, 293-294). Kilbride et al. (2000, 70) had similar perceptions on the age. The research group reported that street children regard 14 years to be an age limit for begging, because older children do not look innocent anymore. Older children and youth can also start feeling ashamed when begging. Sometimes the older ones become supervisors for the younger ones and also start protecting them while simultaneously performing other activities. In some cases the children manage to get involved in certain kinds of productive economic activities rather than begging. (Abebe, 2009, 293-294).

In some circumstances the children might deny their status as beggars and think the activity they are doing is only a way of passing the time. These children do not belong to the child beggar category permanently but the membership is limited to a certain period of time. Some children do not want to be associated with begging simply to avoid the stigmatising label. (Abebe, 2009, 291-292).

Interestingly, some children in Abebe's (2009, 294) research saw begging as work in its own right. The children felt that begging is an activity that requires and develops different skills and ability to do business. Begging was also seen as a way to develop a sense of normality and reconstruct a positive self-identity. This was to legitimate begging as an income generating activity based on effort. Kilbride et al. (2000, 70) found out that children were learning better styles to beg from each other. Verbal

requests for donations were usual. Also requests to get some goods, for example shoes or food, were common among street children in Nairobi. Non-verbal signs were used together with verbal requests.

In Nairobi begging was a major survival strategy for both boys and girls working in the streets. For girls there was another way to earn money in addition to begging, namely "survival sex". Begging can afford children money and other necessary things such as food or clothing. Begging, just like the other survival strategies, involve strategic locations. These locations had often distinct styles and behaviour. For girls it was common to use babies to attract sympathy when begging believing that babies attract bigger sums of money from the tourists. For girls begging was sometimes very uncomfortable, because sometimes people took the requests for money as carrying also sexual connotations. So begging can be a risky strategy to earn income, especially for girls. Sometimes begging street children are also targeted by a police. Police can take children off to the jail on the grounds of quite arbitrary reasons, for example on the grounds of disturbing people. (Kilbride et al., 2000, 68-70).

Different approaches in begging have been discussed by Abebe (2009). The children in the study were highlighting the importance of being brave and persistent. In Addis Ababa, street children engage in different strands of begging: lone begging, group begging, verbal begging, singing, or written begging. The way of begging varies according to a range of push and pull factors. These factors keep children moving around. Children also have different talents in begging and they are learning from each other. Group begging is a collective way of begging, but it is not easy to become accepted by the other members of the group. And young children often beg with their parents. (ibid., 287-288). Disability is one of the factors used in begging in the streets. The children of disabled or blind parents are accompanying their parents in the streets and helping them begging. (ibid., 280).

The social relations become emphasised in the streets. According to the participant observation of Okoli & Cree (2011), fights and squabbles were common between children and youths in the market places. Nevertheless, children and youths were able to form supportive working groups with each other, especially with the ones of same sex and age. It also came up that older vendors took care of younger ones in the market

place and eased their participation into the vending communities. Children and youths tended to support each other both in their trading activities and against rivals or hostile adults. (ibid., 67). Street children tend to work in the groups mainly for two reasons: 1) economic & 2) social and psychological reasons. Children are planning their strategies and cooperation to be successful in their work as car washers or beggars. And like other people too, also street children need friendship and support from each other. The social relations in the streets help street children to cope with the insecurities of the life in the streets. (Kilbride et al., 2000, 74).

Often people may mistakenly think that begging is the only way for street children to earn income but this is not true. Especially boys in the streets participate in occupational street space. This space is varied and complex and children are blending with other street workers and are for example guarding or washing parked cars. (Kilbride et al.,2000, 71). Children in Okoli's & Cree's (2011) research were working for example in motor parks, bus terminals and gas stations selling various goods and food. They were often working alongside adult vendors. This means that the children had to compete with adults and each other for the customers and sometimes it became scary and even dangerous. The children were sometimes abused by the customers, both verbally and physically. (ibid., 65). In Harare the children living on the streets were being active in the informal economy. Almost all of them worked in a way or another; more than half obtained income from begging and around 20% from selling small items. Other activities on the streets included emptying bins for shop owners, distributing advertising flyers, looking after or cleaning cars or touting customers for mini-buses. The highest income was claimed by the girl who was sexually exploited whereas the highest income among boys was theft. The children in Harare were spending their earnings mostly on food and clothing. Some of them used the money to support the households through parents /guardians. The money was also spent on drugs, toiletries and sanitary protection as well as visiting night clubs. (Manjengwa et al., 2016, 61-62).

As shown in various researches before, also Okoli & Cree (2011, 65-66) found out that children and youth have mixed feelings about work. On one hand the work was considered as fun and it afforded children and youth opportunities for play, education and leisure. It also provided them information and social relations. Moreover, vending was seen as more interesting and better option than its alternative, domestic work. On

the other hand children and youths were aware of the reverse side of working in the streets. The work of course affected their education and sometimes the work in the market was very difficult and hard. The labour of children was necessary for the livelihoods of their families and the work was also a duty.

When observing children helping their parents in vending at the market places, Okoli & Cree (2011) noticed that children they were observing were very young when brought there. Children were watching and helping their mothers who were working as traders, but also playing with friends and siblings. When reaching a certain age and maturity, they were given their own produce to sell. When practicing their own trading, children also maintained a contact with their families. On the grounds of this Okoli and Cree state that work and family life were not separate among these children but work was only seen as their contribution to the livelihood of their family. Children also felt safer with their parents or relatives and made a distinction between working for a relative and working for a non-family member. Work in the market place even for a non-family member was seen as more attractive choice than domestic work regardless the exploitation and bad treatment. An important reason for this were the social relations in the street. (ibid. 66-67).

Street life may seem chaotic but the children on the streets have their own networks, groups and hierarchies. However, children sometimes get involved in conflicts over scarce resources. On the other hand, they also give each other information about livelihood possibilities while competing with one another. Abebe (2009) describes these groups to have *"interdependent group dynamics"* through which they converted their impoverishment into viable livelihood strategies. (ibid., 290-291). Children working in the informal sector would be affected in a harmful way if child work would be prohibited. In the case of prohibition of children's work children would be deprived of their rights and prevented from defending and organizing themselves. (Liebel, 2004, 213).

Begging as a livelihood strategy?

Livelihood can be described as *"the means by which people get by and make their living"* (Abebe, 2009, 277). Abebe reminds that when researching begging as a livelihood strategy of children, it is important to make a distinction between 'coping

strategies' and 'livelihood strategies'. In his study he found out that the majority of the children considered begging to be their work and livelihood strategy, whereas some children were begging only temporarily to cope with adversity. The begging as activity is very fluid and not all children in the streets beg full-time (ibid., 285). Therefore Abebe (2009, 278) suggests to distinguish 'full-time' child beggars from 'part time' child beggars. The former group use begging as source of livelihood whereas the latter group only beg occasionally. These distinctions he bases on the time the children spend on the streets while begging and the amount of income they earn, but reminds that none of the children fit into these categories fully.

In Addis Ababa poor children are engaged in one or a combination of the various ways of begging. These can be ways of livelihood or in order to supplement the income they have earned from other activities. There are multiple forms of exchange of resources in the different ways of begging. There is also a clear tension between structural constraints of inequality and the creative ways the children use for sustaining their lives. (Abebe, 2009, 279-280).

Abebe (2009, 293) sees children's involvement in the activities in the streets, especially begging, highly transient. This is because begging is usually combined with school and other activities. Begging is limited to the times when the income-generating potential from other activities is limited.

School and work: Exclusive categories?

In Zambia people believe in the importance of education. Many young people expect attending school/college to help them to achieve social mobility. However, even if they succeed in obtaining a school leaving certificate, the possibilities of obtaining a formal sector job are remote. (Gough, 2008, 247). Formal education in Zambia is linked to British colonial period. Also the formal schooling was introduced as an alternative to cultural learning. In the 1990s Zambia adopted "education for all" policy that focused on quality, access and management. The education changed toward a liberal economy and democratic ideology. In 2000s HIV/AIDS crisis and unemployment have been addressed as the most critical issues. These are the concerns that determine whether Zambian educational reforms can be implemented. (Hansen, 2008, 158-159).

In many African societies work is seen as a child's training (Bass, 2004, 39), and work is seen as the main activity of most of the working children (Liebel, 2004, 207). While working they are trying to combine their work with their educational interests at times. This includes also attendance in school. According to the movements of working children this pushes children into marginal positions and hinders them to achieve any improvements to their situation. (ibid., 207).

It is too simplistic to think work and school as opposed. Bourdillon (2006, 1210) stresses that not only work but also school can be harmful for the child. For example teachers in school can be exploitative or the competition between the children can cause stress for the child but these problems are usually considered as specific problems. On the other hand, work can be seen as harmful if it causes prevents going to school.

Also Bass (2004) discusses the dichotomy of work and school. She mentions that on the one hand there are opinions that child labour and work hinder children from going to school. On the other hand, there are also perceptions that because of work children can afford going to school and buying all the materials they need at school. (ibid., 99). Bass (2004, 103, 105) also reminds that some children can combine school and work but others are not able to do that. Sometimes it may be difficult to attend school if the work is scheduled during the same hours. In some cases working can also be a reason why children do not attend school, for example if the parents prefer work training. Sometimes school is not seen as the best place to learn skills that children need later in their lives. (ibid., 120-121).

Okoli & Cree (2011, 46) had an interesting finding concerning the division between work and school. The children were both working and going to school, some of them even at the senior secondary level. Many children involved to participant observation were working as vendors in the streets but also attending to school. They were working before and after school and also at the weekends and during the holidays. It is clear that working did not only afford children the education but also affected their education adversely. (ibid. 65-66). This example shows part of the complexity of the issue of combining school and work. Children and youths in the streets were also studying in various levels of schooling. Nonetheless, not all the children were at the level of education they should be according to their age. Some children and youths had told that

they were encouraged to miss school by their parents in order to work. Also moving to the city from the countryside or from relative to another caused often instability to the education of children and youths. However, work did not only hinder children from going to school, but also afforded them continuing in school. Even though none of the children or youths wanted to remain as street vendors for their life, some of them valued vending as a step to the business career in the future. (ibid., 68-69). As can be seen from here and as also Bass (2004) writes, sometimes working can teach children and youths many skills they might need in their future careers.

There is opposing information to the division between work and school too. In Nairobi many street children were working in the streets because of poverty. And for the same reason they had to leave school. Also these children are willing and striving to go back to school and have also shown feelings of regret after leaving school. In many cases it has not been the decision of the child himself but the child can be actually kind of pushed out from school by home environment that has been unfavourable. (Kilbride et al., 2000, 47).

Financial constraints were the main reason for the children to drop out of school also in Harare. Most of these children said they had dropped out of school to support themselves in the street whereas a couple of them did not think education was important. Some children were also sent to the street by their parents or grandparents to find money for school. These children who were in the streets only periodically to obtain money for school fees and uniforms did not regard themselves as actual street children. (Manjengwa et al. 2016. 61). A growing number of children were resorting to begging for money for school fees. This often led to them becoming street children during the school holidays. (ibid. 64.) A significant observation in the research of Manjengwa et al. (2016, 61) is that the majority of the children who were not currently in school planned to return there as soon as they could as they considered education as the key to success and a good job.

Conclusion: Childhood, street children and child work as subjects of investigation

In this chapter I have reviewed literature on and discussed childhood, street children and the reasons why they end up in the street, institutions supporting the children, work and livelihood – including begging – and the relation of school and work.

There are different perceptions on the definition of childhood. Childhood was usually seen as something related to the age and care. It was argued that the child should not be used as labour and that work is only acceptable as a way of learning. Also street children have many definitions. Children spending time and working in the street were seen as street children as much as those staying in the street. The reasons for children ending up in the street varied but common reasons are poverty, abusive (step) parents, lack of opportunities and education. Also peer pressure and drug addiction were seen as pull factors for the children to go back to the streets. In my research, I defined child as a person under 18 years of age. In the analysis part I am referring to everyone interviewed in the group of children as 'child' whether they are under 18 years or not.

In the street children face a lot of challenges such as lack of safety protection and shelter, lack of food and clean water, lack of education. Also health issues like infections and STDs are very common among the children in the street. In the light of the Convention on the Rights of the Child the children in the street face a lot of deprivation and are not enjoying their rights. Therefore there are different institutional actors and organizations trying to find strategies to help these children. Children in the street are perceived as a problem, but it is interesting to investigate the way the children themselves see the life in the street as well as what kind of strategies the different centres have to tackle the problem.

Work and livelihood are broad categories and in the academic research there are contradictory perceptions for example on child work, whether it is a right of the child or a harmful practice. Sometimes it was seen that work hinders children to attend school, whereas other perceptions saw work as something that makes the education financially possible. Therefore, it is interesting to examine how those being on the street define their activities in the street: whether they consider the activities as work or survival and how they perceive begging.

In this study, the above-mentioned definitions of the topics are used broadly. In the analysis, I am mainly interested in how the children in the street and the workers of the centre perceive the topics. In the results chapter, thus, these different perceptions will be presented.

Before the results, in the next chapter, I will introduce the methodology used in this study and the ways the field research and analyses were done. I will also present the centres where I conducted the research.

3. METHODOLOGY

In order to answer to my research question, I selected a methodology of qualitative case study. I considered this the best option, because I wanted to get first-hand information about the lives of the street children as well as the centres supporting them. In this chapter, I will first introduce my methodological approach in general. Then I will proceed to describing my fieldwork and different types of data collection I used. Finally, I will describe the procedures of analysing the material collected.

3.1 Ethnography as a general research approach

In general this research falls into the tradition of qualitative research based on a case study. Case studies can give us significant information about social world (Vennesson, 2008, 223). It is important to remember that a case study is not always an ethnography but ethnography is defined by the methodology used (O'Reilly, 2009, 23). The research is ethnographic and interviews and participant observation – which is one of the core activity of ethnographic fieldwork (Emerson, et al. 2001, 352) – are used as methods. Also my research included both interviews and participant observation.

Literally ethnography means writing about people (Allison, 2001, 246). Allison defines ethnography as something that:

> *Through immersion in the lives of those we seek to understand, over a lengthy period of time, across a range of social contexts, and involving a variety of different kinds and levels of engagement between the researcher and his/her informants.* (ibid. 247).

My focus in the research was to understand the world of the street children and how they see they should be helped and supported. In this ethnography was a very useful way. To Forsey (2010, 567) ethnography is a method through which it is possible to study a person's life and its cultural and structural content. This requires deep listening and close observation of the structural and social patterns and behaviour. For this reason I wanted to spend as much time as possible at the centres and among the current and former street children in order to learn more about their world and lives.

There is no clear distinction between participant observation and interview. If interviews are combined with participant observation, one can hear different things than

in the situation where there is only an interview. (O'Reilly, 2009, 20-21). In addition to participant observation, watching and hearing, the ethnography also includes listening and asking questions. O'Reilly (2009, 18-19) also points out the importance of knowing when not to ask questions and being sensitive to the context and to the feelings of the informants. The time spent in the field has impact on the understanding of conversations and discussions with the informants. In addition to what people say, interesting is also how they say it and also what they do not say. Consequently, also in my research I combined participant observation with interviews and discussions in the field.

It is useful to participate in the social groups to observe the conversation and action going on. The role of the researcher can be either passive or more active. O'Reilly (2009, 78-79) describes natural discussions as

> *An opportunity to see how ideas are shared or generated, how thoughts are shaped in interaction, how norms are reproduced, and how power relations are managed.*

Crang & Cook (2007, 1-3) discuss about doing ethnographies in the introduction chapter of their publication *'Doing Ethnography'* stating ethnography consists of participant observation, interviewing, and focus groups. My initial plan was to cover all these three in my study but then decided to leave the focus groups out due to lack of time.

Whereas Crang & Cook (2007) count participant observation as crucial part of ethnography, Forsey (2010, 559, 570) reminds that ethnography is not the same as participant observation but sees participant observation as one tool of doing ethnography. He suggests shifting focus from the equation between ethnography and participant observation to defining *"ethnography by its purpose rather than as a method"* (ibid. 566).

O'Reilly (2009, 80) presents an approach she calls planned discussion. In planned discussions it is likely to use groups that already exist and people in these groups know each other. People in the group also have a relation to the topic. Planned discussions may enable talking with people you would not be able to talk alone with only one informant. In planned discussions it is also possible to talk about topics that would not be appropriate in private. This kind of planned discussions would probably have been

very useful with the children and youths in the streets, where one on one interviews would not have been very natural.

Forsey (2010, 560) emphasises the importance of listening in the ethnographic project. He calls for the possibility to conceptualise '*engaged listening*' as part of ethnographic practices just like participant observation. Also Heyl (2001, 370, 375-376) raises up the importance of careful and respectful listening. Forsey (2010, 561) argues that ethnographer is more participant listener than observer and wants listening to be seen at least as significant as observation. He also suggests that we add smell and taste to the ways of collecting ethnographic knowledge. All this would create more flexibility within ethnography in order for researchers not having to be as dogmatic about how some ethnographers do. (ibid. 567). He explains these arguments by saying that *"significant enough portion of ethnographic writing is based more upon what was heard in the field than what was seen there".* Researchers often tend to report things as seen even when they actually are different kinds of noises people make: singing, speaking, having conversation. (ibid. 563). In my study most of the observations are based on what I saw or heard in the discussions. However, also for example the smell of the glue and other solvents during the street outreaches was very recognizable.

3.2 Ethnography with children

As my research considers life of children, there are specific features of ethnography that have to be taken into account. Ethnography as a research methodology has *"enabled children to be recognized as people who can be studied in their own right within the social sciences"*. In addition, instead of seeing children as objects they are now seen as subjects in the research project. Allison (2001) argues that ethnography as a method has made the whole social study of children possible and justifies the argument based on the way ethnography sees children as competent interpreters of social world. (Allison, 2001, 246). Ethnography also leaves space for the children's own views and sees them as active participants. But this has not always been the case since the early ethnographies were not concerned to articulate the perspectives of the children. (ibid. 247). In my research I wanted to give the children the chance to tell what they think and feel. Through ethnography it is possible to see children's life experiences as contextualized by cultures and societies where they live and the biology (ibid. 250).

