

Full Length Research

The Role of Street Child Organization towards the Challenges of Street Children in Kenema city, Eastern Sierra Leone

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A number of Humanitarian organizations are involved in the welfare of children all over the world. One of such organizations is the Street Child Organization of Sierra Leone (SCoSL). This was formed in 2008 by a business man in London. His main aim was to reduce the number of children on the street by sending them to school or re-unite them with their families. The study investigated the contributions of Street Child Organization of Sierra Leone towards vulnerable street children in Kenema city. The forces that push children to the street and the challenges were also looked into. The study design is descriptive and was done in Kenema City, Nongowa Chiefdom, Eastern Sierra Leone. Data were collected using structured questionnaire for workers in SCoSL and interviews were conducted for the staff of SCoSL and street children. The findings revealed that there were more men working for the organization. The assistance given to children were education, trauma counseling, child protection, Medicare and livelihood support. The organization faced a number of challenges including: difficulty to remove the children from the street; Peer group influence, low contributions from other child welfare organizations, inadequate financial and material resources and insincerity of some care takers. To reduce children in the street the following recommendations were made: Government should provide support and enforce laws governing free and compulsory quality education. Non Governmental Organizations (NGO's) should continue to give adequate support that will help remove vulnerable children from the street. Local authorities must help provide information about street children, to child welfare organizations and help government in support of free and compulsory quality education to ensure that children are removed from the street of Kenema city.

Keywords: Humanitarian organizations, welfare of children, Kenema city, Eastern Sierra Leone

INTRODUCTION

Street Child Organization of Sierra Leone is a charity based organization from United Kingdom founded in 2008 by Tom Dannatta

business man in London. His aim was to reduce the number of children on the street by sending them to school , or reunite the affected children

with their families. Street Child Organization have created employment facilities for many Sierra Leoneans.

A street child for this study is a child that lives and work on the street. They are highly mobile and they can either live on the street or live with family. Studies show that children who live on the street are involved in begging, theft, hawking and prostitution. These activities enable them to earn money which they use for their daily survival.

In 2008, Street Child Organization of Sierra Leone started to operate in the country with the same aim as that of Tom Dannatt. The organization started operations with a handful of street children. They started by connecting the children to their families and supporting them to go to school. Their operations expanded and started sending children to school especially those who were not able to access education because of poverty, lack of parents or because of gender issues (i.e. they are girls.)

Street Child Organization Sierra Leone carried out registration of street children and were able to discover that there were over 12000 street children in Freetown the capital city alone. These children, like those in other African countries are exposed to the dangers of drugs, child trafficking, prostitution and other dangers of life.

After the war and the Ebola outbreak it was common to see a lot of street children in the cities like Kenema, Bo, Freetown, Makeni and urban towns across the country. Many of these children were sent out to work instead of going to school. Many of the separated children were pushed to the street and even slept on the street.

The organization, Street Child of Sierra Leone (SCoSL) undertakes the responsibility of giving street children better future by giving support in diverse ways including psycho-social support family business support, educational support, connecting families, livelihood support, trauma healing, counseling and better character reformation.

SCoSL has also established day care centers, providing food, counseling, clothing and medical support in order to encourage children to get off the street. SCoSL in collaboration with other NGO's like Help a Needy Child (HANC-

SL) have reunited over 1,000 street children with their families and send them to school. SCoSL report shows that 95% of the children continued with their education and have stayed off the street. Street Child Organisation

collaborates with other child welfare organizations like UNICEF, FAWE, Red Cross to provide assistance to street children.

The ten year civil war in Sierra Leone led to a lot of destruction and lose of lives. The country was left with the legacy of destruction of properties, poverty and suffering of people including children. This situation worsen and forced thousands of children to go to the street, lived and work for their survival. That is thousands of the poorest children were trying to survive on the street.

The Ebola virus disease outbreak also in 2014 added to the suffering of Sierra Leoneans. Thousands of deaths were caused by the outbreak. Many families were separated and many children became orphans losing their focus and parental care.

Many developed countries including Sierra Leone are faced with many problems relating to human resource department and child protection. Organizations concern with child development and protection for instance, Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC), Universal Declaration of Human Right (UDHR), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Save the Children, Defense for Children International (DCI) and host of others have all been making effort towards the protection of the rights of children. In 2007, the UDHR and the Children Rights Act was adopted. United Nation Convention on the Right of the child adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989 outlined the basic rights of children and the responsibilities of government to protect children. In 1989 the convention on the rights of the child, defines a child as any human being who has not reached the age of 18 years. SCoSL in partnership with some rural communities have built schools and helped in training teachers in rural communities where there are no schools.

They also helped with teaching and learning materials. In protecting the child SCoSL, worked with orphaned children and street children to find for them caretakers through the extended family that will look after them and make sure they return to school.

