Contents

1. Introduction

The meaning of the term street children has been widely debated and it is difficult to find a typical definition for it (Ennew, 2003). In its most common usage the term has been applied to refer children under the age of 18, who either live or make a living on the streets. Some may have family connections, but others are simply abandoned or choose to run away from home (CSC, 2009).

Poverty has multiple dimensions and manifestations. As a developing country striving in a pathway towards modernization and urbanization, one form in which poverty expresses itself is the outgrowth of street children (Dybicz, 2005). Among other things, the growing presence of children on the streets of urban areas engaged in scavenging for food, hawking or soliciting while their peers are in school, can be considered as one of the deprivations caused by poverty (Ouma, 2004).

Due to the fluid nature of the problem, nobody knows how many street children there are globally. Estimates have ranged from 100 million to 150 million, but these figures are not proven and are impossible to confirm (Hutchison, 2010). According UNICEF, the stance is increasing as the global population grows and as urbanization continues apace (2005).

Street children are mostly found in urban areas, and rapid urbanization is one factor that has contributed to their prevalence. As Ray Hutchison identifies, the growing gaps between the rich and poor, poverty, conflict, famine, natural disasters, family breakdowns, and the increase of domestic violence are among the reasons given for the increasing numbers of street children worldwide (2010).

Although the street children phenomenon is a global one, Latin American, African, and Asian countries are typically affected by the problem more than any other part of the world (ibid). In recent years, these children have become a common feature in the urban landscape of most developing countries (Acker et al, 1994).

Since Ethiopia is one of the developing countries, its urban areas are challenged by the growing intensity of street children (MoLSA, 1993). Such problem could be

emerged as result of assorted reasons, which include unbearable problem at home, dreaming more freedom on the street and peer pressure. Regardless of the causes, all the children are expected to face the challenges of life by themselves. As a result, they involved in diverse informal sector activities to earn income. According to MoLSA,2004 street children are usually engaged in shoe shining, carrying goods for customers, begging, watching and washing cars, selling cigarettes, lottery, and chewing gum while the girls are selling food items in the markets, selling roasted bean in the bars at night.

As it is noticeably witnessed, street children are not single and homogeneous groups. Rather, it is very hard to describe a typical street child due to their uniqueness (Hutchison, 2010). Some of these children are spending most of the day time on the street and they return to their family at night. However, others spend both the day and night on the street. These children are generally referred to as 'children on the street' and children of the street' respectively (WHO, 2000). The children of the street have no home but the street. In addition to these, there are children who are a part of a street family; i.e. some children live on the sidewalks or city squares with the rest of their families (ibid).

In its most fundamental sense, providing a solution to a social problem is the only reason for a social welfare policy or social programs to be established (Chambers, 1993). In line with this claim, the policy may take both proactive and remedial mode (UNICEF, 2007). FDRE, has been taking several measures concerning children in general and street children in particular. However, its basic approach does not differ significantly from its predecessor. The interventions continued as supportive at one time and punitive at another. On the supportive side, the government shows its commitment by ratifying the major international conventions that promotes the rights and welfare of children. In line with this, the government ratified both the United Nation CRC and the ACRWC. Besides, the government attempts to harmonize the domestic laws and policies with the provisions of the conventions (MoWA and HAPCO, 2010).

Concerning polices that affect the rights of children in general and the street children in particular, the government formulated the federal developmental social welfare policy in 1996. The objective of the policy revolved around creating an agreeable environment for sustainable development in the country. The major targets of the policy are vulnerable groups. Children mentioned as one of the most vulnerable groups that needs protection.

Accordingly, the policy raised the issue of street children as one of the major social problems of the urban areas. For all social problems including streetism, it provides three major approaches of interventions; namely preventive, developmental and rehabilitation.

The government (both the federal and regional/municipal) have been conducting different interventions to address the problems of street children independently as well as in cooperation with organizations like UNICEF and other NGOs (FSCE, 2001b). As a matter of fact, governments could not have the capacity to address all social problems by themselves.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The problems of street children in Ethiopia had got recognition from the government since the era of the Dereg (MoLSA, 1988). According to the first survey on the problems of street children conducted by Rehabilitation Agency in 1974, there were around 5004 street children in Addis Ababa (ibid). Since then, the magnitude of the problem in the country in general, and in the capital city, Addis Ababa in particular, has been increasing and becoming one of the major social challenges.

As a relatively recent estimate indicates, the number of street children in Ethiopia ranges from 150,000 – 600,000 nationally and 60,000 - 100,000 in the capital city, Addis Ababa (CSC, 2009). Furthermore, UNICEF and others estimate this number to be much higher. Many also agree that the number of street children is increasing in major urban centers, particularly in Addis Ababa (FDRE, 2007).

