

## Census of the number of children who were spending time on the streets on 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2003 in Moshi and Arusha Municipalities, Tanzania

**Implemented by Mkombozi Centre for Street Children  
Strengthening Communities Producing Street Children in Kilimanjaro  
Region, Tanzania project  
In partnership with Child Hope UK  
Funded by Comic Relief and the Foundation for Civil Society**

The social problem of marginalized urban children and young people (CYPs) is an issue of concern to Civil Society and to Government, local and national. Since the early 1990s Tanzania has witnessed a visible increase in the number of children living and working on the street. Mkombozi Centre for Street Children is one of the leading child focused NGO's in Northern Tanzania and conducted this census of the number of children on the streets as part of its 'Strengthening Communities producing Street Children in Kilimanjaro Region, Tanzania' project. The results will provide Mkombozi with baseline data from which to measure the project's impact in reducing the number of street children coming from the target communities. Research about street children in Tanzania is sparse and tends to focus on a qualitative analysis of their situation. This census intends to partially fill the gap in existing research by quantifying the total number of children spending time on the streets in Moshi and Arusha Municipalities, and then quantifying how many of these are street children. The census also uncovers gaps in current services and interventions for street children. Data was collected over a 24 hour period in each town by Mkombozi children and staff using a questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted.

### RESULTS:

- 1,120 children were interviewed in Moshi (457) and Arusha (663).
- In Moshi 14% (64) and in Arusha 29% (195) identified themselves as full time street children.
- In Moshi 49% (224) and in Arusha 44% (296) of children identified themselves as part time street children.
- In both towns there are more part time street children on the streets than full time and more boys than girls.
- In Moshi 92% of full time street children and 89% of part time street children are between 10 and 19 years of age.
- In Arusha 94% of full time street children and 96% of part time street children were between the ages of 10 - 19.
- In Moshi 25% and in Arusha 12% of street children came from Mkombozi's target communities (Kibosho, Majengo, Machame and Uru).
- In Moshi 77.23% and in Arusha 69.26% of part time street children are not in school.

1<sup>ST</sup> EVER CENSUS OF  
STREET CHILDREN IN  
ARUSHA AND MOSHI

1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2003

**Mkombozi Centre  
for Street Children,  
P.O. Box 9601,  
Moshi,  
Tanzania  
Tel: (00 255) 27  
2754793  
Email:  
info@mkombozi.org**

**We're on the Web!  
www.mkombozi.  
org**

**We believe that only  
if families, grassroots  
communities, civil  
society organisations  
and the Government  
work together can  
we address the root  
causes behind child  
migration to the  
streets.**

Mkombozi Centre  
for Street Children

P.O. Box 9601,  
Moshi,  
Tanzania.

Email:  
info@mkombozi.org



## Current gaps in services...

The following gaps in services were identified by part time street children:

- 76% of those who said that one of the causes driving them to the streets was a lack of safety and security at home also identified a lack of family based services as a gap in social welfare provision.
- 69% of those who claimed that they came to the streets to look for employment identified lack of employment opportunities as a gap.
- 90% of those who said that they spent time on the streets because they were not in school claimed that this was because they lacked material support for school costs.
- 48% of those who came to the streets to look for money to cover the costs at home asserted that a current gap in services was poor linking of families to community support systems.

Full time street children identified the following shortcomings in interventions:

- 79% of children who said that they disliked the fact that they could not access basic services on the streets (food, healthcare, clothes) identified a lack of services to address basic needs as a current gap in social welfare provision.
- 79.07% of those that said that they did not like being unable to get employment as a downside of street life recommended that projects be initiated to help older youths build self reliance.
- Of those who said that they disliked not being treated as normal citizens by the police and public 50% said that they would like services to address this issue.
- 48% of full time street children who said that they disliked the fact that they had no one to love or care for them also recommended that staff and volunteers in centres working with street children spend more time and be closer to street children when they are on the streets.
- Of the full time street children who identified the dangers of drug addiction as a negative aspect of street life 51% recommended that projects work with street children to address both prevention and treatment of addiction.

## Recommendations

The census demonstrated that 30% of children spending time on the streets are not street children. Government planners and NGO's should be aware of the tendency to overestimate the scale of the problem of street children in Arusha and in contrast to underplay it in Moshi. There needs to be a range of interventions that respond to the many complex needs of street children of different ages, genders and psychosocial, educational and physical needs. The fact that the majority of part time street children in Arusha and Moshi come from neighbouring slums emphasizes the need for intensive community based rehabilitation and interventions for at risk children in these urban neighbourhoods.

A more holistic approach to community development needs to be undertaken, with a focus on community and familial support that would address much of the causation of street children. Funds need to be allocated at local level together with intensive capacity building amongst the implementing staff within Government Departments (Social Workers, Community Development Workers etc.). Services for marginalised children need to be taken back to families and communities, rather than remaining in residential centres. Intensive family based

support is expensive and time consuming. However, given the personal and economic cost to society from having children fall through social safety nets it is important to allocate tax revenue to social services provision and to focus on skills development, resource allocation and empowerment to those working in the field, whether they are Government or private sector personnel.

Non-attendance at school is a primary causal factor driving children to the streets. A two pronged approach needs to be undertaken that addresses both the need to re-enrol and supervise the school attendance of part time street children already and the need to undertake preventative work with schools, communities and families to reduce the number of children excluded, dropping out and playing truant from school.

Mkombozi and other actors in the community and government need to address the issue of youth unemployment since it will have a significant impact on social and economic development in Tanzania over the medium and long term. Government and NGO's need to think creatively on how they can access youth on the streets and in our slums to ensure that they gain appropriate workplace and life skills.