Consequently it is important to look at the thoughts and experiences of these children in the context of street life.

Allison (2001, 253) discusses about research done in schools and raises up three important questions about the researcher's role in the interview with a child in the school setting. He states there are always power differentials, which makes the question a very central issue in research with children. In all the centres where I was conducting my research, the staff members only announced the children that I am there to do research and that I will interview at least some of them. None of the children were really asked individually whether they want to participate but the staff members – the authoritative adults – gave their consent on behalf of the children. The relative powerlessness of the child can be invisible in the settings where the researcher has an easy access to participant observation. Therefore it is important to address the expectations of the authoritative adults. (ibid. 255).

It is very crucial to acknowledge the fact that because of the power differentials the adult researcher can only have a semi-participatory role in the lives of the children. The second issue Allison (2001, 254) raises up is the siting of the research and he calls for flexibility when it comes to the setting of the research. In my research, the children did not have so many chances in choosing the setting but the interviews were conducted where ever it was possible – the quietest place in most of the cases – and where the interpreter was available. The third issue Allison is concerned of is the informed consent of the child (ibid.). In my study, the children were explained the purpose of the study as clearly as possible at the beginning of every interview session. They were told what the interviews will be used for and that they will be anonymized in the text. However, the expectations of the authoritative adults that everyone will participate, may have impacted on the decisions of the children.

Also Brockmann (2010, 240-241) raises up the issue of power imbalance between the researcher and the informants being observed. In her study some of the informants felt it was "uncool" to take part in the research. One possible reason for the power imbalance, according to her, could be lack of trust of the students. One way to tackle the lack of trust is openness. The children and youths taking part in my research seemed to be happy to do so and I did not see signs of them feeling it would be somehow uncool on

embarrassing. Couple of the older boys in the centre 3 were even eager to help me by interpreting some of the interviews. On the other hand, the interviewee can also affect what kind of relationship the researcher will have with the research topic (Riach, 2009, 362).

The topic of the researcher's role in the research with children is discussed by for Fine & Sandstrom (1988). There are many different roles the researcher can take and it is important to choose the role that serves the best for the particular research. The role of an observer is the role of an adult without authority and affective relationships. However, observer's role is not consistent with participant observation. Because the observer is seen as an adult, children usually have no motivation to allow him or her to learn about their group's social codes. Being an outsider as an observer is difficult. For that reason it is useful to form a relationship of an observer-friend. An ideal type of an observer is, according to Fine & Sandstrom, a friend. To get the role of a friend, the researcher needs to build trust with the children, which can take time. (ibid. 16-17).

Another challenge is how the researcher can understand or represent the world view of the other person or group of interviewees. As one solution Riach (2009, 357-358) suggests that we should consider the participant as a reflexive subject and to try to focus on participant-centred reflexivity when reading the interview. She also brings up the term trans-narrative dimensions that, according to her, play a significant role in the interview. The challenge is to ensure these rich insights will not disappear during the transcription process. (ibid., 361).

Klocker (2012) has done research among current and former domestic worker children and has observed that there was a gap between the information the current and former working children gave. Therefore she argues it is important to study how the passage of time influences people's – children in this case – experiences. (ibid. 895). Klocker tries to find other possible explanations to the gap in addition to the passage of time. She suggests one reason could be the real differences in the experiences. Also the retrospective nature of the narratives the former child domestic workers gave, may have changed their memories of the experiences. Third, she reminds it is possible that the different groups presented her different "fronts" in the interviews. (ibid. 899).

3.3 Methods of data collection with street children in Lusaka

Selection of and access to the centres

Many researchers have found it easy to gain access to their information and people have accepted their presence and questions. People have even been happy to participate to the research. (O'Reilly, 2009, 7). Getting access to particular places is not only about who the researcher contacts but also how she/he explains the project to them. Negotiating access is particularly important in participant observation. (Crang & Cook, 2007, 40).

O'Reilly (2009, 9) states that it is important to think about what kind of role to take in the field because it affects on how people see the researcher and how they act. The researcher also needs to consider how to present the ideas on the topic (ibid., 10-11).

In order to be able to conduct an ethnographic inquiry into the lives of children and their views, I selected a strategy to approach those through children's homes, because building a relationship and trust with the children was easier in the centres than in the streets, where it is more difficult to become part of the group. In the centres it was also possible to observe the daily life, contrary to the street life, where my presence would have changed the behaviour of the children more and for a longer time. Keeping in mind my research question, that also included the organizations supporting the children – the centres – it was important to be able to observe the everyday life of those.

Finally, my cases included three different centres run by different organizations, and to which I was able to get access in different ways through acquaintances. I conducted interviews with the workers of the organizations in three different places. All of them were centres for previous or current street children but had somewhat different strategies of how they function.

Centre 1

Centre 1 became the centre where I spent more time than in any of the others. I got access to this centre through friends working in centre 3. Centres 1 and 3 had some cooperation sometimes so the friends from centre 3 knew the staff members of centre 1. Since I had some challenges in getting an access to centre 3, I was introduced to the centre 1 to replace the centre 3 as a place for my data collection. After introducing a

brief research plan, I was welcomed to do my research at the centre and I started going there the following day.

Centre 1 was a big centre accommodating only boys. They had two big dormitories with around 20 bunker beds in each. In this place most of the boys were from the streets found and brought by the outreach team, but some of them had come there for other reasons too. This centre also had a small clinic, school and a library for the children from the community. In addition they had a small internet café offering internet and computer facilities. The internet café also served as an income generating business.

The staff and the whole organization was going through a change while I was there and in January 2013 there was a completely new outreach team, but they constantly had two teachers, kitchen staff, librarian, cleaner, and different number of caregivers and outreach officers.

With this centre's outreach team I attended also the street outreaches they made. The outreaches were on their weekly schedule – four scheduled outreaches per week – but they did not seem to do outreaches that often. I was told this was due to insufficient funds. In fact, one of the outreach officers told me that they only went to the street when I was insisting.

Centre 2

The centre 2 was introduced to me by an acquaintance and I had visited there the previous year. On my first visit there I did not do any research, just spent two days getting to know the place and people there and finding out whether it would be possible to do some research there.

Centre 2 was a smaller, home kind of a setting, for children from the street and also for some other vulnerable children. This centre was run by a foreigner lady staying in the house with children and being both the director of the children's home and their 'mum'. Apparently this centre is getting most of its funds from United States. This centre accommodated much less children than for example the centre 1 and centres in general and the setting was more like a home with less children in one room and with a normal big house. The majority of the children staying in the centre 2 were boys but there was also a room for girls.

When doing the research, I spent five days living in this centre and stayed in the volunteer room next to the girls' one. Staying there made the research very intense and easy to get started with.

From this centre the children went to school, sports and church in the community. The director of the centre emphasized that it is a home where children do normal things, not a centre. They also had a teacher teaching the children who were still new and not going to school in the community. In addition to the teacher and the 'mum', they also had one lady taking care of the kitchen and cooking. This place also used older girls and boys as room aunties and uncles to take care of the smaller ones.

Centre 3

Also the centre 3 I had visited before. That one was introduced to me by a friend. My original plan was to do my research in the centres 2 and 3 but I had some challenges to start my research in the centre 3. Later, almost at the end of my field trip, I finally got a permit to do my research also in the centre 3. This wouldn't have been possible without my friends working there. Actually without my contacts it would indeed have been a challenge to find the informants for my research.

Centre 3 was a day time centre for children in the streets and also for children from the community. In this place they didn't have school but for example counselling, breakfast and lunch, washing and bathing facilities as well as a nurse. They were also sponsoring the school for some of the children going there. Some youths had been helped by renting them a house from a nearby community. Their staff consisted of a social worker, nurse and peer educators. The peer educators played a big role in this organization being responsible of the counselling and teaching as well as spending time with the children.

In all of the three centres I first spent time getting to know children and staff members before starting my interviews.

Participant observation in the centres and street

Briggs suggests that fieldwork often involves observation rather than interviewing (Briggs, 1986, 7). A good way to learn about the lives of the people who are in the focus of the research is through first-hand experience in their daily lives, through participant observation. Participant observation is an oxymoron and it can be difficult to achieve

both in practice. According to O'Reilly a participant is a member of a group whereas an observer is an outsider. (O'Reilly, 2009, 150-151).

As part of my research I did participatory observation observing the daily routines and encounter in all of the three centres as well as during the street outreaches. In my research the participant observation had a big role in all the centres. In the centre 1 for example, I spent the first month only observing and getting to know the people. This was very useful as through participation the research can learn about events, feelings, rules, and norms in the context. This way the researcher is able to focus on the events and actions and the whole context can be included in the study. (O'Reilly, 2009, 160). However, O'Reilly (2009) suspects observation to be more objective part of participant observation than participation. She states that *"without observation, a participant is no more than a participant"*. The extent of participation can vary from spending very little time in the community to full time immersion in the group. Participation gives a good idea also of things people would not tell in different situation. (ibid., 151-152, 155).

I had a possibility to participate more than just a little time but full time immersion to the group of children working in the streets was not possible. However, in the centres my participant observation took place somewhere between these two extremes, depending on the centres. In some of the centres and with some of the children I managed to build a relationship of an observer-friend whereas with some of the children my role was just an observer. In the streets I did not have time to build such a strong relationship to become an observer-friend with the children. Keeping in mind the context and the social world of the children in the street, I am not sure about the possibility to form the observer-friend kind of relationship at all. O'Reilly (2009, 153-154) presents four different types of participant observation that can be used. These are 1) the complete participant, 2) participant as observer, 3) observer as participant, and 4) complete observer. In the centre 1, where I was seen as part of the outreach team, my role was somewhere in between the complete participant and the participant as observer. In the centre 2, I felt my role was close to participant as an observer. In that centre I did not have any kind of role but I was taking part in the daily activities and living with them. In the centre 3 I was clearly an observer as participant taking part in the activities but being an observer more than really participating. My role in the streets falls into the last category being a complete observer as my street visits were relatively short and

rare. On the other hand, I attended the street outreaches as part of the team from the centre 1, where I was more like a participant. But within the street community I was only an observer. Brockmann (2011, 233) introduces different roles of the researcher in participant observation and reminds that those roles are fluid. This fluidity was seen also in my own roles. The roles are formed and developed within the research context. Brockmann (2011, 239) explains how taking part in the activities of her informants helped her to gain a better understanding of their experience by sharing it with them.

To maintain the informal feeling of the situations, I did not make notes during the observing the daily activities in the centres but wrote notes later when I got home in the evenings. Emerson et al. (2001) discuss the different types of field notes and highlight their importance. Field notes are *"an expression of the ethnographer's deepening local knowledge"* (ibid. 355). They are used to describe the scenes, dialogues, experiences and reactions. Field notes are a form of representation and also very selective in what they include. There are various opinions of the ways the field notes should be written and which kinds of notes are considered as field notes. (ibid. 353-254). However, as Emerson at al. (2001, 357) state, there are various different ways of writing describing field notes. My field notes were written after the actual observation and included the activities, actions, and expressions of others as well as my own question and reflections. What is written in the field notes varies according to what the researcher considers as important and relevant to take note of. The researchers approach also depends on the different understanding of the value of the field notes; some researchers see field notes at the core of the field work whereas others regard them as something marginal and something that interfere the actual fieldwork. (ibid. 355). Sometimes researches use a method of writing some key words and phrases while in the field to use them later when writing the field notes (ibid. 356). I did not have any note pad with me when doing the observation and participating in the activities but I wrote all my notes afterwards. Writing down some key words would have been helpful in order to allow me to focus on other activities happening around without having to worry about forgetting certain things.

The data from the street outreaches is only based on observation and notes written after the outreaches. This is for the reason that making notes or especially conducting interviews there would have changed the setting from normal and natural into too

formal, so I do not think I would have been able to get as authentic data as I did without making notes there. My notes from the outreaches were mental notes, as Emerson et al. (2001, 356) call them. Mental notes are the headnotes of the ongoing scenes, events and interactions in the field. All together I have around 50-60 pages of hand written notes in two different notebooks. These notes include notes from the interviews, street outreaches, general observation and other notions from the field.

After the street outreaches with the outreach team of Centre 1 we always had feedback meetings. As I was treated as a member of the team I also attended the meetings. In these meetings we were discussing about the things seen and happened in the street and what should be done for things seen. In those meetings I was able to take notes. I typed all those notes later and have eight and half pages of typed notes from those meetings.

Research interviews

Along with participant observation, interviews were the main method in my research. The biggest part of my research material is formed by the interviews. I conducted interviews with children and the workers of three different organisations. Ethnographic interview can be used to gather rich and detailed data from the participants. It has been influenced by cultural anthropology, where the interviews are usually conducted in the field. Ethnographic interviews can be distinguished from other type of interviews by the duration and frequency of contact. (Heyl, 2001, 369).

Crang & Cook (2007, 1-3) also call for flexibility when doing ethnography as "the read-then-do-then-write model" does not usually work as such but it is necessary to read and study while doing the research. This applies to my research as well. In fact, my whole research question changed during the course of the research because of the new interesting information I found when doing the interviews. Also writing and analysis are inseparable and themes or issues may suggest that more fieldwork or data is needed (ibid. 133).

My original purpose was to interview older children/youths, who are living or have lived on the streets but the majority of my interviewees occurred to be younger children. Some of the interviewees in the group of children were now grown-ups, but were interviewed in the category of children about the time they were still children. This happened mainly because estimating the age of youths was very challenging. The

interviewees in children's category were aged between 12 and 36 years. Girls are a minority in my data (only 4 interviews of girls) while the boys interviewed were 45 of which I am using 29. In fact, this reflects well the situation and division of boys and girls in the streets, where boys are much more in number than girls. Reasons for leaving some interviews out are that some children had only spent couple of days in the street or had never been doing any kind of activities that can be considered as work. I set the limit of the time spent in the street to one week in order to get the information from the ones who have experienced the life in the street for a bit longer period than just few days. One boy, whose interview I am using in this dissertation, had only stayed in the street for one night but he had been doing some activities that can be considered as work before. For this reason his interview is used here.

According to Warren & Karner (2010, 152) interview is a special form of social interaction. Also Briggs (1986, 24) brings out that interview is a unique social interaction. This interaction involves a negotiation of social roles between the interviewer and the interviewee. In my research I spent a lot of time with the children before starting the interviews just to get to know each other and to build trust. I tried to keep the interviews as laid back and casual as possible. Warren & Karner (2010, 157) state that it has been suggested by feminist qualitative sociologists that the interviewer should take more participatory role as well as the informant. It is important to remember that interviewing is not only about talking but also about listening. Also Forsey (2010, 569) highlights the role of listening and states that if the interview is construed as a form of participant observation, it actually is engaged listening.

Briggs (1986) states that the collection of data can be called an interview only if it occurs in a face-to-face situation (ibid., 7). He also reminds that when doing an interview, it should be kept in mind that the statements were made in a particular context. The context of the interview is created by its participants and the interviewer can be seen as a co-participant in the construction of the discourse of the interview (Briggs, 1986, 23, 25). Due to the low level of English skills among my interviewees, I was using an interpreter in my interviews. The interpreter was always someone from the centre, either a paid worker, peer educator or a room uncle[3] in the centre 2. So with

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[3] Room uncles were the older boys living in the centre.

most of the children the context of the interview was created by me as an interviewer, the child as an interviewee and also the interpreter. The presence of the interpreter may have changed the context a bit the interpreter – in most of the cases – being a worker of the centre. When doing interviews, one important issue is a basic understanding of the communicative norms of the society (ibid., 95). In this the interpreter was for great help. On the other hand, the presence of the interpreter may also have formed the interviewing situation more towards the communicative norms of Zambia. The researcher should also explain the meaning of the interview for the participants (ibid.). The lack of agreement between the interviewer and respondent can risk the whole interviewing process (Briggs, 1986, 59).

I left the choosing of the children/youths to the interviews to the staff of the centres thinking they know them the best. Of course, only the ones who were willing to participate were interviewed. At the Centre 1 the challenge was that they didn't really choose the interviewees but just said that I am there to do interviews and the interviewed ones will be rewarded with a soft drink and cookies. At the beginning this caused long queues to be interviewed but after some few days the excitement was a bit milder already. Also Fine & Sandstrom (1988, 25) remind that rewarding the children for being informants can lead to situations where they are only willing to help the researcher for what he or she can provide, not for what he/she is. At the Centre 2 and 3 the children were not rewarded to avoid confusion among the others.

The interviews were semi-structured with open questions and all the interviewees were interviewed only once. Not all the interviewees were asked exactly the same question but the conversations depended on the experiences of the child/youth. However, there are many styles to conduct interviews. Interviews can be structured, unstructured or semi-structured. Unstructured conversations are more used in ethnographic research than structured interviews. Also in my research the interviews were unstructured, leaving the interviewees space to tell their views of the topic at hand. One possibility is also to do in-depth interviews. They create space for participant's to focus on intimate details and to discuss things not discussed in other circumstances. (O'Reilly, 2009, 125-126).

O'Reilly (2009) advices to think ethnographic interviews more like conversations rather than structured interviews. Sometimes – especially with the staff members of the centres – the interviews did turn out more like conversations than just structured interviews. Sometimes the conversations led to some interesting topics outside the planned questions. This was the aim with the children too. O'Reilly (2009, 129, 136) also suggests thinking people attending to interviews as key participants rather than informants. Interestingly Briggs (1989, 27) states that *"interviews are not supposed to be conversations"*. According to him, the native's own discourse rules often infiltrate in the interview. It is also important to take into the consideration that the interviewer and the interviewee might have very different images of the speech event. (ibid., 39). It is important that the interviewer maintains control over the interaction. If everything is working properly, *"the interviewers provide clear and interesting questions that enable respondents to exhibit their knowledge"*. (ibid., 56).