In 2011, a commercial wing of SCoSL was formed to help create employment opportunities for the care takers. This created awareness in people and the financial support also brought a sustainable source of funds. Despite the intervention of the various child welfare

organizations in Sierra Leone, their goals are still not achieved. With all the interventions, children are still seen in the street doing menial jobs and other activities to get their daily living.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the study was to find out the contributions of Street Child Organization towards the challenges of street children in Kenema City, Nongowa Chiefdom, Eastern Sierra Leone. The specific objectives were to:

- Examine the demographic characteristics of the street child and staff of street child organization
- Determine the causes that led children to the street in Kenema city.
- Identify the challenges faced by Street Child Organization operating in Kenema city.
- Examine the life style of street children in Kenema city.
- Examine the impact of Street Child Organization of Sierra Leone on street children in Kenema city.
- Identify other organizational assistance and area of support to street children organization in Kenema city.

The result of this work will be important in various ways to the government of Sierra Leone, Non Governmental Organization (NGO's), educational institutions, human rights organizations, religious organizations and other humanitarian organizations.

• It is the concern and responsibility of the government of Sierra Leone to protect her citizens against exploitation. This is expressed in the Child Right Commission (CRC), therefore the findings of this work will help government to undertake programmes that will help address the problems and needs of street children.

It will also help policy makers to develop strategies that will help alleviate the problems of street children in the country.

- The NGO's and other humanitarian organization interested in children will find this work useful for their operations. It will also help them to make adjustments where they have lapses.
- The result will also be useful to religious organizations that advocate for child's protection.
- It will also create awareness to stake holders in communities about the problems faced

by street children and how to minimize these problems.

- It will also serve as a base line for further studies in educational institutions.

CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The views of other writers were also sought on the topic. Many organizations all over the world are concerned about the welfare and status of street children. The problem of street children started way back in the industrial revolution in Europe when the children became a dominant social ill (short 1990). In 1850, a settlement center was established in Chicago (Cohen A.K el al 2007). This was an indicator of the prevalence of the problem.

Street children are found in large majority of the world's cities and in densely populated urban towns of developing countries in Africa, Europe and South East Asia (UNICEF 2008). UNICEF defined street child in two ways: those 'on' the street and 'of' the street. Children 'on' the street are those who have a home to live but have full time or part time work on the street. Children 'of' the street are those who do not have a serious tie with their home, they essentially live in the streets. That is they are those who live all their time on the street or children with no shelter except the streets.

Ebigbo, (2003) define street child as a boy or girl aged under (18) years for whom the street has become their homes and or source of livelihood and who are not protected from the dangers of life.

Duong Kim Hong Kenidu Ohno (2005) observed the problems of street children in Vietnam, a country rapidly growing and integrating with the world. He classified causes into broken family, mindset problem and economic migration. Situations are divided into current protection and future investment. It is shown that the family group is most difficult to assist while the economic migration group shows strong desire for and better life. However, their aspiration is frequently interrupted by various setbacks. Since street children are not a homogenous group, interventions must also be diversified according to the needs of each type of children.

International Labour Organizations (ILO) report in 2008 and UNICEF (2009) estimated 215

million children between the ages of 5-17 were working under conditions that were considered hazardous, illegal and exploitative. This is alarming figure and demands the attention of the world leaders. There is therefore the need for steps to be taken to minimize this act. United Nations statistics in 2005, reveals that the causes of child labour included poverty, neglect, no access to education, poverty and unemployment are high particularly among families and children in developing countries like Sierra Leone. Poor families rely on child labour for their daily sustenance and attainment for their basic needs.

Many parents in Africa particularly Sierra Leone are too poor to provide sponsorship for their children. The inability of most parents to take responsibilities of their children has made many children to abandon their homes to live on the streets where they engaged themselves in tedious work to earn their livelihood.

In a similar research carried out by Nte (2005) in Port Harcourt, based on ILO estimates, put child laborers figure at over 500,000. It was opined that, bulk of these children are street hawkers who sell for parents to augment their lean wages, sell for employers for a 'morsel of bread', sell for relations in the form of disguised child labor and abandoned children/destitute who sell or beg to make a living – they make up eighty per cent of Street Children. There are also the scavengers who browse through rubbish heaps to search for any abandoned material of marketable value. In the same vein, children of immigrants from Niger and Chad republic equally add up to the growing number of Street Children in Port Harcourt. Hidden from the "casual observer" is the army of child prostitutes who combine hawking and petty prostitution. They are usually aged 11 – 14 years and at times encouraged by their parents, guardians and employers.

This category makes up the most hazardous Street Children because of the HIV/AIDS scourge and unwanted pregnancies/teenage motherhood. The effect of this social problem to Nigeria's national security cannot therefore be over emphasized.

In 2015, Street Child Organization of Sierra Leone (SCoSL) and Liberia defined street child as any child below 18 years who rely on the street as their home or for their livelihood. The wish of SCoSL is to ensure that the rights of every child is respected and recognized. SCoSL therefore aim at supporting children of the streets

making them return to school for quality education, vocational training so as to achieve sustainability through livelihood support. Street Child Organization in Sierra Leone and in Liberia since 2008 worked with over 50,000 street connected children. Street children work in the street in a distracted attempt to take out whatever they can. This may include food, money, medicine, jewelries and other items necessary for their life support.

Although rates of homelessness among young people are difficult to assess because the population is often hidden and transient (renewal), statistics from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention indicate that there were approximately 1.6 million homeless run away and throw away youth under 18 years of age in 1999 (Hammer, Finkelhor, & Sedlak, 2002). Of particular concern is the number of young girls who become pregnant while homeless. This number has been steadily growing over the last 30 years. Recent estimates show that between 6% and 22% of young homeless girls may be pregnant and which could be a recipe for prostitution (Health Resources and Services Administration, 2001), whereas pregnancy rates in the general population (aged 18–19) are just above twelve percent (Guttmacher Institute, 2006).

The physical and mental stresses of pregnancy and the pressures of caring for young children can complicate the process of extricating oneself from homelessness (Webb, Culhane, Metraux, Robbins, & Culhane, 2003). Mental health problems are prevalent among homeless mothers, and are exacerbated by time spent living on the street (Cauce et al., 2000). Moreover, homelessness during pregnancy increases risks for birth complications, low birth weight, and nutritional or substance abuse related physical and neurological effects on newborns (Chapman, Tarter, Kirisci, & Cornelius, 2007; Little et al., 2005; Stanwood & Levitt 2004; Stein, Lu, & Gelberg, 2000).

Over the years, various researchers and organizations have attempted to provide concise definitions of the term "street children". De Moura (2002) analysed the media and literature on these children and found that the use of the term "street children" is predominant in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe, while the term "homeless children" is used in North America and Western Europe. Dabir and Athale (2011) mentioned that the United Nations has provided a broad definition: "those for whom the

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street (in the widest sense of the word, i.e. unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc.), more than their family has become their real home, a situation in which there is no protection, supervision or direction from responsible adults.

A head count survey on street children by TambaLahai (2012) together with Help a Needy Child International (HANCI) and Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children Affairs in 2011 revealed that a total of 49,698 children are living and working in the streets of Freetown the capital city. About 2,699 children were found sleeping on the various streets across seventeen (17) urban towns the survey covered.

UNICEF (2000) has been, and is still to appealing for the educational development of children particularly in African countries as a way of removing children from the street.

This study focuses on the contributions of Street Child Organization in Kenema City to address the challenges of disadvantaged street children in Kenema City.

METHODOLOGY

Description of Study Area

This study was undertaken in Kenema city. Kenema is in the Eastern region of Sierra Leone and is the headquarter town of Kenema District. Kenema has a growing population according to 2015 Housing and Population Census of 609,891. The population of the children is significantly large prompting the government and other Non-Governmental Organizations to direct their attention to them. The main economic activities of the people are agriculture, trading, mining, and civil service. The city is composed of all tribes in Sierra Leone i.e. Mende, Temne, Limba, Fula, Loko, SoSo and other nationals. However, Mende is predominantly spoken by majority of the people. Kenema is a commercial city that attracts business people not only from within the country but also foreign nationals. The town is predominantly a business city where children are seen selling many articles on the street including food items, clothes, shoes and also doing manual jobs to enable them get their daily survival. The presence of many children in the streets of Kenema City made it an ideal choice for the researcher. Children in the streets from different parts of the

city decided to live 'on' or 'in' the streets because of the different forms of challenges they face.

Research Population and Sampling

The research population comprised street children in Kenema City. The sample comprised of fifty (50) street children and five (5) office staff of Street Child Organization, Kenema branch. In all a total of fifty five (55) respondents were contacted for information on street children.

Sampling Procedure

Stratified sampling and Simple Random Sampling (SRS) were used to collect data for this work.

In stratified sampling respondents were put in groups so that they can be easily identified. It was done this way to easily access children found along major streets in the city. In the SRS the respondents had equal opportunities of being selected.

Data Collection

The data for this work was collected through questionnaires and interviews conducted for office staff and street children. Well structured questions were developed and administered to both SCoSL office staff and street children. The staff were given the questionnaire to fill and were collected later.

For the children the questions were read and interpreted by the researcher and their responses recorded. Focus group discussions were also carried out. One group for the boys and the other for the girls. This was done to encourage them to tell true stories about themselves. Data collected from the various instruments were analysed, frequencies and percentages worked using simple statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher concentrated on analyzing and discussing data on the following variables as prescribed in the objectives of the study:

- I. Examine the demographic characteristics of the street child and staff of street child organization,
- II. Examine the life style of street children in Kenema City
- III. Causes that led children to the street,
- IV. Challenges faced by street child organization operating in Kenema city,
- V. The impact of street child organization of Sierra Leone on street children in Kenema city,
- VI. Identify other organizational assistance and area of support to street children organization in Kenema city.

To probe into the activities of Street Child Organization of Sierra Leone, interviews were

conducted based on the objectives of the study. Below are the analyses of the interviews.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STREET CHILD AND STAFF OF STREET CHILD ORGANIZATION

It was revealed that 35(70.0%) of the respondents (street children) were male while 15(30.0%) were female; indicating there were more boys on the street than girls

Table 1: Showing the Sex of Street Children

SEX	Frequency	(%)
Male	35	70.0
Female	15	30.0
TOTAL	50	100.0

The data in Figure 1 shows the percentages on the sex of staff of street children organization in Kenema city. The findings revealed that 30(60.0%) of the workers interviewed were males while 20(40.0%) were females. This is an indication that more males worked for the street child organization in the Kenema branch office.