At some points it is necessary to ask indirect questions instead of direct ones. Especially with children the indirect techniques can be helpful. (O'Reilly, 2009, 20-21). Also Forsey (2010, 568) suggests asking questions beyond the immediate concerns of the research question as a way of getting information in ethnographic interviews. Asking indirect questions was the technique that I sometimes used when interviewing the children. For example, when trying to find out whether they work in the streets, I asked them to tell about their typical day there and how they spend their time.

In total I conducted 49 interviews with children[4] of which I transcribed and used 33 in this research. The number of the workers interviewed was nine and eight of those interviews are transcribed and used in my research. All the interviews were recorded and of most of the interviews I made notes as well. In the streets I didn't conduct any interviews. In total I have 299 pages of transcribed interviews.

At the Centre 1 and 2 I conducted the interviews within the premises, either indoors or outside. At the Centre 3 only few of the interviews were conducted in the actual centre and most of the children were interviewed by the football pitch while others were playing. This was mainly because of the time when the peer-educator of the centre was

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[4] This includes also the grown-ups still involved in the centre activities.

free to be my interpreter. There were also less distraction by the football pitch than in the centre which was small and noisy. I noticed that the interviews conducted by the football pitch were more relaxed than the ones at the centre 1 for example. Also the interviews at the centre 2 were laid back, more like casual chats at home. Most of the interviews last between 20 and 40 minutes.

Table 1: Interviews

	Staff	Children	Other*	Total
Centre 1	4	9	1	14
Centre 2	1	9	0	10
Centre 3	3	13	1	17
Total	8	31	2	41

* These were grown-ups who are still involved in the centre activities.

Pictures

As my data I am also using the pictures the children were drawing. I asked the children in the Centre 2 and 3 to draw the pictures of the life in the street. In the Centre 2 the children who had not been in the street were asked to draw a picture of the life in the centre/children's home. Some of the pictures were also explained to me clarifying what is in the drawing. The pictures drawn in the Centre 2 I was allowed to collect and take with me whereas the drawings in the Centre 3 I only took pictures of. Altogether there were 29 drawings. However, not all of them were informative enough to be analysed.

Laws et al. (2003) are listing both strengths and limitations in the use of the drawings of children. One of the biggest strength for my study is the ease of communication without using words. The biggest limitation is the difficulty of interpreting the drawings and the risk of misinterpretation. Luckily in my research the children had the possibility to explain what is in the pictures they were drawing. In some cases there can also be a problem of the ownership and reproduction of the pictures. (ibid., 324).

3.4 Reflections of the researcher role, ethics and limitations

Being a young white female

Conducting research as a white female among the current and previous street children has its own challenges. Riach (2009, 357) raises up an important question about how to understand or represent another person's world view. In my research this means the world view of the street children and keeping in mind the different kinds of backgrounds, I think it is impossible for me to represent the street children. Riach (2009, 357-358) suggests that participant-centred reading of interview transcripts and consideration of people's personal biographies can help in trying to reach participant-focussed reflexivity. She also reminds that the participant should be seen as a reflexive subject.

Crang & Cook (2007) discuss about the roles and relationships in the field. They state it is unusual for researchers and researched to have nothing in common with each other (ibid., 43). When reflecting this to my research, I can find things in common with the workers of the centres but find it quite challenging to find something we share together with – especially the current – street children. Crang & Cook (2007) also remind that the communities researched are unlikely to be homogenous. This means that it is not possible to understand them all from one perspective. (ibid. 46). The participants make a connection between the researcher and the research topic. It is also important to remember the researcher's relationship with the research topic. As Riach (2009) reminds, whatever mode of reflexivity we use in the research, it is possible to gain only a partial view of ourselves and the others (ibid., 362, 366).

Riach (2009) describes how in her own research her participants wanted to discuss why she was interested in such topics (ibid., 362). In my research I was wondering whether the participants really understood the purpose of the research and the interviews. As Riach (2009) states, the participants' ideas of key why we research a certain subject are of key importance when considering who to interview and why would they want to take part (ibid., 363). Especially among the children who were still spending their days in the streets, I think I did not get only open and true information about the topics at hand but also information they thought I would want to hear. On the other hand, being the only female in the outreach team most of the time, I think it was easier for the girls –

who are not that many or visible in the streets – to approach me. Also at the centres the presence of the interpreter may have impacted on the responses the participants gave to the interview questions.

Ethics

There are many ethical questions to be considered especially when interviewing children. As Riach (2009) reminds: *"Our responsibility to respondents is not limited to the interview itself"* (ibid., 267). I needed to take into account for example the age of the interviewees and also their background. It was important to consider carefully what kind of questions to ask to get the information needed but also not to ask questions that could upset the child. Klocker (2012) had decided not to ask any questions about possibly traumatic experiences. She also used an open format in her questions to allow the interviewees decide what they wanted to share. (ibid. 896). However, she notices and accepts the fact that the open-ended questions may have resulted under-reporting of traumatic experiences (ibid., 901).

An informed consent of the interviewee is one of the key things when conducting interviews. It is important to keep in mind that the research is often based on tentative development of the research questions and the consent should be negotiated all the time. Parker (2007) reminds that negotiating the ethical issues in ethnography is not unproblematic and cannot be taken for granted. (ibid., 2252-2253). All the interviewees in my research gave their informed consent for the research after they were explained the purpose of the study and how the data collected will be used. The informants were also told they are free withdraw anytime and in case there are questions they don't feel comfortable answering to, they don't have to. The interviewees were informed about the use of the audio recorder and explained the reasons for that. They were also informed that the data they are giving will be used in this dissertation but that they will be anonymized.

Riach (2009) discusses in her article the role of the participant and their eagerness to discuss why she was conducting the research (ibid., 361-364). I see it very important to consider whether the informant really understand why the research is conducted. The children were explained the purpose and practicalities of the research and asked for consent before their individual interview. One limitation is that despite the simple and

clear explanation of what the data is going to be used for, I am not sure whether all the children really understood what the research is all about: what is the institution I am writing the thesis for, what purpose it has and whether they can benefit of the results or not. As Riach (2009) states:

> *Participants' ideas of why we, as researchers, research certain subjects is therefore of key importance when considering who we interview, and why they might want to be interviewed* (ibid. 363).

Alderson and Morrow (2011) raise interesting questions that should be considered when thinking about the research methods to be used. They suggest thinking for example whether you want to learn about children's and youth's views, experiences or abilities. One important question to think about is: *"Whose interests is the research designed to serve?"* (ibid., 21-22.) According to Alderson & Morrow (2011, 24) social research is often intended to improve the conditions of young people. On my opinion it is important that the informants can feel that their participation and the whole study can have impact on their lives or situations. However, Alderson & Morrow (2011, 24) remind that research can seldom bring real benefits alone without time and effort spent on disseminating and implementing the findings. It is also important to keep in mind that the views on benefit may differ between for example adults and children (ibid., 26).

As the children interviewed and observed were in the centres and not with their parents, I asked the consent to interview them from the staff members of the centres as they were the major caregivers for these children at the time. Many of the children staying/visiting the centres did have their own parents too. Probably not all the parents would have been so welcoming for the idea of research and their children takin part in it. But since the staff members of the centres were the major care givers of the children at the moment, I decided to trust their judgement and consent.

Fine & Sandstrom (1988) discuss the adult responsibility of the researcher. They raise an important question about the intervention of the researcher and the judgement of the researcher. (ibid., 27). During my research there was one time when I saw a teacher whipping the children in the class room while I was observing. That moment I was not very sure about what I was supposed to do and what was my role as a researcher. At that very moment I didn't do anything but was discussing about the topic later with some of

the other workers of the centre. Fine & Sandstrom (1988, 29) highlight that in case the observer feels the need to intervene, it should be made clear that the intervention is personal.

Limitations

Most of the children did speak some English but only few of them were interviewed in English without an interpreter. With the others I used an interpreter, which sets up some limitations. In the Centre 1 my first interpreter was coming from outside of the organisation. Otherwise the interpreters I used were from within the centre. In Centre 1 I used two staff members as my interpreters. In Centre 2 my major interpreters were two older boys who had been there for quite some time already. Also a teacher of the centre helped me by interpreting. In Centre 3 I used one of the peer educators as my interpreter. He was also my informant himself as a representative of staff. In addition to him, one of the bigger boys who came to the centre helped me in interpreting one interview.

In the cases where the interpreter was also from within the same centre as the interviewee, it may be that the informants didn't feel they can express themselves as freely as they would have wanted to, especially in order to criticize the centre or its staff. On the other hand, in the case where the interpreter was coming from the outside, none of us was able to confirm whether the things the informants told as facts, were true. A general limitation of using an interpreter is that the message inevitably changes a little bit when it is translated, especially if the interpreter's language skills were limited as was in the cases when the boys staying and coming to the centre were interpreting.

One limitation is that I did not interview the children we encountered during the field visits – the ones who do not even come to the centres – because the information from them would have offered another kind of viewpoint to the topic. The reason for not interviewing them was because it would have been challenging to organize and the situation would have become unnatural and probably even a bit unsafe for all the people involved with the interview. However, I do not think the setting in the street was completely natural or neutral during the outreaches as the children were usually scattered but when we went there, they started to gather there where we were. Also

being there as a new person and, in addition to that, as a foreigner probably had some impact on how the children were behaving.

Not doing field notes when doing the participant observation is another limitation as memories fade as time passes. Also the orientation of the ethnographer/researcher influences to the point of view (Emerson et al., 2001, 360).

3.5 Analysis of the research material

How to sensitively capture the multiple levels of the research encounter is a challenge when conducting analysis of the interviews and findings (Riach, 2009, 256). In my research I decided to use narrative analysis to present the results of the study.

Narrative analysis of the ethnographic research material

To analyse my research data I am using narrative analysis, which can be used to analyse narrative as text product or as a social process or performance. Through narrative analysis it is possible to understand the meanings of key events in the lives of the informants, their communities or cultural contexts. Narrative analysis form a key element in life stories. It can be used for many reasons. One rationale is to understand the meaning the teller is giving to the experience. Through the analysis it is also possible to share the experience of particular groups. It also allows us to see ethnographic research as a story itself. (Cortazzi, 2001, 384-387).

There is a variation in how narrative analysis is understood. However, it can include talks and texts as well as structures of knowledge and storied ways of knowing. Cortazzi (2001) divides narratives in two categories: oral and written narratives. Using narrative analysis it is possible to interpret others' interpretations of events. It also shows the teller's perspective on meanings, relevance and importance. Cortazzi (2001) reminds that it is crucial to bear in mind that every narrative is a version or view of what happened. (ibid., 384-385). When it comes to research interview, the narrative may not be the same as it would be told in a conversation among peers (ibid., 388). This is important to keep in mind also in my analysis. The teller's perception also shapes the stories and accounts (ibid.).

In addition to rationales, narrative analysis also has many functions, of which the personal experience is the one Cortazzi (2001, 387-388) is highlighting. Before coming

to narrative conclusions, the researcher needs to carefully reflect the functions of the narrative stories. Narrative analysis is a good method to develop an understanding of the meaning people give to themselves, to their lives and to their contexts.

When doing narrative analysis, also the context affects the results. Many times the non-narrative talk can be crucial. Also the teller's point of view as well as the relationship between the story, the teller and the audience do play a role in the narrative. Context is the key element in narrative. (Cortazzi, 2001, 389).

Narratives can consist of interviews, general conversations or overheard conversations. Also narratives are shaped by the questions asked. This is something the researcher should take into account. Narratives can be seen as jointly constructed interviews, not just as simply answers. But it is important to bear in mind that in controlled interviews the narratives are usually less natural and less authentic. (Cortazzi, 2001, 390).

Coding and analysis

I started my analysis process by listening the interviews. After listening and transcribing the interviews, I was reading through the transcriptions. While reading them through, I was making notes and marking some letters on the printed transcriptions. All the letters had some specific meaning such as 'work' (w), 'centre' (c) or 'street life' (sl). I analysed the interviews of the children and workers of the centres separately since it made the analyses clearer and easier to read. For the clarity, in my analysis I call all the informants interviewed in the category of children as "children" despite their age. However, all of them are talking about being a child (or youth) in the street no matter how old they were at the time of the interviews.

When analysing the interviews with the children, after doing the coding on the transcriptions, I collected the different themes and categories in a table, one child at a time. My categories included the following: Length of time spent in the street; reasons for ending up to the street; the time spent in the centre; the reasons for coming to the centre; activities in the streets; perception on working in the street; has the child been to school; perceptions on street life; what keeps children in the streets; use of drugs; the best way to help the children in the streets; and the life in the centres. After categorising the information in the table, I was studying what kind of narratives there were under the

categories. The narratives were mainly life and work narratives, also survival narratives – including poverty – were found.

The interviews conducted with the staff members of the centres were different compared to the ones of children and the discussions around the topics much broader. For this reason I didn't put these interviews on the table but coded them only by letters or words on the sides of the papers. However, the purpose was the same: to find what kind of categories came out and to be able to analyse the same theme among different interviewees. I collected the data under different categories also in this case. The categories included child work; impacts of work on children; the division between work and school; what should be done to the issue of child work; banning child work; centres in general; the strategies and activities of the centre; why children do not want to come to the centres; how to help the children in the streets; and street life. By looking at the categories I was searching the narratives on them. The narratives in the interviews with the staff of the centres included victim and survival narratives where the children were seen as victims of abuse, violence, hardships, poverty and being deprived of their rights. On the other hand there were hero narratives, where the centres were seen as the solution to save the children.

After developing the codes, according to Crang & Cook (2007), the next phase is to shift the focus of analysis from the individual statements to the ways in which they relate to each other (141). In my research this meant finding the categories for the narratives. One way to understand the research material is to think it through theoretical notes (ibid., 143). In this study the theory was creating the frames for the categories.

Also the field notes were used in the analysis. Emerson et al. (2001) state: *"Field notes provide a critical, first opportunity to write down and hence to develop initial interpretations and analyses."* (ibid., 361). There are various ways of turning the field notes into finished texts (ibid., 363). In my study the field notes were to complement the information from the interviews.

In the next chapters I will present the results of the analysis. The first chapter will introduce the results from the point of view of children and in the one following I will present the conceptions of the workers of the centres.

4. RESULTS: CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVES

In this Chapter I will present the results of the analysis of children's interviews. As explained in the methodology Chapter, I analysed the interviews in order to identify different perceptions of children's lives in the street; the role of centres in their lives; and the perceptions on how to help them.

4.1 Children on and in the streets

"I didn't have anyone to go to" (CHILD1, male, 14 years) – Why children end up in the street?

The time the children/youths had been staying in the streets varied from one day to years. In fact, some of the interviewees were currently living in the streets whereas some of them had never stayed in the streets at all but had only been going there from home during the day time.

Also the reasons for ending up in the street varied between the interviewees. The reasons for ending up in the street were multifaceted and included both pull and push factors. Poverty was mentioned as one of the push factors by Abebe (2009, 282), Bourdillon (2006, 1206), and Manjengwa et al. (2016, 64). One thing common for many of the interviewees was that they stated they had nowhere to go and needed to survive. This was sometimes due to losing one or both parents.

Also running away was common, and there were various reasons behind it too. One reason was being scared of getting beaten up. In the case where the child had stolen some money from the parents or care takers they did not see any other option but to run away from home. Sometimes the money wasn't really stolen but the child had spent someone else's money or the money meant for school fees on something else. This made them too scared to stay and they decided to run away. Fear was mentioned also in the cases of mistreating or violent parent or step parent. These are related to the situations where the children felt they had nowhere to go to. Abebe (2009, 282) had a similar notion: in his study the abusive step-fathers were one reason for children to run away to the street.

Sometimes running away was linked to other things than fear. A habit of drinking was a reason for one boy to leave to avoid the complaints of the father. Often the friends were

the ones influencing the child to choose the life in the streets. In addition to friends, some pull factors were mentioned too. One of these were videos that the children used to watch in a certain shop. Another big pull factor was earning money. Freedom that the children had in the streets was also attracting some of the children to the street life. On the other hand, being bored at home – where there was nothing to do – was a push factor. If the parents, relatives or other care takers were unable, usually due to poverty, or unwilling to support the child in going to school, they had nothing to do during the days. As Abebe (2009, 286) noticed, begging in the street had also a social role and friends were the ones influencing the children to go to the street.

In some cases there was no food or not enough food at the house, so the child went to the streets to look for some extra. Also Abebe (2009, 283) stated that the poverty in the household was a usual reason for the child to go to beg in the street. Poverty at home could also lead to the child going to the streets to look income to support the household. Apart from poverty, the example of the parents or the relatives can lead the child to go into the streets too. Like one teenager boy told:

> *Because when I'm selling that thing [eggs] I help my family because my father is not working. He's washing cars mu [in] town there…* (CHILD29, male, 18years).

Interestingly, there was also an interviewee who stated that nothing happened but he just went into the streets. He said he grew up in the street in Kitwe already, so it was natural also in Lusaka. However, the interviewee did not tell how and why he ended up from Kitwe to Lusaka.

Among the street children in Lusaka it is not rare to hear stories of how one came to the capital city from Copperbelt, mainly from Kitwe. When running away from home and finding their ways to Lusaka, the children did not have a way to get the transport back home again. So the usual consequence was to end up in the street.

Activities / Survival in the street

Street life was a topic that was discussed broadly with the children. The focus was on the life in the streets, the activities the children were doing, and what kind of perceptions children had on the activities there?

The most usual activity in the street was begging. Begging wasn't considered as work but as a mean of survival; getting money and food. As one child in the drop in centre stated, she was begging to survive:

> *Because of poverty, I am doing that because of poverty, the way of surviving"* (CHILD25, female, 12 years).

On the contrary, in Abebe's (2009, 273) study begging was seen as a livelihood strategy. The informants told that begging felt bad and was hard, but they had to do it for money and survival. Begging also made some of the children feel ashamed and guilty. Kilbride et al. (2000) had similar findings among the children in Nairobi and especially older children were feeling ashamed of begging (ibid., 70). Sometimes they were scared of getting beaten up and some of them actually informed that they had been beaten up when begging. Because begging often took place by the traffic lights in between the car lanes, the accidents were a real danger too. Cars were also presented in the drawings the children made.

However, begging was not the only mean of survival in the street. There were many other small jobs – piece works, as they used to call them – the children and especially youths were doing in the streets. Small restaurants in the city centre of Lusaka were places for many to do the piece works: washing the dishes, fetching water, and throwing bins. In exchange they were given food or money. Also in Nairobi especially the boys are mixing with other street workers doing different piece works (Kilbride et al.,2000, 71). Similar activities were recognised in other studies in Kenya, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe as well. These activities were for example guarding or washing parked cars (ibid.), selling goods and working alongside other street vendors (Okoli & Cree, 211, 65), and emptying bins (Manjengwa et al., 2016, 61).

Apart from the restaurants, the children and youths were earning money at the stations, especially at the Inter-city station, where all the long distance buses are arriving to and departing from. At the stations one way of earning money was helping people to carry their luggage and other things. This was presented in the drawings too: in the drawings the children were usually carrying big loads on top of their heads. Some boys were also doing small jobs for the bus companies by loading and unloading the buses and washing and cleaning them. Washing cars and polishing the tires took place in other locations

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too. According to the young boys who had been washing cars, the compensation of that job was reasonable. Car washing was a desired job because it paid well and some were able to even save some money. Especially in car washing and washing the dishes for the restaurants there was a lot of competition among the street children. So finding even some small piece work for survival was hard.

Selling small goods such as vegetables, (second-hand) clothes, bags, cigarettes, sweets and snacks was also done aside of begging. Sometimes the children were selling the goods for someone, as a sort of an employee, whereas sometimes it was their own business. The street vending could also be learnt from a family member or relative, as one boy told: he used to sell tomatoes and other vegetables with his auntie. On the other hand, some children were starting the vending on their own, sometimes picking and collecting the things – small dried fish, beans – that fall from the table on the ground at the market and then selling them.

One boy had his own little business of selling eggs. He had started it by selling guavas but changed to eggs after the guava season was over. He felt proud of it because that way he was able to support his family. When he was growing up, he saw that there were a lot of (financial) problems at home. Because of this, he decided to find something to do so that he can also help his father to support his brothers. And the informant seemed to enjoy his business: *"I like business too much"* (CHILD29, male, 18 years). He even told how he sometimes had a friend helping but emphasized how it was still his own private business. Another informant had made recyclable plastic bottles and containers his business. He was collecting them and then selling to somebody who melted them for re-use. There was also another boy in whose case his father took part of the money and the boy felt there was nothing he gained from collecting and selling the plastic bottles for recycling.

On the other hand, one older street boy was telling how he was working for somebody at the place called 'depo', where people left their things to be kept. There this informant was helping people in carrying their things and taking care of them while left there. He was given money by these people, but instead of keeping the money himself, he gave the money to his boss who then paid him.

When discussing the activities and survival strategies in the streets, it came out that sometimes adults had their part in children ending up into the streets. Okoli & Cree (2011, 66) had similarly noticed that sometimes the children, even at very young age, were in the street with their mothers who were working as traders and learning about street vending while watching and playing. One informant had been taking her elder brother into town to beg. This was quite common and could also be seen during the street outreaches as well as in everyday life in town. While the particular informant's brother was begging, she was spending her time playing with friends and just hanging around. There were other children too that were playing around in the street with no particular reason for being there.

The so called 'street adults' were also both taking advantage and taking care of the street children. As one informant told: he was sending smaller children to beg and took the money but in return he bought food for all of them and took care of the money they earned. He saw this as a favour to them since very often the bigger street children and youths were robbing the smaller ones.

"I assure that the way of living in the street, it's a hard life" (CHILD17, male, 20 years) – Perceptions of the life in the street

Street life was discussed also in general: How was it? Was it good/bad? What keeps children in the street? Why do the children run away and go back into the street? In the analysis, my main focus is to try to understand what keeps the children in the streets and why do they repeatedly end up going back there.

The children are very much on their own in the street. They described how there was no one to help them. Even young children had to learn how to protect themselves when someone wanted to attack them. These narratives came up in various interviews and discussions: you have nothing, no money, no one to support you, and you are hungry. Especially during the rainy season it is hard to find a dry and warm place to sleep. Not having a blanket makes sleeping difficult and mosquitos are spreading malaria. When trying to earn some money people often use the children in different ways. One informant concluded it by saying: *"There's nothing good on the street"* (CHILD13, male, 16 years).

In the discussions it came out that the children in the street shared the feeling of being scared: almost everyone mentioned they were not feeling safe.

> *I never felt safe, especially at night. I usually never spent the whole night there. Sometimes I spent night in the street and never felt safe.* (CHILD6, male, 14years).

There were various reasons for feeling unsafe: big guys and bullies, theft, violence. The bigger guys were said to be bullies, using violence and beating the smaller ones up. They were often the ones stealing money from the other street children, sometimes while they were asleep. If they did not get any money, they used violence. The big guys also kind of controlled the areas and where everyone else was working or begging. However, the bigger street boys/men were not the only ones using violence but also the people passing by were violent too. The violent acts and rapes were often done by people who were under the influence of alcohol or drugs. As Kilbride et al. (2000) reported, also in Nairobi the children in the street faced violence and especially girls had a high risk of getting raped (ibid., 87-88, 123). Apart from violence and bullies, the children also mentioned traffic as one danger. Children in the street easily get bashed by a car and some were even talking about seeing their friends dying:

> *Some of my friends, those who are on the streets, they were just dying. Because of the way street is, it's not good.* (CHILD3, male, 15 years).

The children also told how the police was harassing and chasing them in the street, and how they had been experiencing violence by adults. Harassment of children in the street was not the case only in Lusaka but also in Nairobi street children were harassed and abused by both police and general public (Kilbride et al., 2000, 78-79).

Especially when it comes to girls, it was mentioned that it is not safe for them. The street life includes violence, rape, STIs and other diseases. One girl summarizes the life of girls in the street by saying there are too many boys and nowhere to sleep. This makes it very dangerous and puts girls in danger to get raped. And girls in the street do get pregnant because of the big boys. For this reason, some children are even born in the street.

Sniffing thinners[5] and using other drugs and alcohol is very common among street children even though most of them stated that it sniffing is not good. Drugs and sniffing were also presented in a drawing of a bigger boy who was still in the street and regularly at the drop in –centre. During the street outreach when spending time among the children, the smell of glue and other solvents was very easy to recognise. Addiction to glue and other substances has been reported to be a common problem among street children in other countries, for example Kenya (Kilbride et al., 2000, 3-4), too. The group pressure was very strong and often forces everyone to start sniffing whether they like it or not. Not only the group pressure but also the fact that almost everybody was under the influence of drugs or alcohol forced the children to start sniffing and doing drugs too. Both to relate with the others but also not to feel so scared. One boy described how life in the street can be very lonely if you do not sniff the thinners or do drugs, since it means you are usually found alone. However, sniffing also makes the life in the street more bearable: after sniffing you think everything is fine. Sticker also keeps you warm in the night when forced to sleep without a blanket. One boy stated how only glue and Sticker made him happy in the street. The Sticker was also a way for the bigger boys and girls to make money by selling it to the others. Only the ones who did not stay in the street told they had never been sniffing. And only very few of the ones that were sniffing had managed to stop that habit.

Drugs and alcohol were also reasons for not being able to save any money because all the money earned was spent on them. An older boy told how he used to be drunk when selling charcoal to avoid being shy when approaching the customers. He also emphasized how the money is spent on drugs:

> *Whenever you've got money, you only think of buying drugs. That's the major problem they have. You can't do anything with the money you worked for. (…) But the reason why I'm saying that at the street, even though you've got plenty of money, you can't do anything with it because of drug addiction and drinking too much alcohol.* (CHILD8, male, 20 years).

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[5] The children were using two different kinds of thinners/solvents: Bostick and Sticker. Sometimes the children referred to these as glue. Most of the time, the children were talking about "smoking" when they meant the actual sniffing.

On the contrary, Manjengwa et al. (2016, 61) had a notion that in Harare the children spent most of their earnings on food and clothing. However, they spent money on drugs, toiletries and night clubs too.

There were both pros and cons in having a group of friends in the street. Through friends it was sometimes possible to find piece work for making some money for food, for example. The group can also protect one from getting beaten up, and against the gangs that can attack while sleeping. As Manjengwa et al. (2016, 62-63) saw: being member of groups and gangs also meant safety for children in the streets. There can be real friendships in the streets too: one informant explained how he got to know his friends in the streets. And another described the group of girls he was staying with to be more like a family. On the contrary, staying with a group can be risky too. Some people from your group might steal your money while you sleep. Another informant felt that his friends were taking advantage of him. Also an issue of one person in the group doing something illegal was brought up. If one person in the group for example steals something, the whole group can end up being arrested. This was one reason for not to stay in a group. In a group there can also be different opinions on how to use the money and food the group members have pooled. This made one informant feel that there is not much freedom but the group decides what and how to do. For this kind of reasons some of the children prefer staying alone.

The bigger street boys and men were often using the smaller children in the street by sending them to beg and find money. On the other hand, they were also looking after and protecting the smaller ones. One boy told a story of how his new shoes got stolen and how a bigger boy went to beat up the thief. So he was on the small one's side. They also had an arrangement where the big boy was keeping his money for him to avoid it to get stolen.

Sleeping in the street was hard. Sometimes the children had been paying for the night guards to be allowed to sleep in the outdoor corridors in front of the shops in the city centre. At the stations it was not good or safe to sleep. A bigger boy, who was working for a bus company, was sleeping in an office of a bus company. But he mentioned it being risky because of the risk of being blamed and arrested for things you haven't even

done. The children also reported of being robbed while sleeping, and therefore they were good in finding clever ways of hiding the money.

> *They used to steal a lot. Sometimes when I had money, I made a hole somewhere here where the cloth has been folded. I could push the money somewhere here [inside the seam of the cloth]. When I sleep, I would find that the cloth has been torn and the money is gone.* (CHILD11, male, 14 years).

Life in the street was also described as very hard. Food is scarce and hard to get because of not having a source of income. One boy who had been in and out of the street for a long time vividly described the life in the street:

> *It's hard life because… I'll give an example: Like I have the imagination, right now it's rainy season. Because at the time of rainy season you find that you don't have anything to keep you warm and inside the stomach you are hungry. Just like there you don't have anything: no money, no one to support you. So it's very bad life because even walking, you just go automatic, you don't even know where you are going. Sometimes you can keep going but you don't know how you turned out and found you're back at that place. So it's very, very bad and sometimes you could have walked there barefoot, yes. In terms of sleeping, you don't care where you sleep as long as you have a sleep. Most of the times I used to sleep in the corridor nearby Shoprite [a grocery store].* (CHILD17, male, 20 years).

As the interviewee described, also Kilbride et al. (2000, 48, 120-121) noted that especially rainy season was hard and during that time children were exposed to respiratory infections and malaria due to cold and rainy weather.

On the contrary, one boy mentioned – in the same sentence when complaining about not having a source of income – that it is easy to find money in the streets:

> *I've got the heart of looking for money. So whenever I was in the street, money was easy to find. Yeah, where ever I go. Money was very easy to find. That's the good part. Because some very hard work (…) hard work I used to do. I used to do all the work. So I enjoy working.* (CHILD8, male, 20 years).

However, despite having money, he felt that he has not achieved anything:

> *I am very hard working person. But what I found is nothing. You can't do anything with that money. I don't know if it's my mind or what but I haven't*

achieved anything. I used to have money but nothing came out for me. (CHILD8, male, 20 years).

On the other hand, the children were talking about free time and friends too. Some went to watch videos at the shops in Soweto market and some just playing with their friends. One boy felt that an area called Northmead was his home but otherwise street life was not good according to him.

Some of the children had kind of grown up in the street and there were also some of the older boys / young men, who were still in the street without having any other future prospects. To some it depended on the day: sometimes the street life was relatively good if they were not disturbed or harassed. Then some days it was bad and including violence and fear. However, there were children who felt that they really wanted to get out of the street. They quite often described how they wanted to become someone in the future: *"I want to finish my education and be someone in life"* (CHILD3, male, 15 years). They saw school to be the key on the way and they were hoping to find someone to sponsor their school. The importance of school was emphasised and street life was described as waste of time:

> *Because you are wasting your time. That time that you are working [in the street] you are supposed to be at school.* (CHILD1, male, 14 years).

One boy was only waiting and trying to save money for transport to travel back to his parents. The children also described how there was too much bad influence in the street: smoking, drinking, and girls. It was said to be fine for only the big boys who can find some work for making a living.

There was also some kind of shame. Like one girl described how she doesn't even look fine. The way people usually see street children was also a concern of some of the informants: they felt that a general opinion on street children is that they must be bad persons. Also the children in Abebe's (2009, 291-292) research reported to feel ashamed and sometimes tried to avoid being considered as beggars because of the stigma.

What keeps the children in the street?

Even though the children were describing street life as very hard and unsafe, there are reasons why they repeatedly run away from the centres and go back into the street.

Addiction to Sticker, drugs and alcohol was a big problem among the children and one of the major reasons they ended up going back to the street. In the centres all use of any kinds of drugs is forbidden, so the children run away. Also Kilbride et al. (2000) had noticed that even though there sometimes were other alternatives for street life, the addiction to glue often kept the children in the street (ibid., 121).

Another big pull factor, again, was money and the earning opportunities in the street:

> *The other thing is love of money, and the issue of Sticker also. Once you become addicted, you want to have money. So you have both the love of the money and Sticker.* (CHILD6, male, 14 years).

The children stated that earning money in the street is not easy, at least there was a chance to get some money. In the centres children do get food and shelter, but no money for their own use. One suggestion by an interviewee was that no one should give the street children money when they are begging.

The addiction to Sticker, drugs, alcohol and money were closely linked to freedom in the street. In the street the children were able to earn money to buy drugs, but in the centres it was not possible.

> *They are used to the life on the streets and that's why they keep running way. They like sniffing Bostick and Sticker. And begging for money and things like that. They feel like they are being caged or something.* (CHILD7, male, 20 years).

The freedom also meant no rules and no same kinds of responsibilities as in the centres. They were often very used to the life in the street and had difficulties in adapting in the centres. So they rather went back into the street since they had *"mind of living in the street"*. One boy had a strong opinion on the children who repeatedly go back into the street: according to him it is up to them to change and that they should realize that themselves.

Push factors for going back into the street were violence and mistreatment at the centres. In many cases the child had ran away from home because of violence and mistreatment and then faces the same kind of treatment in the centre too. The teachers and other adults in the centres were criticized by children. The teachers were said not to have heart for children and that they did not understand the children and their needs. The most notorious centre was one ran by the government. That centre was described as something more like a prison or jail, and every time it was in the discussion the violence and abuse was mentioned too.

> *Yeah, it's just ok. Centres are just ok. Except one (...) It's a government centre (...). But it's under defence. Understand defence? Like police, soldiers and like that. (...) Sometimes they beat. There's no tolerance.* (CHILD20, male, 19 years).

Also in the cases where the child had been reintegrated to his/her home and family, the mistreatment or other problems at home sometimes made the child to run away again. One interviewee was blaming the children themselves for the violent treatment: if they keep on doing wrong things every day, they end up being beaten up. And this reason they use for running away.

Influence of friends was one big factor in pulling the children into the street but also in making them to run away back into the street too. Peer pressure was working as a pull factor for children to go to the street also in Addis Ababa (Abebe, 2009, 282). Sometimes it was more like group pressure rather than just influence; the fear of being left alone and kicked out of the group of friends. One boy had followed his brother's footsteps in running away and going back to the street life.

4.2 Perceptions on the centres

There were some differences between the experiences and answers of the current and former street children. The current street children were much more critical towards the centres for example, whereas the former street children saw the centres in much more positive light. Interestingly, many children in the street approached the outreach team with the same demand: *"Build us a new centre"*. However, they were not able to elaborate in which ways the new centres should be different from the already existing ones.

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Running away from the centres was a way to end up into the street again. One informant even mentioned how he had been in another centre in Kitwe, which he considered as a good place, but ran away anyway, for no specific reason. The habit of running away was explained with money and addiction to glue and drugs:

> *Once you are used to money you get from town, you get used to it. Then you come here, it's different…"* (CHILD9, male, 17yrs).

> *Some of them just think of running. Instead of… When they are there in town, they smoke a lot. So they are addicted to that. So if they just stay maybe for three months or four months, without having that stuff [drugs] in the street, it will be difficult for them to just stay like… they think of it and then they go back. Some of them it is money. Because if you stay here, you have just seen (…). Here you have nowhere to find money. So it is difficult for them, they always think about the money. So they run away, go back.* (CHILD16, male, 18 years).

The informants were probably a bit biased when talking about the centres since I only interviewed children at the centres, not the ones who never go there. However, one of the centres was a drop in – centre where the children go during the day time and then go back to the street (or home). The children coming to the drop in –centre would probably be the ones that would run away from the centres where they would need to stay and follow some more strict rules. In fact, many of them had been in various centres but ended up in the street repeatedly. At the drop in –centre they have a freedom to come and go as they wish. They also highlighted the freedom they have in the street and criticized the strict rules at the centres.