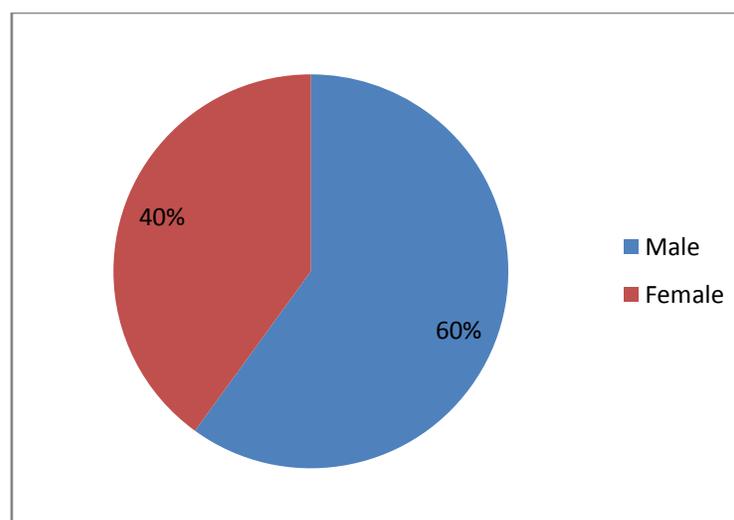


Figure 1: Pie Chart Showing Percentages of respondents on the sex of staff of Street Children Organization in Kenema City

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Investigation was done on the parental background to know whether parents are alive or dead. It was discovered that majority 21(42.0%) of the children have both parents dead, 13(26.0%) of them had one parent alive, 9(18.0%) of them

had both parent alive and 7(14.0%) do not know whether their parents were alive or dead. The research finding shows that majority (42%) of the street children have lost their parents by death.

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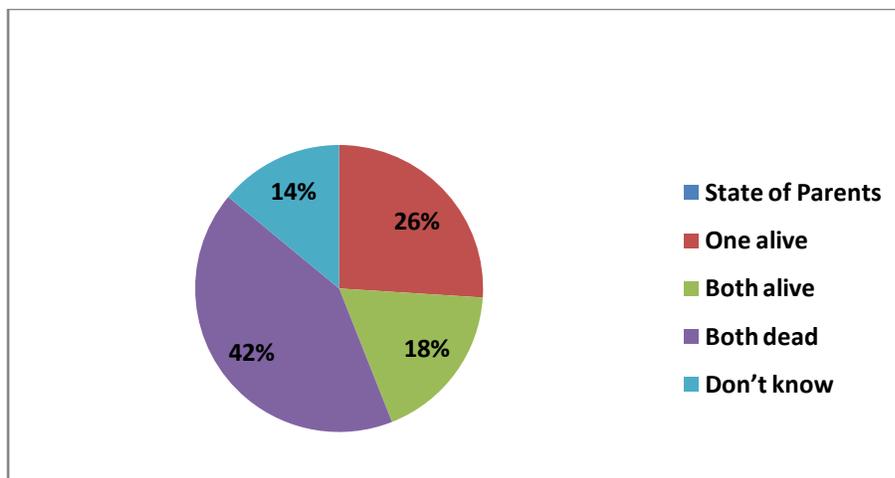


Figure 2: Pie Chart showing percentages of Survival Status of Parents of Street Children in Kenema City

The educational attainment of the children indicated that most 26(52.0%) of them attained classes 3-4 and left school. A good number 17(34.0%) attained classes 5-6 and 3(6.0%) stopped at class 1 or 2. However a few 4(8.0%)

attained JSS level. The highest rate of drop out was between class 3 and 4 with (52%) of them stop. Children dropping at this age is an indication that the country future in terms of education is bleak

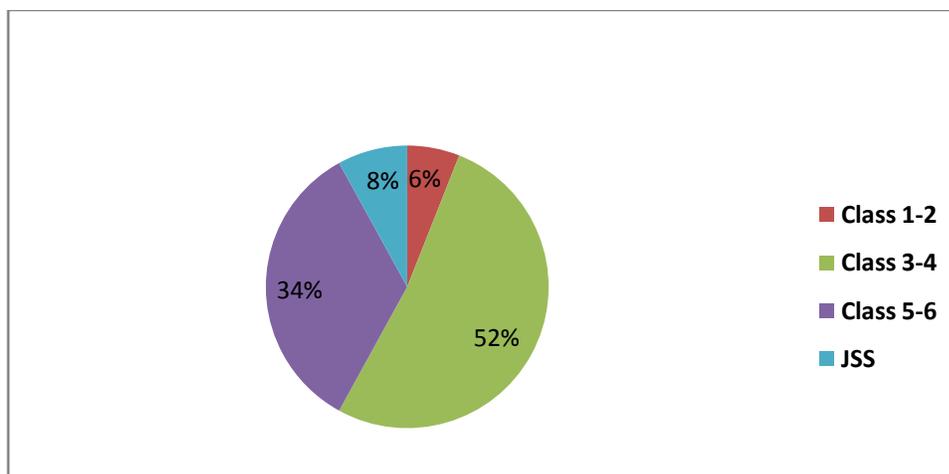


Figure3: Pie Chart showing Percentages of Educational Attainment of Street Children

CAUSES THAT LED CHILDREN TO THE STREET

Figure 4, depicts the responses of street children on the reasons for their movement from their homes to the street. It was revealed by majority 17(34.0%) of them that the behavior of their guardians was responsible for their movement to the street, 14(28.0%) indicated that they wanted to be with their friends, 13(26.0%)

stated of pressure of work at home and 6(12.0%) indicated that they wanted to be on their own. It can be concluded that most children moved to the streets because of the behavior of their guardians or caretakers, some of them moved because they want to be with their friends and some move away because of pressure of work at home.

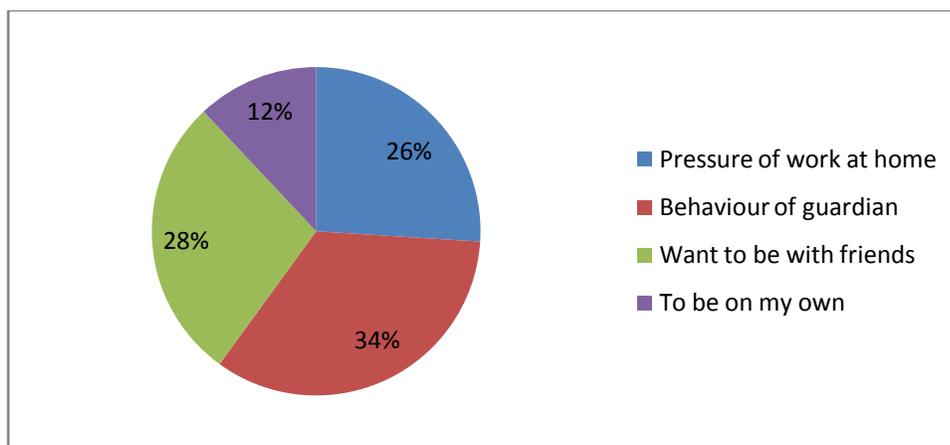


Figure 4: Pie Chart showing the reasons for the movement of Children to the Street

The findings revealed that most 18(36.0%) of them dropped because of peer group influence, 14(28.0%) indicated lack of family support, 10(20.0%) dropped as a result of poverty and

8(16.0%) stated that they dropped as a result of illiteracy. Children most time drop out of school and join the street because of peer groups, lack of family support and poverty amongst others

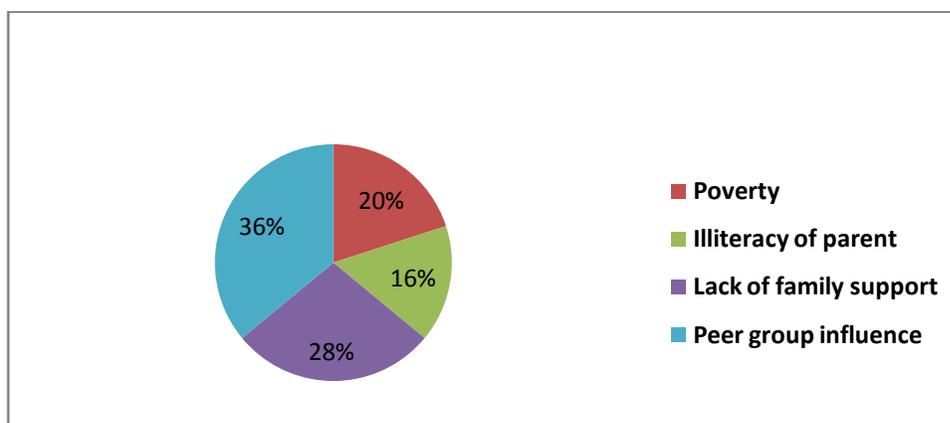


Figure 5: Pie Chart showing percentages on the Causes of Children Dropping out of School in Kenema City

CHALLENGES FACED BY STREET CHILD ORGANIZATION OPERATING IN KENEMA

Figure 6 , shows the percentages of the challenges faced by street child organization in Kenema city. Majority 20(40.0) of the children when interviewed were still on the street because of their peer groups. About 10(20%) of the respondents stated that inadequate financial and material resources was a challenge. Also 10(20%)

indicated insincerity of their caretakers and the same percentage stated low contributions from other organizations as a challenge

Although Street Child organization is doing so much to remove children from the street, the organization is faced with a number of challenges as indicated below

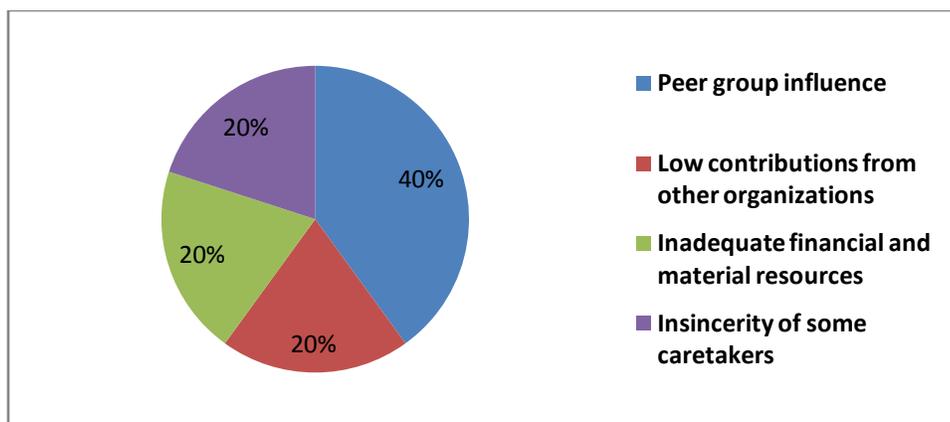


Figure 6: Pie Chart showing percentages of the Challenges Faced by Street Child Organization in Kenema City