At the big centre, where the boys were staying, the informants were stating they feel happy and safe there. To some, the centres felt more like home. Also the feeling of being looked after by somebody was an important factor. The centres were considered as good places for various reasons: food, learning and studying. Apart from the school kind of studying, the children learn basic life skills – cooking, doing the dishes, washing clothes – at the centres. Also the routines of a normal everyday life in the Zambian community – praying, going to church, going to school, how to respect parents – were all seen as something that made the children feel good and safe. Social interaction and networks were important to the children too and many of them mentioned the friends at

the centre as well as football and other sports activities. Counselling and talking to a safe adult were also things the children tended to need and value.

At the drop in – centre they were also tried to motivate end encourage not to go into the street anymore. At the same time, the children were given food and clothes, the things that helps them to survive the life in the street. The drop in –centre was often the only place for the children living in the street to have an access to decent toilet and bathing facilities. On the one hand the services the drop in –centre offers was making their lives in the street more bearable, but on the other hand kind of encouraging them to stay in the street because they have a way to survive there.

Compared to street life, where there is nothing, the centre was a good place to be. The motivation to stay at the centre needed to come from the children themselves. However, the children need to be helped to find their motivation:

> *In order for a child to stay at the centres, you must replace something. Replace something from the false addiction. You have to replace them with other things. So it's football, having pool, chess, a lot of things. Recreation comes with a lot of activities that children would be excited to do.* (CHILD32, male, 19 years).

If the children did not see the point of staying there, or felt like it has nothing to give to them, they easily ran away back to the street. One boy stated how he felt good about staying at the salvation home and saw it as a way to change his future.

The life at that centre was said to be good as long as you follow what the caretakers and teachers are saying.

However, sometimes life at the centre can be difficult too. It depends on the person himself/herself and also the treatment at the centre whether the centre is considered as a good place to be. There is a lot of variation between the centres. According to one informant the centres are good if you are off the drugs and Sticker, otherwise it would be challenging. The children sometimes felt like they are kept like in a prison, probably because of the lack of freedom they had used to in the streets and also the way they were treated. Also the prayers and church were mentioned by the interviewees, sometimes just as a notions, sometimes as some sort of criticism. However, it is important to keep in mind that in the Zambian culture in general the religion – mainly Christianity – has a big role in people's everyday life and praying is nothing unusual.

The staff members of the centres were not always considered qualified enough to deal with children and youths from the streets. Like one informant described how sometimes a former street boy becomes a care taker at the centre:

> *It's difficult like when they are telling you what to do and then you are like the one who tells them, the people who work here, they are telling you what to do and then you become a guardian or so…* (CHILD4, male, 14 years).

The children also felt that not all the staff members are very encouraging:

> *And the most of the children in the centres they are not being taught, they are not been encouraged a lot like we do here* (CHILD17, male, 20 years).

He also stated that the children are not treated nicely but talked to like they were animals. There was also some heavy criticism about the way money is used at the centres: the money does not go to the well-being of the children but for the big staff members. He even felt that the centres are set up for the workers to earn money. So, according to this informant, the children do not benefit from the money. There is also some lack of encouragement; children do not feel that they can develop themselves.

Violence in the centres is a big problem and a factor that pushes the children back into the street. This is especially problematic since many children have initially run away from their home because of the violence there. Violence at home as a push factor for running away to the street was a notion of Kilbride et al. (2000, 123) too. Without violence the centres would be good places. Especially at the drop in –centre the children were highlighting the nonviolent atmosphere. That was mentioned by almost every interviewee from that centre. In turn, the big centre accommodating only boys was known for having some care takers who do have violent ways of treating the children. But in general, the three centres involved in the research were considered as relatively peaceful places. The centre that was very notorious for the violence and hard labour was a government run centre that was not involved in this study. Of course, the children interviewed were more or less biased because they were already in the centres in the question and probably did not dare to say bad things about them, especially when the interpreter was somebody who was working at the same centre.

4.3 How to help the street children

The opinions on how to best help the street children varied and there were also contradictory perceptions. Interestingly, there was a lot of critics against the centres – lack of freedom, violence – but when asking about the ways to help the children in the streets, centres were mentioned as a way to do that. However, the children agreed that it is up to the children themselves to change if they are given a chance. The counselling and information about different opportunities were also something that could be very valuable in order to support the children. Also interviewing children in the street to find out what they want and need was considered important. Street outreach was emphasised in the interviews:

> *Street outreach. And when you go for street outreach, you don't just force them to come here, you ask people that are willing to change to come here. (...) That's the only good way of helping those people. You reach out for them. They have to be willing to come here.* (CHILD9, male, 17 years).

Opportunity to go to school is very important to every child. Manjengwa et al. (2016, 64) suggest that assistance with school fees would be one way to help the children to stay off the street. It can be used as a way to motivate the children to stay out of the street, the transformation can start at school, but also to provide them an alternative to the street life. Through education children can also develop themselves and have a way to have further education, vocational training for example. Education was seen as a way to find a good job in the future. As Hansen (2008, 143) noticed in his study, the children working in the streets often become school dropouts. Also finding a place for the child to stay is vital for him/her going back to school. Going to school while living in the street is rather impossible, like a former street child was explaining:

> *Life in the street is very different from just usual life, because of the habits they do in the streets. You know they are smoking and drinking. So it's difficult to be in the street and then attend school. Because the behaviour is totally different. You find yourself going to a class totally drunk, which is not allowed. Or you have taken drugs.* (CHILD10, male, 36 years).

One boy also told how he had felt ashamed when going to school from the street and dosing in the class and therefore being laughed at. Nevertheless, the children who were still staying in the street had hopes of going back to school. The role of the government

should not be forgotten either but it was said that the government should find a place for these children, a centre with all the facilities under the government. The emphasis was on non-violent treatment of the children.

Not only education and learning at school was seen as important but also learning the basic life skills. Street life is basically surviving and making money, and after living in the street it might be challenging to learn to live the "normal" life again.

In order to help the street children, it is important to know the number of children in town and find a way for them to be taken to their parents. For this the street outreaches are very useful. In such cases, the children feel that the child himself/herself should be heard when making the decision between sending the child back to home or the centre. However, tracing their parents and supporting them to reintegrate back home is fundamental.

To reach out the children in the need of support, the street outreach would be the way to meet them and then support them to come to the centre. Other children are more willing to come to the centres than the others, some need a lot of encouragement and information about what the centre has to offer. An important thing is to not force the children to come to the centre but to find the ones who are willing to come. Forcing them would only make them run away and go back into the street again. Giving out clothes and food, and taking the child to school can be a good way to persuade the child to come to the centre.

An important thing in encouraging the children to leave the street is not to give them money when seeing them begging, but to advise them to look for a centre where they have a program for them. The children who were out of the street already had consensus on this:

> *Tell those people who are giving that stop giving them money* (CHILD22, male, 15 years).

> *Now I can say don't give street kids money. Because you encourage them, yeah. (...) If you give 50 pin [50 thousand Kwachas], they are going to buy alcohol, Bostick... So I would say: Zambia, stop giving street kids money, they stay in the street.* (CHILD26, male, 18yrs).

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If there was no money in the street, children would not run away to go back there. And if they would not be able to find money in the street, the children would be more motivated to go in the centres.

Sometimes the children are first taken to social welfare and then to the centre. Another way is to be picked up from the street by the Child Protection Unit (CPU), which takes children to the centres too. The CPU was mentioned by many interviewees and also presented in a drawing. It was well known and even a bit notorious among the street children. In these cases coming to the centre is usually involuntary. However, some interviewees talk about how the children should be brought to the centre for school and education without considering the fact that the children should come to the centre voluntary. For the ones that are in the street, it would be important to look for a shelter that could keep them busy, where there would be activities that would help them to adapt there and forget the street life.

There was also calls for a new centre, a neutral place where also the children would be new to each other. Interestingly, the same statement included the thought of hindering them from running away, for example setting up the centre outside Lusaka so that it would be difficult for the children to run away to go into the streets of the capital. There were other suggestions for building the centre so far that the children could not run away. A wall fence with electricity was suggested around the centres. The most drastic suggestions were to take the ones who do run away to the police and to the jail. There were also voices for the CPU, which usually was criticized. CPU picks the children up from the street and places them in the centres.

Most children in the street should also be encouraged to stop sniffing Sticker and using other drugs. The addiction should be replaced with something else in order to make the children stay off them and to adapt in the centre. In this, some activities that the children find meaningful could be a good way. When coming to the centre, the children need to change their habits and behaviour since the way of living in the street is different. The change happens gradually, a bit by bit, and the child needs to be motivated to do so. The access to school has a big role in the change. Religion – in this case Christianity – was seen as a way to help the children too; through religion the children could be able to find direction in their lives.

During the interviews it became clear that at least the children who have decided to stay in the centres and are committed to change valued the centres a lot. Some of them even mentioned how they would like to have a centre for the little children, like giving somebody else what they have been given. One boy told his future plan was to be a social worker:

> *I would like to be a social worker. I would like to also to set up a home like this so that I also can live there and the boys so that they see now, so that they can have a confidence that also this person that keeps us, he was once like us. And that's a good challenge for them. See: not fiction but I've seen it, this person was once like us. Now he lives.* (CHILD17, male, 20 years).

The reasons why children end up in the street are multifaceted. Some children stated they had nowhere to go and needed to survive. Children also run away from home because of fear of abusive (step) parents. Poverty is one factor why children run away: there is nothing to do at home since the parents cannot afford sending them to school or they need to support their families by earning money in the street. The most common way of earning money in the street was begging, which was seen more as survival than work. Other activities were different kinds of piece works. In the street children face a lot of hardships such as unsafety, for example violence and harassment, and drug addiction. However, the freedom in the street was also emphasised and it seemed to be also one reason for running away from the centres to go back to the street again. Nevertheless, the centres were seen as a good way to help the children in the street, especially when they offer education and the possibility to learn different life skills. The children highlighted that they need to be willing to come to the centre since force would only make them run away again.

In the next chapter I will discuss the same topics from the point of view of the staff members of the centres.

5. RESULTS: NGO'S CONCEPTION ABOUT THE PROBLEMS OF CHILDREN IN THE STREET AND THEIR SOLUTIONS

When I started my research my focus was mainly on the activities children and youths are doing in the streets and whether those activities are considered as work or something else. I was also interested in finding out what the workers of NGOs and centres think about children doing various activities on the streets in order to earn some money. However, these questions are still relevant when considering the street children phenomenon, even though the focus is more on how to help the children in the street.

In this Chapter I will shift my focus from the experiences of the children to the perceptions of the NGOs that are trying to influence the lives of the children. The analysis is based on the interviews of staff and volunteers in three centres. In order to address challenges, the centres have to first, define the problems they want to address, and second, to design practical strategies. In this Chapter I will present how both the perception of problem and the strategies are multiple and sometimes even controversy. There were various topics raised up during the interviews with the workers and volunteers of the centres.

5.1 What is the problem? – Perceptions about the street children phenomenon

I will start to report results by representing different perceptions of the "problem" that emerged in the interview data. These problems were constructed around themes of definitions of what is meant by "street children" and the perceptions of problematic consequences of children being in the street.

Who are street children? Different definitions

Definitions of a "child"

Childhood was not discussed as such but the perceptions of childhood were entailed in discussions about other topics. When discussing about work, it was stated that it depends on the age of the child whether the work is harmful or not. This suggests that the age is one factor defining childhood.

At the beginning of the interviews child work was described in a different way than I expected. The interviewees were talking about it as they considered it; the work to help the children.

> *Child work is working with children who are having age of 18 and below, yes. Especially those children who are in need. Working with children, you need to have heart to them and you need to dedicate yourself working with these children.* (Centre 1d[6]).

However, when defining child work as an income generating activity, one simple definition was that when the person is under 18 years old and doing some kind of work, it is child work. This entails that a child is a person under 18 years of age. Also Bromley & Mackie (2009, 142) were using the common way of defining a person as a child when he or she is under 18 years old. It was said the children under the age of 18 are not supposed to be working or to be given maximum work in the streets because of their age. Often the interviewees made no difference between the terms 'work' and 'labour'. On the other hand, they defined 'work' as something normal like domestic work and 'labour' as abuse or exploiting the child.

Quite often the children found in the street or the centres did actually have a home, either with their biological parents or some other relatives. Also in the previous research the researchers had noticed that there are actually many children in the street who do not live there. Pinzón-Rondón et al. (2008, 1417) divided them in "homeless children" and "working children" whereas Bromley & Mackie (2009, 143) used categories "children on the street" and "children of the street". Kilbride et al. (2000, 2) had the same notion too and Manjengwa et al. (2016, 54) were using the broad definition "children living and working on the streets". I am using "street children" and "children in the street" as broad categories including both children living in the street and children working in the street.

> *But if you're looking at street children, we are dealing with children that are born, then left alone like from 6hrs. They're just following their brothers and sisters to town, knowing how to make money, knowing how to beg, knowing how to look vulnerable so that somebody looks at you like someone who is desperate*

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[6] The number refers to the centre and the letter to the staff member.

so that they give you money but they keep repeating the process. So now they lack knowledge about who they are. (Centre 3c).

Definitions of child labour and work

Child 'labour' was also defined as forced labour whereas child 'work' is something a child is doing willingly according to the situation at home or sometimes told to do without being forced. Liebel (2004, 43) reminded that there is no consensus on the definition of child work and labour. In Zimbabwe, in turn, there is a clear definition: the economic activity is regarded as child labour if the child is under 15 years (Manjengwa et al., 2016, 62). Among the staff of the centres, the work done at home – domestic work – was distinguished from the work outside home. Domestic / house work was generally seen as normal whereas the maximum work done in the street was stressed to be illegal.

> *Domestic work… the reason why I say it's fine… because even when they grow up with that mentality, they will have, in terms of knowledge, they will know how to wash their clothes… They will not be careless." "But in terms of the street, I think they do the maximum one, which is not allowed, it's illegal.* (Centre 3a).

Also in the study of Omokhodion et al. (2005, 281) child work was understood as part of the training. However, they also stated that nowadays child work can be seen as labour too. The perceptions of my interviewees suggest that there is a range of activities that are fine for a child to do. For example house chores and a reasonable work load were seen as a way to raise the child and teach him/her basic life skills and responsibility, not as work. Domestic work and house chores, such as cleaning one's own plate for example, was also considered as character building and part of the culture. Also the timing was emphasised; the child has to learn and do things that are suitable for his or her age.

> *So, there's also too much unfairness in child work. It has a lot of negatives, there's nothing good in child work according to my opinion. Like I mentioned, the child is supposed to grow up like any other normal child is supposed to work according to their age.* (Centre 1c).

One definition of 'labour' was anything that denies their rights. Also Manjengwa et al. (2016, 62) remind that children used as labour in economic activities are deprived of

their rights. The rights the informants were talking about in this point were at least the right to leisure and play and the right to education (Unicef, Convention on the Rights of the Child). The rights of a child were acknowledged but understood only on a more general level, not in detail. When talking about work, it was highlighted that the amount of work has to be reasonable and that work outside home is not encouraged because it is child work and it is violating the rights of the child. *"Child labour is not encouraged because that's violating children's rights"* (Centre 1d).

An interesting difference was also made between the work at the centres and in the street. The work at the centres was seen just as normal domestic work as part of everyday life whereas the work in the streets is the survival of the fittest; you will not have food unless you do some sort of labour. The piece works children do in the street are not suitable for a child but the children have no choice in order to survive. Staying in the streets means begging money and doing piecework. It was also mentioned that there are some centres that take the children to use them as labour in the fields and give a little money in exchange, in other words: using them as labour.

On the contrary to domestic work where a child can learn different skills, the general view was that in the work in the streets the child is not learning anything. Bourdillon (2006, 1213) in turn, reminds that work can also be seen as a way of social participation. And again, an interesting example by an interviewee was a boy, who used to make a lot of money dealing drugs and he also had very good skills in managing money, making change and in entrepreneurial skills as well. Interestingly, the informant stresses that this drug dealing was more beneficial for the boy than for example car washing, where the child does not learn to manage anything. It was also mentioned that even though the work in the street looks very random, it actually is controlled by older men exploiting the children. As Okoli & Cree (2011, 67) were stating, the social relations become emphasised in the streets. Among the interviewees, the work and activities children are doing in the street are generally considered as really bad. People running their businesses are not taking care of their workers and they are paying them very little – if a child is asking too much they can hire another child instead. Most of the time the work is beyond their capacity and no one is talking to these children. When discussing this issue, two interviewees stressed that instead of using children, people should hire adults.

Hire an adult. But if you hire an adult you have to give him a wage, you have to comply with the labour law, you have to register for NAPSA. So they can pick up a kid and do whatever they want and if something goes wrong, they go just like "ah, it's just a street kid, nobody cares". (Centre 2a).

In the interviews, poverty was pointed out as a push factor driving the children to the street. Abebe (2009, 282) had the same argument of poverty as a push factor. Pull factors, such as money, freedom, peer pressure, Sticker and other drugs, and not having enough food at home, were discussed with the interviewees.

Poverty but it is also peer pressure. You know when these children are growing up, it's very easy to get (...) to simple simple things. Here's a child who's on the street and then they go back home with money and when they told their friends, automatically their friends will want to go where they are getting this money from. They'll say and they'll go and beg on the street. Eventually the other child will be pressured to that, eventually they will go on the streets. (Centre 1c).

Most of the street children are coming from poverty stricken families where the parents know people will feel pity for the children and give money to them so they send their children to beg in the street. Sometimes the reason can also be the home environment which is not conductive for a child. The study of Manjengwa et al. (2016, 57) was supporting this perception by stating that almost half of the children in their research were earning money in the streets in order to support their families. The interviewees in my study argued that when it is the parents sending the child to work or beg it was seen as abuse as in these cases it can be the child who is supporting the rest of the family. One example was a case where the child coming from a poor home where the parents are not working or are only doing some simple piece work. In the families like this children often feel pressure to go in the streets probably to avoid the verbal abuse from the parents.

They should find things to do, they should find employment, instead of sending their children. Because normally people, they would stay back, and just send their children to do work, which is not good. So I would suggest people should stop sending their children and send their children to school. That's a good way. (Centre 1a).

Let's look at our economy you find out that most children come from poverty stricken families. And their parents they know that it's easy for a person to give money to a child because people feel pity for children. So you find out most parents are doing that. So you find that children go on the street, being sent by the parents. Also the home environment is not conducive for a child. They opt to go in the street, because, you know, when they go in the street they will find their friends there. And they become more like a family and they become comfortable with street life. So, really yes, child work has contributed a lot to taking the children from home in the streets. (Centre 1c).

Some parents, usually the parents of those who have already been in the facility, re-integrated and empowered, send their children to the streets so that they could be picked up to a centre again. Sometimes blind parents are sending their children to the streets to beg, which encourages the children to go in the streets as they get used to the life and activities in the streets.

Parents who usually do that are the blinds, yes, they do that. Some of the parents, those who are blind, they go with the children on the streets, to lead them and also them are begging. Then at the end of the day they will get used with the life on the street. And then they'll just go on their own. But it's not really that parents do send their children go and beg and then bring money, but that really happens to the blind people. (...)It is not ok because it really encourages the children to go on the street. But what would they do? (Centre 1d).

This is seen as a problem but on the other hand it was reminded that these people are not working and not receiving enough support from the government either. One informant openly blames the parents of laziness as they do not go to the social welfare to get support but send their children in the streets. So the blame should be shifted to the parents; it is the parents who should be earning money, not the children. If the parents are unable to do that, there are many channels where to get help from when it comes to school fees, uniforms etc.

These families would be forced to find another alternative. Because before there was child work, this work was still there. As we have said, this is more like a recent phenomenon. How all of a sudden children can be used to work? In the past it was never like that. And the people worked, the children either stayed home or went to school. But just recent (...) of children in urban areas has just

opened up so many opportunities for people abuse them. And so if it was banned, the families would find an alternative. One way or another they would survive. I'm pretty sure they would find an alternative. The good thing is that the government also has its own policy on this, NGOs have so many policies on this, so there's so many other avenues. (Centre 3c).

School and education were also discussed alongside work. Bass (2004, 99) reminded that work can either hinder the child from going to school or to be the only way the child can afford to go to school. A general opinion among my informants was that the ideal for the child would be in the school. But as long as their parents cannot afford it, the children end up being abandoned in the street because that is all they can do. Poverty was seen as a vicious circle and even though the activities children do in the streets is not going to get the family out of the poverty, at least it may get food on the table.

> *I think it's one of those… like in our country we would say "the lesser of two evils". It's like really none of them is good, but is it better to send your child to beg in the streets at the robots or is it better to cook a tray of eggs and give it to your child and say "go sell these". (...) I mean if the ideal is the child being at school but these people can't take their children to school, they can't afford it.* (Centre 2a).

When asking about combining school and work, there were two kinds of opinions: according to the opinion of some interviewees it is not possible to combine school and work while the others stated that it can be possible to combine them. The study of Okoli & Cree (2011, 46) proved that in some cases it is possible to combine school and work. However, all interviewees agreed that when combining those two, the school performance of the child will go down.

> *So it's not good for a child to be doing double or two things at the same time; go to school and go to work. Meaning it's either concentrating on school or money. It's obvious that you'll go for money and stop school. And that's a challenge.* (Centre 3a).

And according to one interviewee combining school and work is only encouraged if the child is doing it willingly. Especially if it is the only way for a child of a poor family to

get education and if it is done willingly, then it is fine. But in case the work is imposed, it will never have positive results.

When someone is under 18 years, that person is supposed to be at school and concentrate on one thing. According to this statement combining school and work would not be a good idea. It was stated by many interviewees that one consequence of working is that the school performance of the child goes down if he or she is working because of being tired and not having enough time for home work. It was also emphasised that when the child is learning he or she needs to have free mind and time for doing homework. While mentioning it is not good to combine school and work as the child can only concentrate on school or money, the informant raised up an important issue of child choosing money instead of school. The informant thinks the child will get too excited about work and money and stop school.

On the opinion of another interviewee the work and school can be combined if the child is working during the weekends. Combining work and school also depends on what time the child goes to school. In any case, he emphasises, the work has to be light. Age was said to be one indicator as well. If a person is 16 years old and goes to work to be able to go to school, it is ok. But if a 6 years old child is working while going to school it definitely is wrong as children at this age are developmentally unable to deal with work and learning at the same time. Lack of love at homes is also pushing children to go in the streets. A child can also run away from the mistreatment or abuse at home. Also the death of the parents can drive the children in the streets.

One interviewee states that in Zambia, child work is a recent phenomenon and if the use of children in work would be banned, the families would have to find other alternatives for survival. Bourdillon (2006, 1201-1202) states that the children would be harmed if child work and earning money would be prohibited. On the other hand, for example Manjengwa et al. (2016, 64) are calling for pro-poor policies, which would help the families to have a better financial situation so that the children would not be sent to the street.

Hampering normal trajectory of child

In general, the street children phenomenon is very problematic and has a lot of consequences. Because of working, children will skip many things that they are supposed to do as a child. A child has stages in its development but street children are skipping most of these stages. These children working in the street are also said to lack love and free time. As Ennew (2002) noticed by studying the CRC, the children in the street are deprived of several rights.

When asked about child work, most of the interviewees stressed that it is not good. In many comments child work was juxtaposed with abuse. When it comes to child work, a child is being used to perform duties she or he is not supposed to do. In child work it was said to be too much unfairness and nothing good, it was also mentioned to be harmful. On the contrary, for example Bromley & Mackie (2009, 142) have suggested that there can be benefits in child work too.

The informants in my study stressed that many children are abused by adults because they don't ask for much. For this reason a lot of people take advantage of them and they are made to do all kinds of chores. This is also seen in the streets and the piece work children do there. One reason why child work was said to be abuse was because of the child not having a choice. This statement is supported also by Liebel (2004, 10), who reminds that children are not able to decide what kind of work they want to do. However, even banning the child work was not seen as a solution to the whole problem:

> *I think the people would be affected the most are the children, not the parents, because the parents just pressure them. So if they ban that, ok, the parents don't suffer much because what they are getting from their children is not much. So maybe sometimes in a day one thousand, two thousand kwacha, five kwacha... these are the kinds of... So the parents will not be affected but a child. Because now when he comes back they'll start beating him. So these are the kind of the things.* (Centre 3a).

> *They are always saying it's not good for a child to be in the streets working but then again, I've been trying to ask how about if it's the child who is bringing the money home to get food. And no one really knows how to answer, they just say that okay, the government should be doing something to support the families.* (Centre 3b).

Those workers of the centres who have been in the streets themselves acknowledged that the life in the streets is very hard. *"You know, kids who live on the streets, they really go through a lot, a lot"* (Centre 1d). There was begging and piece work in order to survive. An interesting point was that the problem is not them being in the streets but that they are growing up in the streets, this is the way to create so called street adults. One important and interesting issue raised up is the need for a centre for the 'street adults', usually grown up men. There is a need for a centre for them as they are not accepted to the centres which are meant for children. These bigger boys/men are using children for begging or doing piece work. This is why they sometimes refuse when the outreach workers are trying to pick up the children to take them to the centres.

> *I think there's need to have a programme or a centre for these children, or let me just say adults. Because they are somehow, the causes of these other children going on. Because we've had cases where we want to get this child from the street but the bigger boys will refuse, reasons being they use this child to beg for them or they send them to do something.* (Centre 1c).

For most of these men the street is more like a home. Also Manjengwa et al. (2006, 62) were aware of the problem of street adults and the way they were abusing the children.

Consequences for health and wellbeing

In the streets there are lots of challenges and the children go through a lot. Therefore, the interviewees were concerned of the health of the children working in the streets.

> *It's only harmful because it doesn't do any good to a child. It doesn't, because even psychologically children can be affected.* (Centre 1c).

It was also stated to be abuse, especially abuse by adults.

> *It is child abuse! Not 'kind of', it is child abuse! Because basically the child has no choice. And if they leave home, they'll probably be not eating. So the first person who says "Can you carry a few bags of maize and I'll give you a drink?" they'll do it. And we know the threads on the body: the child sometimes will sprain it's back... They won't take you to a hospital because you're not a worker. It's just something by the way. So they are abused.* (Centre 3c).

There are gangs, bullies and drugs in the streets. As Kilbride et al. (2000, 87-88) explained, for example in Nairobi there is a growing conflict among the ones sharing

the street as occupational space. However, the gang can also benefit the child socially and economically (ibid., 74). An interviewee was explaining how going the whole day without eating anything may result in children being forced to steal for food. Kilbride et al. (2000, 2) acknowledged that usual behaviour of the street children was food scavenging.

In addition, the children in the street usually sleep without blankets, which exposes them to the cold. Kilbride et al. (2000, 48) were not only worried about the cold but also respiratory infections caused partly because of the cold weather. As the interviewees concluded, cold can be one reason leading the children to sniff glue. Glue works like a blanket at night, the children do not feel the cold when high.

> *Some of them sleep without blankets, not some but any child that you'll find on the street sleeps without a blanket. (...) And the same stuff they sniff, Sticker, it acts like a blanket to them. When they take that, they forget about what happened to them and that's why we try to go there on the streets and we find that kids are always high.* (Centre 1d).

Sometimes the glue sniffing was said to be a way to forget whatever happened to them when they were back home. Some of the children have been raped by their relatives and that's why they ran away to the streets. Abebe (2009, 282) found out in his study that abusive step parents were often the reason for the child to run away. In the streets, in turn, the children can be harassed by the police officers. Some children are used by taxi or minibus drivers and security guards, especially girls. ¾ of the kids who are living in the streets are having STDs (including HIV) because girls are few and the boys, so the children keep on infecting each other. Having the status of a street child with HIV can lead the child to face even further discrimination (Ennew, 2002, 393-394). There is an uneven number of boys and girls in the streets the boys being the majority with 80%. This is caused by early marriages and also by the culture where girls are at home doing the housework.

When girls are ending up in the streets they usually go for prostitution or work somewhere else than in the streets. Despite the different numbers of boys and girls on the streets there are also so called street marriages in the streets. It is also acknowledged that the life in the streets is somewhat easier for the boys than for the girls; the girls who

are in the streets do not learn any house work or how to conduct themselves. One concern related to health was that the children are left alone in the streets and they are lacking knowledge involving the changes in their bodies when they reach puberty. Girls are also often invisible in the streets whereas boys are the ones being breadwinners and girls are exchanging the money for sex. The boys are working hard in the streets to look after themselves and the girls as well.

> *But for the girls, they are usually, yeah they are usually invisible. They just sit under the drainages, the boys go to look for money, and the girls just exchange with sex. So the girls are usually hidden, because they know the boys do that thing. So that culture still exists.* (Centre 3b).

Work related to labour can be harmful for the child's development when he or she is for example carrying heavy loads or sent to beg. The informants mentioned that the people giving them piece work and other simple jobs are not looking after them and they do not have access to health and medical services. In addition to physical harm, the work can affect the child also psychologically. It is clear that the abuse children face in the streets affect them both physically and mentally.

Insecurity and engagement with activities in the street: "For a street child even tomorrow is a threat" (Centre 3b)

Sometimes the work in the street is too hard for the child to cope so he or she starts using drugs.

> *So each and every one who go in the street, they have to be taking drugs. That will help you not to be shy, that will help you to have false confidence to approach people to ask for money. That will help you not to really absorb what people tell you "No, just go to school and make money, don't be lazy and just asking!" You don't care about that.* (Centre 3b).

The use of drugs among street children is not only limited to Zambia but has been recognized elsewhere too. For example Ennew (2002, 393-394) has acknowledged that street children are using drugs, especially solvents. The staff of a centre emphasised that drugs and addiction to them cause a vicious circle: the child will start using the money on drugs instead of going home.

One issue raised up was the way the child becomes ignorant when being in the streets as the activities they are doing are nothing that would benefit them in the long run and yet they do not have anyone supporting them. Also the issue of surviving was discussed as it was stressed that the activities done in the streets is not really working but just surviving day to day. This survival is said only to be sustaining the street life without teaching anything to the child. That is also why the child never has to sober up and choose the life. If they were in school they would learn different useful skills for life. The activities in the streets were also seen as piece work instead of employment for the reason that the child is not able to negotiate about the money they are getting.

The gangs in the streets can make the children feel safer but according to some interviewees you really have to be part of one to survive. In the streets there is love, belonging and freedom; it is a general family sub-culture and like a family kind of structure. The children can become really comfortable in the streets but if they are worked with, it is possible to make them go back home again.

Children in the streets also stop going to school because of the activities they are doing:

> *So it's like, when you're a child you don't really know the value of school or education, not until you reach a certain stage and say, ok, now I can go to school. So child work and school, to me, it cannot work.* (Centre 3a).

The activities and work disturb everything as they are not enjoying their rights as a child. In the streets they are managers of their own and are doing whatever they want to. It was also highlighted by one informant that when the child grows up, he or she needs to be able to function in the community and to take care of his/her family. If everything this person knows is hassling in the streets, how will he/she be able to do this? However, an important reminder was that usually these children have no choice. In turn, usually the children working in the streets end up being very good in mathematics as they have to learn to manage money but still they cannot read or write.

Lack of education was raised as a consequence of street life and child work. However, every child should have the right to education (CRC, 1989, 8-99). It is important to remember that jobs are hard to find even in general, so for street children it is even more difficult. That's why the type of jobs the children are doing in the street is understandable. And the lack of education or proper background is the reason why they

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end up washing cars and doing other simple jobs. Lack of education can lead to the situation where the child will not get out of the street even when growing up but find himself washing cars and doing other simple jobs in the street even as a grown up.

5.2 Towards solution – Multiple strategies in tackling street children

In the three different centres I conducted my research I encountered different kinds of strategies to help the children in the streets. The interviewees from the centres were also talking about the centres in general as well as about some specific ones. According to them there are differences between centres. One of those involved in this research is small and more like a home whereas the other two are clearly centres.

All these centres that were part of the research had very different kinds of visions and strategies, sometimes even contradictory, however they all, at the first place considered centre as a most liable solution to the problems of street children. In this sub-chapter/section I first present a variety of strategies discussed in the interviews and revise different arguments of the centres. Then I will describe more in detail the strategies of these particular three centres, and after that return to the general questions of centres as solution. I am viewing the strategies of the centres in addition to the general ways of helping the children in the street.

How to help the children in the street?

"Stop giving them money" (Centre 3a)

When discussing the ways to help the children in the street and to get them out of the street, giving money to them was highlighted as a big problem. There was a consensus among the informants that the children in the streets should not be given money because that encourages them to stay in the streets and makes their living there easier.

> *We don't want those kids to go on the street. So by giving the alms is really encouraging, it's really making their life easy on the streets, it's encouraging them to go on the street. Because money is one of the reasons why children go on the street.* (Centre 1a).

They also use the money on drugs and alcohol, which are factors that keep them in the streets. To stop giving the children money would also encourage or force them to go to

the centres or home; not giving the children money would make them to realize the best place for them is home.

Centres, life skills and raising awareness

Money was also seen as one reason why they go to the street in the first place. Instead giving the street children money there was a suggestion that it would make more sense to rent them a house and give them a weekly budget as a way of teaching life skills. The challenge is that some people in Zambia really think that giving a child some piece work to earn some money is helping them, but this is actually only helping them to sustain their life in the streets. A better way would be to direct them to the facilities. Information was also emphasized; the importance of talking to the children and directing them to facilities.

> *We don't encourage people to give any money to the kids because you are telling these kids to stay on the street or you are saying the street is the right place for the children. Because if you're giving them handouts, if I'm giving them money, it means you are encouraging them to be on the street. So instead of just not giving them money, you need to talk to them, you need to educate them of where they should go.* (Centre 1d).

Information should not only be given to the children in the streets but also to other people so that they would have enough awareness not to give them money and to direct them to facilities. People should also be made aware that it is not good make children to do hard labour.

Some of the interviewees were flagging for the centres as they have knowledge of how to go about the processes involving the government, the parents, and bringing the family together. Nevertheless, the general opinion was that the best place for a child is home. The task of the centre is to help the child to find his/her way back home. But if it is not possible to re-integrate the child, in that case a centre is a good option.

However, it is not enough to direct the children to the facilities but there should also be welcoming and easy to understand programmes for them. In addition to this, things should be in order at the centres. When a new child comes to the centre, everything should start with counselling and the children and youths should be considered as

individuals and it is important to find out their individual needs as well. Another interviewee reminds that some centres do not have the capacity to do the counselling:

> *So a lot of centres really need a lot of help with the right counselling as counselling in that actually gives results* (Centre 3c).

An important point was that whichever the case is, also street children should be treated as normal children and human beings as well as individuals.

There was a reminder that the way out of the street is a continuum and we should be careful in order not to encourage the children to go back in the street with the programmes. An informant reminds that it is dangerous to provide for child's basic needs without any supervision. This combined with the lack of love and structure can, according to her, create a monster.

Education, family and rehabilitation

Education and family environment was also strongly emphasised:

> *Put them into school. Put them into school and put them into family… Well, I don't think the centres are the greatest place even. I think that there needs to be a mum. Community based interventions I think.* (Centre 2a).

The situation of street children is not only about housing but there is a need for treatment, rehabilitation and behaviour change too. The children need to become able to function in a normal family and in a Zambian community. The best interventions are to create belonging, freedom, and identity.

> *But the real bottom line is: if you're going to take the child from the streets and make them somebody that can function in a Zambian community, it's a lot of work. It's not just about housing. They need treatment, they need rehabilitation, they need to change their identities.* (Centre 2a).