Figure 7, depicts the responses of street children on problems they encountered. The findings were that many 12(24.0%) of them said they do manual jobs and are given small amount of money, 11(22.0%) of them said they had no food, 10(20.0%) sleep in making shift areas and are forced to take drugs. A few 2(4.0%) said

adults do not show concern for them even when they are not treated well by older folks. Children are faced with a lot of problems or undergo series of sufferings when in the streets. The adage 'survival of the fittest' actually prevails with street children

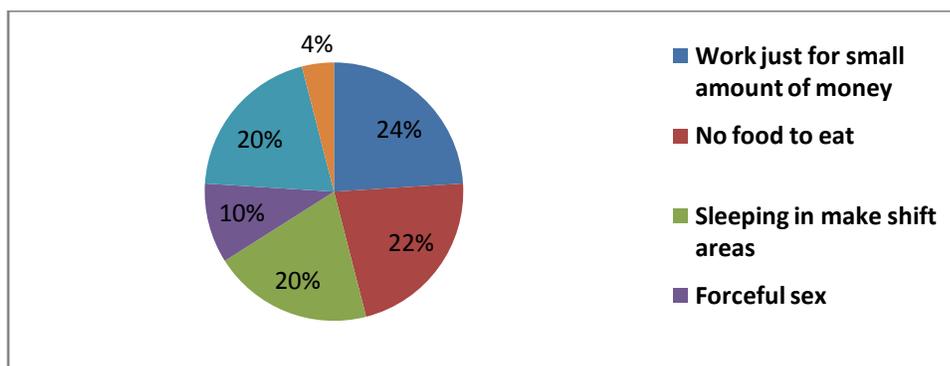


Figure 7: Pie Chart showing percentages of the Problems Encountered by Street Children Organization in Kenema City.

EXAMINE THE EFFECTS OF THE LIFE STYLE OF STREET CHILDREN IN KENEMA CITY

Figure 8, depicts the life style of street children in Kenema City it's adverse effect on them. Most of them 14(28.0%) stated it has caused them to drop out of school. It was opined by a good number of them 10(20.0%) that they now take drugs, 9(18.0%) indicated stealing, 8(16.0%) them stated that they are now involved in prostitution. A good number 7(14.0%) stated

they now gambles and 2(4.0%)of them stated it has lead to early pregnancy.

The effects of life on the street has caused a greater percentage 14(28%) of children to drop out of school and some resorted to taking drugs and other bad life behaviours like stealing, prostitution and early pregnancy.

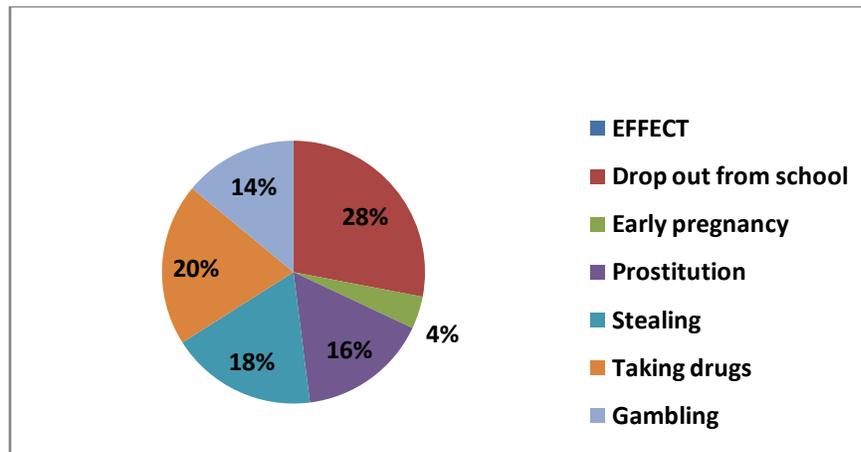


Figure 8: Pie Chart showing percentages of respondents on the Effects of live style of children on the street in Kenema City.

The study revealed that 17(34.0%) of them take traumadol,16(32.0%) indicated they take all drugs, 10 (20.0%) take marijuana and 7(14.0%) stated that they take cocaine.

This shows that to be on the street, children take hard drugs like cocaine, traumadol, marijuana to enable them survive the rigours on the street. In a situation where a child move to the street who is not used to taking drugs he/she must be subjected to taking hard drugs in order to survive.

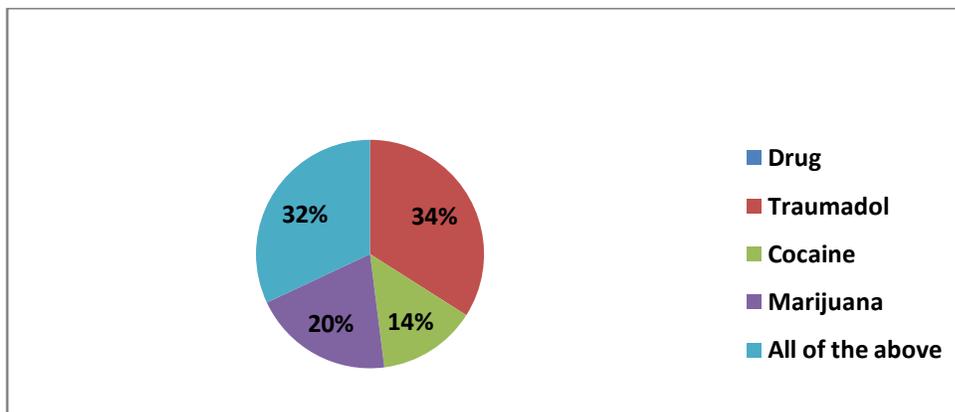


Figure 9: Pie Chart showing percentages on Drugs taken by Street Children in Kenema City

OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND AREAS OF SUPPORT TO STREET CHILDREN ORGANIZATION IN KENEMA CITY

The research also investigated assistance from other organizations to street children. Majority 27(54.0%) had assistance from UNICEF; 10(20.0%) from FAWE; 7(14.0%) from Help a Needy Child, 4(8.0%) from IRC and 2(4.0%) from

Red Cross Society. This clearly shows that street children do not only have support from SCoSL but also from child welfare and other humanitarian organizations

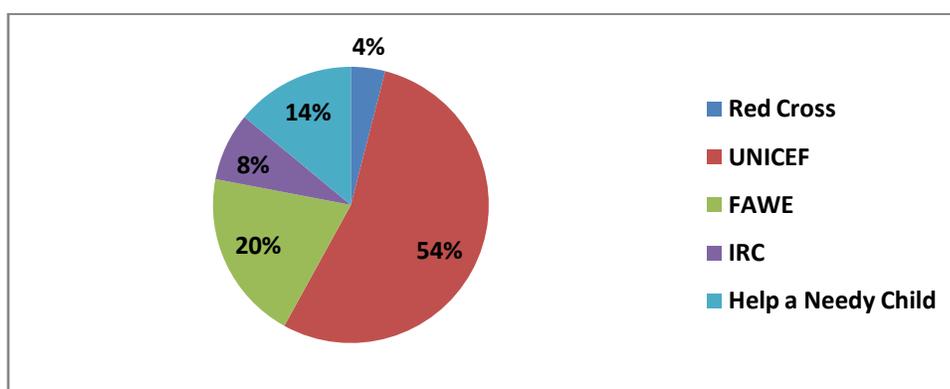


Figure 10: Pie Chart showing percentages of respondents on other Organizational Assistance to Street Children Organization in Kenema City

Figure 11, depicts percentages on the areas of support to street children in Kenema CITY.

The area of assistance to street children from Street Child of Sierra Leone was investigated. It revealed that assistance were mainly in the areas of education 20(40.0%), counseling 10(20.0%), 10(20.0%) protection and

character reform and 10(20.0%) financial and livelihood support. Street Child Organization helped street children mainly in education, though character reform and protection, livelihood support and counseling were also addressed. The view of the researcher is that children can be removed from the streets if they have educational support and proper counseling

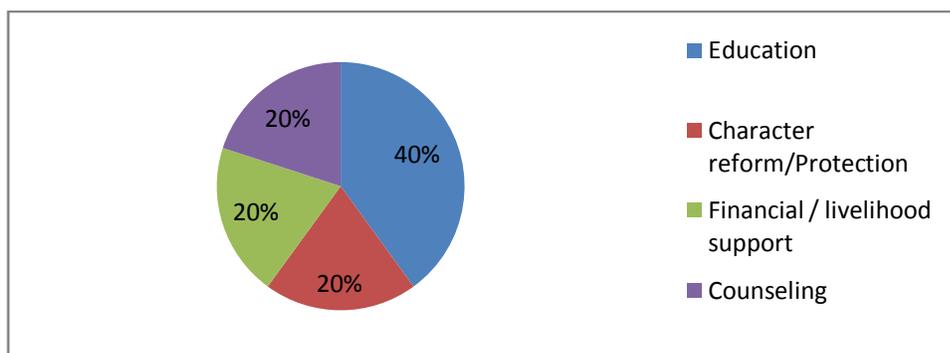


Figure11: Pie Chart showing percentages of respondents on areas of support to Street Children in Kenema City

IMPACT OF STREET CHILD ORGANIZATION ON STREET CHILDREN IN KENEMA CITY

Figure 12, depicts the impact of street child Organization on street children in Kenema City. Majority 20(40.0%) of the children opined that they have gone back to school, 10(20.0%) have stop taking drugs and 8(16.0%) have started practicing good life. However, 12(24.0%) of them

stated that they have not observed any impact of the effort of Street Child Organization on their lives. About 60% of the street children have had their life improved. This is an indication that SCoSI is making some positive impact on the lives of children 'in' and 'on' the street in Kenema City.