In addition to home, treatment and rehabilitation, education was mentioned as one of the keys to help the children. Without education for the children we are only wasting time. For children school is even more than learning and getting education; it is also being part of the group of friends and being treated as a normal child:

> *Because education is like… For our kids it's like a magic cure: if you change your behaviour, if you can learn how to function properly, then you'll go to*

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school. And they all want to go to school. Because that's what normal kids do. Every kid, everywhere, wants to be with their friends, especially teenagers. The peers are so important. And if we give them the opportunity to go to peers, the peers that are not orphans and street kids, that is like the giant cure. It's huge! That's the real thing. Somebody treating them as a normal person. (Centre 2a).

This said, it is an easy way to make the child to change his/her behaviour if going to school is used as reward. When discussing about education, there was a reminder that child work is really keeping the children away from education. While working, the children should actually be at school.

Education was mentioned in all the interviews with the workers of these different centres. There was also one interesting point of view: integrating the bigger youths to start work. These youths in consideration have never been to school and as they have skipped a certain stage they cannot start school at grade one anymore.

Like we have a certain age that you can't start grade one, like (…), all those big boys, you can't take them to grade one. Obviously they have skipped that stage. So that's when the aspect of good development education comes in. And not the normal curriculum that you learn in school but now development education, like what we do; ok, teach them. (Centre 3b).

This is why the informant suggests that they should be integrated in work and trained and counselled by the centre:

So if you're not getting them constructions or things that help developing the country, then you're neglecting them. Already they are neglected, they know we are outsiders." (Centre 3b).

But for this the government would be needed to cooperate so that these youths would get employed in some different general works. In addition to the money the youths would earn, they would be able to learn handling money and to have a feeling of being trusted.

To me it would make more sense to rent them a house. You know: "This is the house, I'll give you this much food, this is your weekly budget…" You know teach them some life skills. (Centre 2a).

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So far these people have been neglected outsiders in the society and, according to the interviewee, they are in the risk of become criminals such as serial killers. *"These people, what they need is trust"* (Centre 3b). In addition to the need for education, it was highlighted that there is a need for qualified teachers and training staff.

The role of the government

The government's involvement was also required in two ways: they should have a law for those parents who are allowing or sending their children to go to beg or work in the streets and they should also be supporting the NGOs and centres by funding them. Also, the government should invest in children and make sure they get better education because children ending up being in the streets are lacking education. And if the children wouldn't go to school, the blame should be on the parents in this case. However, it was also mentioned that the Zambian government probably does not have enough experience in the issue of street children. Currently the government is treating the street children as victims and there is a vicious circle where the children are picked up from the streets, taken to the centres and from the centres they run away back to the streets again.

There was also a call for help and support from outside Zambia as well as from within the country. A concern was that there are only a few people who care and are concerned of children working and staying in the streets.

The practical strategies and roles of the centres

Child work was simply defined as working with children under the age of 18. This was interesting as in all the centres there were youths older than that age. Despite this the interviewees kept on talking about children instead of youths for example. However, the main point they raised was that you have to have heart for the children. This was to emphasise the commitment and dedication to this kind of work and the children. Important was also working for the best interest of the child.

Centre 1: Outreaches, shelter and home tracing

The Centre 1 emphasised their outreach programme to be the backbone of the whole centre. The purpose of the outreach programme is to go out in the street, talk to the children there and invite them to the centre. During the street outreach the outreach

team is also checking whether there is a sick child in the street who needs to be taken to the hospital. However, the outreach team did not go to the street as often as scheduled.

> *As an outreach officer you have to be there on the street 24/7. So it was... the street was like our office. We used to go there each and every day only that now that we are given these positions: outreach manager, outreach what... So we do not have enough time to go on the street but of course we are dedicated to that work (...) And why sometimes we don't go out there on the street is because of the funds. When you want to go out in the streets you need to go with something. So when you don't have money you can't go.* (Centre 1d).

Outreaches are also used to build a good relationship with the children before they come to the centre. There are different activities, like football, used in the street to build the relationship. When there is a trust between the outreach worker and the child, then he or she can be picked up. They are not forced to come to the centre but they need to come willingly.

> *As an outreach officer, we go to the street, we... If we find somebody who is sick, we take that person to the clinic; somebody wants to come here to the centre, we tell that person to come, he comes there; he will come, and start a new life, staying here... But some, they stay here, some they go back. After maybe one week, two weeks... We find that that person is back again.* (Centre 1b).

The need for the child to come willingly was emphasised by the outreach team.

> *You have to talk to this child, you have to counsel this child who doesn't know what is happening out there. Now what CPU[7] does, they just go there and they pick kids by force, they get them "Let's go (...)". And the kid, he's not willing. And of course, even if you bring that child here, the child won't... can't stay because he was forced to come. So that's what CPU does.* (Centre 1d).

In the centre there are different activities and programmes as well. At the centre they try to make the life as normal life at home and there is shelter, food, recreation, sports and gardening.

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[7] Child Protection Unit

To have very welcoming and easy to understand programmes. (...) When they are moving to the centre, we work on their behaviour. Let me say, like rehab. Then eventually we have to trace their homes. (Centre 1c).

There is also a school for the children living there as well as for the children from the community. The centre is also sponsoring school and skills training programmes for the ones who cannot go to school. Everyone at the centre must go either to school or skills training. In addition to this, there is also a small clinic and health services. One worker of the centre also raises up the need to introduce a mobile clinic in the streets. It once used to be there but it did not last.

Workers of the Centre 1 kept on highlighting the fact that the best place for a child is home. For this reason they have home tracing, child and family counselling, motivating mentoring, re-integration and follow ups. Counselling and home tracing are inevitable to find out the background and the truth of the child.

They are here, yeah, they star centre life; going to school, after when you've seen that that person now has changed we take that person back to the family to start a new life as well that side (Centre 1b).

When the child comes to the centre, he starts the centre life and school there and will later be re-integrated back home if possible. When they come to the centre there will be rehabilitation and working with their behaviour. One interviewee reminds that behaviour change is a process and changing the child completely is hard. That's why it was emphasised that it is necessary to have heart for the children, patience and commitment.

So it's really really a challenge working with these children. Big challenge, and needs somebody who has a heart for them, yes. (Centre 1d).

Another interviewee reminded:

We need to see that these children enjoy their rights and they grow up to be healthy people. These are our future leaders. So if we just stand and see such happen, then we are doing it right. (Centre 1c).

All this aims to re-integrate the child back to his or her home and community. It is also important to do follow ups to make sure the re-integration is successful. The family is

also provided resources in order to empower the members of the family. If the family does not have enough food, money for school fees or school uniforms, the child will most probably run away in the streets again.

After home tracing we have to reintegrate them. Then they have to go back home. After them going back home, we have to do many follow ups. But also it depends on what and how that family is. We do home assessment. If the family is poverty stricken, we ensure that the family is empowered. So if you look at all these stages, they require resources. So if there are no resources, it means children will still be found in the streets. (Centre 1c).

There is also time, when the child and the family have to be detached from the centre in order to avoid dependency. This is done as part of re-integration and it also helps the family to build up their relationship again. To prepare a child to all this, they are encouraged to visit their families during the holidays.

The centre has a limited capacity but there is also a lot of demand. This causes some challenges and sometimes the children have to use spare mattresses in addition to bunker beds. If the centre is unable to accommodate the child or to provide everything the child is referred to other centre.

There is a farm in a village nearby which is now used as an income generating activity. But initially there is a plan to build homes and a skills training school there. At the time I was doing the research, the farm was not really functioning.

Even at the centre the age limit is 18, in theory. But there are some special cases where the child has joined the centre at the age of 16, for example, and stays there until he is 20 years old. Sometimes these older boys end up coming back after re-integration and for that reason they are in the centre at the age of 18 or 20. One problem behind this is the dependency syndrome mentioned before.

There are also cases when children are willing to come back after they have ran away. They are allowed to come back but they are talked with and also their friends at the centre are asked what should be done. This way the run-away becomes an example for the others and shows that it is not encouraged to run away. Otherwise the other children would start running away and coming back as well.

The Centre 2 is actually a home kind of setting where the emphasis is in being as a bridge in the middle on the way from the streets to the community. There are treatment, counselling and rehabilitation programmes. It is a complete programme with case management, counselling, readiness classes, education, hygiene, personal and moral development.

> *I always say we are going from the streets to the community, and I think of salvation home, which is for treatment and counselling, and rehabilitation programmes. That's like the bridge in the middle. So the child will go from the streets to a salvation home. And then they go back and forth, and back and forth, and back and forth… And then they reach a point, through the counselling and the treatment programmes and the goal setting and the planning.* (Centre 2a).

The ones that are ready, start transitioning back to the community.

There is also a lot of back and forth movement with the children as the transition goes step by step. This means that the same children may come back again after a certain time. But the aim of the whole programme is to make the child to be able to function in a Zambian community. This is one reason why the salvation home is a family setting instead of a centre; the children at salvation home are considered as sisters and brothers. It is also believed that all the children in the streets have potential to change, the smaller the children are the better chances there are for the change. The problem raised up is that the government is programming for labour and putting all the children in the same box even though they should be seen as individuals with different kind of needs. In Centre 2 every child had their individual treatment plan and their readiness for school and moral development were followed. The individual plan included for example behaviour, social skills, and emotional competence.

The salvation home, as the centre is called, also takes care of sick and injured children from the streets. The crisis work is combined with health care because it is a good time to try to get the child out of the streets when he or she is sick and comes to salvation home. There is always one or two beds available for sick or injured children, they are never turned down.

Salvation home is catholic, and the religion is clearly present in its daily life. *"Salvation home is Catholic because that's what I am. And we do have to function as a family."* (Centre 2a). The children are allowed to choose their religion and go to their own church but most of them choose the religion of the salvation home. But everyone must go to the baptism classes at the beginning to know the Christian basics of living. After attending to these classes the children are allowed to choose themselves. The informant states that the children are not forced to choose catholic religion but they are shown strong example.

> *I firmly believe that they need to know God and they need to know God loves them and that they are forgiven. And we will work on that. And I want them to know the basic Christian principles of living, these are the ten commands, you don't steal, you don't lie... You know, just basic human decent living, whether you call it Catholic, Christian, Pentecostal or what.* (Centre 2a).

The role of church is also emphasised as a way to be part of the community. Within the church children are able to go for local classes, have local grandparents and are going to local church just like any other child in the community. The interviewee from the salvation home also criticises the way children are taken to the church from the street because the way it is done is not really helping them.

> *I think part of it is that when you're in the streets there's no structure. Churches, these guys, (go to the streets and) pick them up in the bus and take them to the church and they are filthy, dirty, and drunk. I think it is so embarrassing, especially if you're 16.* (Centre 2a).

In addition to the salvation home, there is also a farm in a village nearby Lusaka, where there are permanent homes for the children who have gone through the transition programme. There these children are living permanently in local Zambian families as family members. The families in the farm are providing permanent homes also for the handicapped and disabled children who don't go to school. At the farm they are able to learn different skills for income generating. The farm is supposed to be self-sustained and also to be used to generate little income for the salvation home.

> *The whole point of the farm is permanent homes in a permanent self-sustainable situation. So this farm in time should pay completely for itself.* (Centre 2a).

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The farm also helps when the salvation home is reaching its limits accommodating children as at the farm there are possibilities for extending the facility.

When it comes to children who run away, there are some rules and conditions on which they are allowed to come back. It also depends on the situation but the little ones are always allowed back, they are even searched and picked up from the streets. Teenagers were said to be most challenging but there are various innovative ways of raising the children and having discipline without violence. These ways of discipline were making a big difference compared to other centres. There are also follow ups to see how the children who have been re-integrated back home are doing and to make sure the money used to sponsor education is used on school fees and school related costs.

In addition to the existing facilities, the informant from Centre 2 raises up a need for a crisis centre. That crisis centre would offer health care and trauma care for the street children.

Centre 3: Support with the basic needs[8]

The Centre 3 is a drop in centre for children in the streets and in the community which is currently running a number of programmes for street children. Every morning starts with morning devotion followed by different activities according to the time table. These activities include learning, bathing, washing, football and eating.

> *Currently we are running a number of programmes for street kids. When they come here for the first time, like I said, we profile them because we want to find out their background, why they are on the street, whether they enjoy being on the street, how we can help them out. Then immediately the child is given food. So every child who comes here (...) they'll have something to eat. After they have eaten, we have a social worker and peer educators who have a one to one counselling session. And from that counselling session we have a follow up, where we go to visit the child's home or if the child is on the street, we go check where he lives. Then, that is when we start designing an intervention. Here at the centre we sponsor education for those who want to go back to school. If the child is over 18, we send them to skills training. If that child doesn't want to go to skills training, we also have night classes.* (Centre 3c).

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[8] The centre has now been closed due to lack of funding.

Also this centre has a nurse and a possibility to take a sick or injured child to hospital or clinic. The centre was using former street children as the peer educators in the facility and in the outreach: *"So if you want to find a street child, use the street child. So those are the big guys we found."* (Centre 3b). These peer educators also get sponsorship with school when they help at the centre.

The centre has a street outreach programme as well as counselling, home tracing, re-integration and follow ups. When the child first comes, he or she will be given food and be profiled and then counselled. Home tracing was mentioned to be one of the key activities. *"We do home tracing, and it's very important for us to get to know them, where they are coming from, their background, their histories, their tribes"* (Centre 3a). In addition to home tracing the follow ups are inevitable to see if the child is still on a right track and if not, to be able to direct him or her back on track again.

> *And we make all those follow-ups to make sure that the people we have trained, you know they are on track, if they go off track, we help them, we can really force if we see them failing.* (Centre 3b).

While doing home tracing and follow ups, the aim is also to keep the children off the street for a certain time during the days. Keeping them off the streets also helps them to reduce smoking and use of drugs as those are not allowed at the centre. At the time of the interviews there were no street outreaches because of the lack of funding. If there are not enough funds for feeding the children, they don't want to make the centre overcrowded.

The focus at the centre is to build a good relationship with the children so that they are able to open up.

> *They have an approach which they are using: ok, let's create a relationship with them. If only we create a relationship like it's our home. They are able to open up.* (Centre 3b).

It is important to be friends with the children and offer a shoulder to cry and being a peer as these children have faced a lot of injustice and are full of anger.

> *It's like asking for them talk to us. They cry, we put them on our shoulder, it comes out, you become a friend. So you're a peer, you know, you're working with them.* (Centre 3b).

It is important to know the children personally and as individuals. In this centre the former street children are used as peer educators to build a good relationship with the children as well as organising activities for the former street youths. Also the informants at this centre emphasise that the children should be treated just like all the other children, not specifically as street children. When communicating with them there should be proper information and attachment. Even here the need to have heart for children is highlighted and reminded that you should not get upset easily when dealing with these children.

One interviewee keeps on highlighting the fact that different centres have different approaches. The drop in centre is using a holistic approach and wants the initiatives to come from children themselves. If their minds are kept busy and active, according to one interviewee the children will be able to make right choices. The role of the social worker is to notice where the problem is and to sort it out by supporting the child.

The centre is also sponsoring education for children in the streets, for example paying school fees, books, stationery and uniforms. As one of the interviewees remind, it is important to find them a place to sleep as well, otherwise it is hard for them to study efficiently. Having a place to sleep apart from street together with education and the centre is helpful in cutting out the root to town. Sometimes creative approaches are needed, for example renting a house for some youths who would otherwise be in the streets. In addition to sponsoring school fees, there is sponsorship also for skills training and night classes.

To enable the families to send their children to school, the parents are taught simple businesses so that they can be bread winners while children go to school instead of sending their children to work. The families can also be given micro loans to start a small business. This reduces their pressure to send the children to the streets. The support to the families is inevitable as in most of the cases it is the poverty that drive the children from home to the centre. Often there are many children from the same family coming to the centre. The need to cooperate with the government was also called for, as well as the importance of advocacy, evaluation and monitoring systems.

Interestingly, it was also mentioned that a centre can also be a way to go to the streets because of peer pressure. This should be taken seriously as it is more difficult to get the

child off the streets once they enter the street life. An informant emphasises that the prevention is better than a cure even in this case.

> *Because once they enter the street, that again is not... It's like the prevention is better than the cure. It's better if they don't even enter the street because once they enter there, so many things happen.* (Centre 3c).

For this reason it is important to make sure that children are at home and going to school. In this way they wouldn't have to make the decisions to go to the street.

This centre had good networks with other similar organizations working in the field of street children.

Centres as a general solution?

> *The centres are the best way to help the children. And centres do know how to go about the processes involving the government, the parents and bringing the family together. The best place for the child to be staying is home. Whether we are sheltering them, we are not sheltering them... The best place for a child is home. So whatever we are doing here we are just trying to find the child, we are trying to find how to help the child to find his/her way back home. Because then they will be safe, they are with the parents.* (Centre 3b).

The interviewees from the centres were also talking about the centres in general as well as some specific ones. According to them there is a difference between centres. One of those involved in this research is small and more like a home whereas the other two are clearly centres. However, one big thing common to all the centres was funding, and quite often, lack of it. All the three centres were constantly struggling to find sufficient funding.

> *People... like in the communities, even outside Zambia, should come together to support the existing organisations, who are working with these children* (Centre 1d).

There are differences between the centres as they have different kind of strategies and opinions as well. One debate was about children coming to the centres during day time. In that case, they do not always have to work with any authorities which the interviewee saw as a problem. From these day time centres the children go back to the streets and do whatever they want to without any adult supervision. This was seen as a big problem

and as a way to make the life of the street children sustainable so that they never have to get out of the streets. Also Manjengwa et al. (2016, 64) remind that the drop-in centres only provide short term safety net and support but also state that they are not financially sustainable. One informant explains how the programme taking care of the children during day time prevents them to hit the bottom, which would be needed for the child to make a decision to move out of the streets. This kind of programmes are also preventing the children to have to answer to authorities. It was also reminded that the children addicted to drugs would need some addiction counselling and rehabilitation. The day time drop in centres are creating an artificial street culture where the children never have to examine their lives; in the drop in centres the children never learn to function and live in a Zambian community.