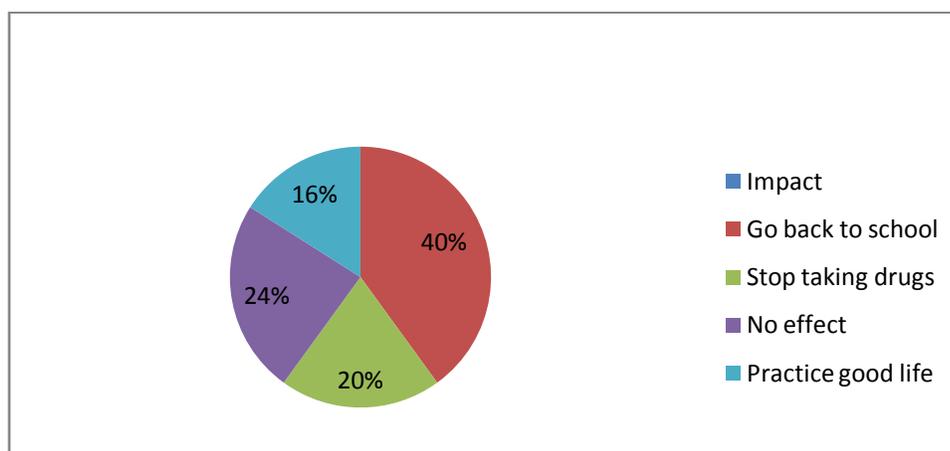


Figure 12: Showing the Impact of Street Child Organization on Street Children

Despite the immense assistance rendered by the organization there were some challenges; these include:

- Difficulty to remove the children from the street. The children are accustomed to the street either because of pressure at home or they find pleasure living in the street. The organization often finds it difficult to persuade some of the children to move away from the street.

Peer group influence. Many children are in the street because of the influence of their peers. There are children in the streets with one or both parents alive who are still engaged in street life like stealing, prostitution, gambling and the like.

- Low contributions from other organizations. Street Child Organization need the contributions of other child welfare organizations to be effective in their operations. Contributions from other organizations are generally low.

- Inadequate financial and material resources. Street Child Organization of Sierra Leone is not financially strong to undertake all it takes to remove children from the streets.

The organization needs more money and materials support to address the needs of street children.

- Insincerity of some caretakers. There were some claims that the beneficiaries weren't benefiting much from support given by Street Child organization. In some areas caretakers do not make available facilities to the beneficiaries. Common among the observable issues is the high illiteracy level in the study area. As a result of the high illiteracy, parents do not put premium on the education of their children. They prefer engaging their children in petty trade rather than sending them to school. The few who do so as a result of social and other problems find it difficult to sustain their children's education. This has accounted for the large number of drop- outs from schools.

Parents, because of poverty status are justified in engaging their children in street trading as a means of raising money to sponsor the education of their children. This venture degenerated into many social problems that have militated against the education of children. Hence an easy and possible way of sending children to the street.

Early pregnancy was another problem observed. The rate at which school teenagers are involved in early and unprotected sex is alarming. High crime rate is one social problem that

emerges from the street. Children are often apprehended for crimes such as stealing, gambling, taking of hard drugs and forceful sex.

Through Street Child Organization of Sierra Leone many children have been removed from the streets and are either sent back to school, or to vocational training centers or reunited with their families or in the care of capable persons to ensure a brighter future for them.

Street Child Organization Sierra Leone does advocate for many children and solicit help from equally concerned partners such as UNICEF, IRC, Save the Children, FAWE to address the needs of vulnerable children. Other challenges faced by the operations of Street Child Organization in Kenema City include:

- Lack of adequate financial resources, - inadequate transportation, - lack of accurate and reliable information on those who are truly vulnerable children, - difficulty in getting trusted vulnerable children, and - difficulty in getting trusted care givers for the vulnerable children.

CONCLUSION

Majority (60%) of the workers of Street Child Sierra Leone Kenema branch are males. It was realized that Street children in the city have benefitted from various assistance rendered by Street Child of Sierra Leone. The assistance covers education, counseling, protection, livelihood support amongst others. Street Child of Sierra Leone collaborates with other child welfare organizations like UNICEF, FAWE Help a Needy Child, IRC, to provide assistance to street children. In addition to assistance rendered to street children, the organization also provided In-service training, rehabilitated schools, provided teaching and learning materials to schools etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) The government should:

- Provide facilities needed for the implementation and strengthen the law governing Free and Compulsory Quality education. This will enable children to have access to education thereby minimizing school drop outs and street children.

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- Complement the effort of Street Child Organization Sierra Leone and other child protection agencies in providing support and other opportunities for street children.

- Empower the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs financially to design attractive programmes for the inclusion of street children and their adjustment to society's moral values.

(b) The Non- Governmental Organizations should:

- Continue to give adequate support to organizations dealing with the welfare and removal of vulnerable children from the street.
- Do regular monitoring to ensure that facilities and opportunities provided for street children reach them in time.

(c) The Public & Local Authorities

- Should complement the effort of the government and non-governmental organizations in providing essential learning materials that will help to remove children from the street.
- Help support government to implement compulsory free and quality education by ensuring that children are removed from the street.

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