It was also said to be stupid to have a day time centre as that is the time when the children could be working, going to the police or social welfare and being safe in general. It is the night time when there would be need for a centre, a safe place to sleep especially for the little ones.

> *But if you have the programme at night, so you were providing a safe environment and a safe place to sleep, especially for the little ones, and you were keeping a register, and you were reporting that register to social welfare, and giving help for those kids, that would be so different.* (Centre 2a).

Due to this, there was a demand for a night time centre, which should be a crisis centre offering also health care for the children in the streets combined with education, spiritual development, and minimum parenting. On the other hand, the drop in –centre staff saw it important to keep the children off the street for at least some hours every day:

> *So, even for the centre, to spend 8 hours to bring them over here… They could be walking around, smoking… But we are keeping them away from so much trouble in the streets.* (Centre 3b).

The interviewee also firmly believed that this could help them to quit sniffing glue and using other drugs.

There was a consensus on the fact that the centres are not the best places for children but home and school. On the other hand, the centres are good places to start working

with the street children as in the centres the children can have instructions and advices of how to survive. *"So, the best place for a child is home. Centres do know the facilitation programme."* (Centre 3b). But the child will only start coming to the centre if they have something to do there and you also have to win their hearts according to one interviewee. Even though there was a consensus on home being the best place for child, it was reminded that it is actually a two way thing; if the child is abused at home by for example a step parent, then the centre is a better place. This is why home tracing and follow-ups are inevitable so that the parents can be counselled and the child can be placed again.

There was also some first-hand knowledge and experience of being a child in the centres. One informant had been at the Centre 2 himself and said that it has been the place where he managed to change, the place was really good for him. He thinks that the best setting for a child is a home kind of arrangement. He thinks the children who are being picked up from the streets to the centres are lucky.

In some centres the children are used as labour and in exchange they get food and a place to sleep. According to one informant the children are not only used as labour but also for generating money. If there are no behaviour change interventions, the children will keep on going back in the streets again and again after re-integration. This is what keeps the centres working as the children come to the centres from the streets, are re-integrated and then go back in the streets again.

One common habit used at the centres was violence. One government run centre especially has a bad reputation because of the use of violence and many interviewees referred to it as a *notorious* centre. There seems to be a belief among the workers of the centres that if the children are being treated softly, they will not listen. For this reason they think they have to be harsh and use violence to have discipline. However, not everybody working with children at the centres agree with this view but thinks you have to be in the middle; not too rude but not too soft either. According to them, the children will start bullying the others if you are too gentle with them. It was also reminded that the children and youths coming from the streets can be rude and in some places violence is used as a way of discipline to show the child what is bad and wrong. Sometimes it is enough just to become rude as they are to cool them down and later having a discussion

with them and apologising. At the centre 3 they are not using violence towards the children, it is forbidden, but try to discuss with them.

> *Others are still using beating as a way of instilling discipline. They are whipping them, you know. There are centres where when they make a mistake they are sent to prison, they are beaten… But I think, to me, that's not the way to go. The way to go is to talk to somebody. A human being is somebody that is not difficult.* (Centre 3b).

One issue discussed about was whipping the children in the class room. This shows that violence is not used only at the centres but quite commonly at schools as well. However, there was said to be a difference between whipping as a way of teaching the good way to behave and whipping used to destroy and hurt. According to this opinion, you should not use maximum force and the child should understand why it is done. This is interesting as on the other hand the same informant was really against the use of violence towards the children.

There is also criticism against the centres as they want to put all the children in the same box without considering their individual needs. Lack of commitment among the workers of the centres was also worrying the others. However, at the same time many other interviewees emphasise that to work with street children, you have to have heart for them. Also the importance of building a good relationship and trust with the children was noted by many interviewees, especially the ones from the Centre 3. Despite of the notion that sometimes you have to be a bit harder with the children who are not behaving properly, it is also stated that you have to be soft and allow the children to be children. It was reminded that it is important to be consistent with the children and remember what you have been talking with every child.

However, not everything is about housing and accommodating the children but they also need treatment, rehabilitation and support to change their identities. Also the role of parenting and Zambian community was emphasises by one interviewee.

One interviewee acknowledged that if you go to the streets to help the children and give money to them, they will start seeing only money in you and the moment you go there without money, you won't be important to them. This is one reason why the outreach workers of the centres never give money to these children. On the other hand, there are

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a lot of things happening in the streets but sometimes the outreach teams are not able to go there due the lack of funds. One outreach worker highlights that you cannot go in the streets without money because sometimes there are cases when the child have to be taken to the hospital or clinic for example.

Also the role of the government was raised up. It was suggested that the centres should work closely with the government to find employment for the young boys/men to keep them busy and out of crime.

> *It's [the role of NGO's] to promote Child Rights and to discourage this kind of acting. What really a government should be more involved though they are not. (...) They should support NGOs, and then, because really, what we are doing within NGOs, whatever we are doing, it's on behalf of the government. So the government needs to support what we do. That's best.* (Centre 1a).

The jobs suggested be suitable for these youths would be for example in construction of roads and such. This did not mean that child work would be good but meaning the older youths who have never been to school and can't start on grade one anymore as they have skipped a certain stage.

Challenges in regard to centres: Why children return to the street life?

There are various reasons why children go back into the street. Often these are the same reasons why the children ended up in the street at the first place.

Freedom of movement, money and peer pressure

There is a completely different world in the streets, including freedom. This is why some children do not want to go to the centres and facilities because there are rules in those places. *"It's not about only money. One, there's freedom of movement."* (Centre 3a.) Freedom of movement was considered as one important cause keeping the children in the streets. Children who are used to the freedom in the streets do not want to be guided or restricted by rules. One big factor mentioned by many informants was addiction to drugs, especially Sticker and Bostick which are some kind of solvent and glue that the children and youths are sniffing. Getting rid of Bostick and Sticker is not always easy and goes step by step. There are a lot of things happening in the streets: sex, freedom, relationships, earning or begging money, and using drugs, and the

children are used to the kind of life they have in the streets. In the centres they miss certain things and eventually go back in the streets.

Of all the things money and begging were raised as major issues why children run away back to the streets and stay there. In the streets children get used to money but at the centres money is not available and they cannot go to beg.

In addition to the freedom and the life in the streets, they have their friends in the streets as well. Friends can be a cause for staying in the streets but also a reason to run away from the centres. Peer pressure to run away can be the higher the easier they can access the centre from town because it was said the friends from the streets can come to the centre for a visit and persuade the child to run away with them.

Integration as a slow process

Also, it should be remembered that the transformation does not always happen quickly. There is some back and forth movement when the children are trying to settle down at a centre. The change takes time as well as changing their mind to stay in the facility. *"So for those who come and go, disappear for years, that means the centre has not reached out for them"* (Centre 3b). So it is important that the outreach workers at the centres do not give up with these children but bring or welcome them back again and again. One informant said he himself wanted to have a place to sleep and stay, the TV at the centre also attracted him to go to a centre.

Also when it comes to a child that is re-integrated back home, they may face the same problems at home why they initially left so they decide to go back to the street again. When taken to a centre the children should not be picked up against their own will but they have to come willingly. Forcing them to come to the centre is one reason why they want to run away. It is important to counsel the child to find out why he or she ran away at the first place. If a child has been traumatised they will need a situation as best as they can. They should be treated as individuals with individual needs. But the problem is that, according to one interviewee, many centres are lacking the capacity to really counsel the child. The informant reminds that it is important to get to the root of the problem instead of only solving the symptoms. The same reason why they run away from home – lack of food or too much labour – can also drive the children to run away from a centre. Also some other small things can drive them to run away, such as bathing

when they do not want to bath. Violence at the centres was also raised up and discussed when asked about the reasons to run away to go back in the streets.

> *Maybe the management mistreating them because there are times when others they say that there in that centre they beat, and that centre they do what, there are rules and this and that* (Centre 3a).

However, in Zambian culture violence is also used as a way of discipline at schools and homes:

> *If it's class room, then, even government schools they do the same. You make a problem, you make a mistake, and the teacher will whip you. So that, it's some kind of normal. But there's other abnormal beating. So you have to beat a child to teach him or her the good way of living. But don't beat to destroy. You don't have to put maximum force to a child.* (Centre 3a).

Sometimes the children run away fights and violence by their peers at the centres. But the violence they face can also be used by the workers of the facilities.

6. CONCLUSION

In this study I have discussed the phenomenon of street children in multiple levels. The topic is broad and includes different concepts, such as childhood, child work (including begging), centres and other facilities. Therefore, the ways to help and support the children are various. Above I have presented and discussed different approaches to these themes in the context of Lusaka, Zambia.

The aim of the study was to find out the perceptions of the children on what the best ways to help them are and what kind of strategies the selected centres have. The second aim was to consider whether the strategies of the centres meet the needs the children described.

6.1 Revisiting the research questions

Children's perceptions on work and street life and the ways they could be helped

The reasons why the children had ended up in the street varied but not having anywhere to go to or running away from home were common. Running away from home resulted from abuse and violence at home. Children also ran away because of poverty and the need to find income. Also peer pressure and the attractions – drugs, drinking, and money – in the street were mentioned as pull factors. The latter ones were also the factors why children remained in the street and sometimes ran away again.

The children who had been in the street described the life in the street very hard and unsafe. The main activity among children in the street was begging. Begging was not really considered as work but rather as a mean of survival in a situation where it was the only choice. Other activities included different kinds of piece works as well as small businesses.

Generally the centres were seen as good places and as a solution to the problem. The children were happy to get food, shelter and education. However, also the violence at some centres was mentioned as a reason why some children run away. Also the strict rules at the centres were a challenge for children as they were so used to the life in the street. Money and the addiction to drugs were the main reasons for running away from the centres back to the street.

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Despite the critics, the centres were seen as the best ways to help the children. However, the children emphasised that one needs to be willing to come to the centre since forcing them would only result in them running away. Education and the opportunity to go to school were valued high. In addition to formal education, children considered the basic life skills they could learn at the centres important.

The strategies of the centres

In the centres a child or youth under 18 years was generally considered as a child. Therefore, the phenomenon of street children was seen as a problem since the children were deprived of their rights. In the street the children were involved in activities that they should not be doing. These activities and street life had severe consequences in their health and wellbeing as well.

All three centres had different strategies on how to help and support the children. As said, the Centre 1 focused on street outreach, shelter and home tracing. Centre 2, in turn, was a home for the children and the aim was to support the children to re-integrate back to the Zambian community. The strategy of the Centre 3 differed from the one of the other two in a way that the aim was to provide facilities to make the street life more bearable: the children were provided food, a possibility to bath and wash their clothes. However, also the Centre 3 tried to support the children with education whenever it was possible.

The strategies of the centres were different, there was a consensus of home being the best place for a child. Therefore, the centres were also doing home tracing to find the parents or relatives of the children. Also education and life skills were emphasised by the staff of the centres.

One very crucial aspect, which was raised up by both the children and the staff, was violence. If a child has ran away from home because of violence and abuse, facing the violence at the centre will most likely result in the child running away to the street. Therefore the centres should take action to stop using the violence as a way of discipline. Instead, the children would need counselling, education, life skills and safety.

The general public in Zambia should be informed about the ways to encounter the street children. In this, to stop giving them money would be the first step. Also, the parents should be discouraged to use children in begging. Instead, they should be advised on the services of the social welfare in order to seek financial support.

Finally, there is a call for the intervention of the government. The centres should be working more closely together and also with the government in order to find the best ways to help the children to get out of the street as well as support their education and re-integration to the Zambian community.

6.2. Contributions to the discussions related to children in the streets

Childhood has many different definitions that are sometimes even contested. However, generally child can be defined as a person under 18 years of age. There are also certain things that are seen as part of childhood – play, going to school – and on the other hand some things that are not suitable for a child, such as work and labour.

There are at least two different groups of street children: children working in the streets and children working and living in the streets. The children working in the streets do have a place to stay and only go to the street during daytime, whereas the children working and living in the street are spending all their time in the street. The children who do not live in the street do not always stay with their parents either but there are various sleeping arrangements including relatives and friends. Maybe even a bit surprisingly, the previous research shows that many of the street children are not orphans but do have parents (Abebe, 2009, 283-284).

The reasons for children ending up in the street were various poverty being one of the major reasons. Children are often contributing to the family livelihood by earning money in the street. Also abuse at home was a push factor why children ran away from home to the street.

The most common economic activity in the street is begging. Begging and life in the street make children vulnerable to many hardships in the street. These include violent encounters and health hazards as well as the social stigma. All these affect children's well-being and development. Working in the street also deprives children of their right to education.

The child rights aspect was strong among the researches of previous studies and street child phenomenon was seen as a problem because the children are not enjoying their rights (Agnelli, 1986, 399). In the previous research on the topic of street children the institutional strategies were not in the focus. In fact, the researcher studying children living and working in the street were paying surprisingly little attention to the institutional actors. However, orphanages (Manjengwa et al., 2016, 64) and residential care (Agnelli, 1986, 75-76) were suggested as a solution.

Among researchers there are controversial perceptions on work children are doing. The work can be seen as a right but as well as a harmful practice. Sometimes the poor families do not have a choice. Work of the children can also be considered as participation to the family's income and livelihood. The work children do in the street is informal, mostly begging, and it exposes children at the risks of street life. Also children themselves had mixed feelings about work (Okoli & Cree, 2011, 65-66).

The dichotomy between work and school was also discussed. Sometimes work can make it possible for the child to afford school (see Bass, 2004) but it can also prevent the child from going to school (see Bourdillon, 2006). A surprising statement was the one of Bourdillon (2006), stating that also school can be harmful for example in a case where the teacher is violent or abusive (ibid., 1210).

6.3. Practical suggestions

The phenomenon of street children is very multifaceted and therefore it should be considered and discussed from different viewpoints. Also, as the staff of the centres suggest, the children should be seen as individuals with different needs.

My observations suggest that, despite the contradictions between the centres, it is an asset to have centres with different strategies and operational models. However, the model where the child is supported to integrate to the Zambian community and to live a "normal" life as a child in the community was the most successful with the longest lasting results. This supports the idea of more holistic programmes with rehabilitation and counselling in home kind of environments. Parenting and a feeling of belonging in the community were seen as a key to the change.

The strategy of the Centre 3 to keep the children away from the street during day time possibly reduced their solvent/drug abuse during those hours, but did not offer any other alternative to the street life. Instead, that model should be developed further to create a step by step –programme including rehabilitation, counselling, education and housing.

Also the children's perceptions suggest the idea of the centres as the best way to help them. However, the centres should find a way to do more cooperation to find a suitable programme for each child depending on their situation. The violence should not be practiced in any centre since it is one factor pushing the children back to the street.

Also raising awareness of the parents/guardians of the possibilities to get support from social welfare would be an important initiative. Many interviewees raised up the point that there actually are social welfare services to support poor families. In that case, the families should be made aware of those services and also be supported in the processes. The awareness should also be raised among the general public in order for people to know how to face a child in the street: instead of giving the children money, they should be directed to the centres.

6.4. Suggestions for further research

Having three different centres participating in the study as well as hearing the perceptions of the children made the data of this study unique and rich. Due to the complexity of the phenomenon, it is important to discuss the topic from different points of views. Considering different strategies and mirroring them to the perspectives of the children gave valuable information of what could be a successful way to help the children and tackle the street children phenomenon.

The study has its limitations too. Leaving the children who do not come to the centres but stay in the street outside the study limited the information and different perspectives. However, I was aware of this when I decided to focus on interviewing the children at the centres. My presence in the street always changed the behaviour of the children and making the situation natural and building the trust would have required much more time than I had. Studying the world of the children who are still in the street would be an interesting topic for further research: their activities and survival as well as the reasons they do not want to utilise the facilities the centres have to offer.

Another interesting topic for further research would be studying the ways of how to actually keep the children out of the street. My study focused on the strategies and models of how to get the children out of the street. It would also be important to study how to support the children in changing their lives in order to integrate to the society and continue life out of the street.

The so called street adults were mentioned both in previous research (Manjengwa et al., 2016, 62) and the interviews. It would be interesting and important to study how they end up spending their whole youth and early adulthood in the street and how they have organized their lives. Also, what should have been done differently in order to support them to get out of the street and obtain education and/or vocational training? And most importantly, what are their experiences and how do they see their situation.

This study has contributed the discussion of street children, their lives in the street and how to help them, from the point of views of both the children and the staff of the centres. However, since the topic of street children is broad, there is still need for further research within the same topic.

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APPENDIX

Interviews

Questions for the children:

- Can you tell me about your normal day here?

- How old are you?

- How long have you been living here?

- How did you end up here?

- Do you go to school?

    - How long have you been going to school?

- Have you been to school before?

    - Why not?

- How did you spend time in the streets?

- Have you been working before? / Can you tell me about your work?

    - What kind of work you were doing / have done?

- How did you end up working in the streets?

- What do you think about the work you did?

- Did you like it? Was it hard?

- Were you working alone or with some other children/youths?

- Were you combining your work and school?

- What do you think about the life in the streets?

- Did you have friends in the streets?

- Did you feel safe in the streets?

- What makes you happy?

- Do you have any future plans?

- Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

Questions for the staff members of the centres:

- Can you tell me about child work?

- What do you think, is there a difference between child work and child labour?

- What kind of difference?

- How should the children working in the street be treated?

- Do you have any suggestions whether to buy goods children are selling or not?

    - Why?

- What kind of impacts you think the work has on working children?

- Is there anything useful in child work in the perspective of children?

- Is the work harmful for children?

    - How?

    - Why?

- Do you think school and work can be combined?

    - Does working only hinder children from going to school?

- What do you think about child work? Is it a problem?

    - What should be done to the issue of child work? (If it is a problem.)

- What kind of strategies does your centre have to help the working children?