Even though there are huge discrepancies on the number of the street children, the scope and magnitude of the problem is evidently increasing in an alarming rate (FSCE, 2003). As a result of this, streetism has become one of the major concerns for the government, NGOs and the community as a whole and requires a lasting solution. Traditionally the response to street children by most governments in Africa and elsewhere has been repression (Kopoka, 2000). In order to 'clean-up' their streets, city governments, usually attempt to repress children and sometimes forcibly move their rescue centers outside of the cities (Vanderschueren et al, 1996). Such kinds of responses have been applied in a number of countries including Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, the attempts of removing children from the street have been made by both the previous and the current governments. The street children had round up by the police force and were dropped in remote forests (CSC, 2009). However, such kind of searches for a quick 'fix' is unlikely to succeed and may even aggravate the situation (Dybciz, 2005). As a result, governments and all other concerned parties have to search a genuine solution to the problems of these children.

In Ethiopia in general and in Addis Ababa in particular, most of the direct actions to support the street children have been largely undertaken by the nongovernmental actors (FSCE, 2001b). However, as the root causes of children's vulnerability are diverse, their needs can only be fulfilled through a delivery of wide range services (ibid). In a manner that seems it considered this reality, different interventions have been established to support and fulfill the needs of the street children. The focuses of these interventions usually differ from one another. Some of them focus on delivering basic services, others on providing health care or educational services, and some others on promoting and protecting the human rights of these children (FSCE, 2003). On a workshop organized by Forum on Street Children-Ethiopia in 2001, it was indicated that, the existing interventions which were characterized by small scale efforts, were not equivalent with the ever increasing number of the street children. Even if there were newly emerging

initiatives to address the problem, most of them were typically providing similar services as the older organizations (FSCE, 2001a).

Since most of the non-governmental actions to address the problems of street children have a limited scope, the involvement of the government on the issue seems imperative (FSCE, 2003). Due to the multidimensional nature of the problem and the wide range of actors involved in the interventions, a mechanism for integration and cooperation is considered necessary. In line with this, Ennew argues that the real solution to the problem of streetism lie in the hands of the government; both at local and national level (1994).

This is due to the fact that governments are legally situated in a position that provides regulative and coordinative capabilities of interventions. The international conventions on children, particularly, the United Nation CRC and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) provide framework of policies and practice that affects the welfare of children.
Based on these conventions governments are expected to establish their own laws andpolicies to promote the rights and welfare of their children (MoWA and HAPCO, 2010).Ethiopia had ratified both conventions in 1991 and 2002 respectively. In line with this, the government attempts to reform the existing legal and policy documents and formulating the new one.

Basically, the FDRE constitution provides a provision to guarantee the right of every child. The constitution clearly stipulated, the rights of child, including the street children, to life, name, nationality and etc…Based on the above conventions and the federal constitution, the government have been engaged in reforming the existing and formulating new laws and policies to promote the right and welfare of children (Conticini2008).

From the reviewed literature for the purpose of this study (including MoLSA, 2005;Conticini, 2008 and Cardoso, 2010), it appears that there is lack of clear and

comprehensive policy guideline to address the problems of the street children in Ethiopia.

The major and the lone policy document that has a direct linkage with the problem of streetism is the developmental social welfare policy, which was introduced by MoLSA in1996.The general objective of the policy is to create a social condition conducive to a healthy life and sustainable development that will benefit all members of the society. In the process it gives a special attention to vulnerable groups of the society, including the street children. Furthermore, the policy provides an article that allows the regional governments to formulate their own welfare policy according to their local context (MoLSA, 1996).

As national policies usually are general and all-encompassing, local authorities have to translate such macro-level policies to micro-level policies to suit with their situations(UMP, 2000). So national policies; like the developmental social welfare policy, has to be translated by the local governments. Furthermore, due to the process of decentralization and devolution of authority to local governments, municipalities increasingly assume policy making and implementation powers to facilitate more effective local decision making (Vanderschueren et al, cited in UMP, 2000). This is mainly due to the fact that many of the intervention areas pertaining to street children rehabilitation fall within the realm of local government responsibilities (ibid).

However, the policy situation of Addis Ababa does not follow this pattern. In the case of Addis Ababa, the problems of street children, as the lower estimate indicates 60,000 and the higher with 100,000, has become one of the major social problems in the city (CSC, 2009 and SCUK, 2004). This figure indicates how the problem is severe in the city than any other parts of the country. Due to this fact, majority of the existing organizations that intervene to address the problems of street childrenwere operating in Addis Ababa (FSCE, 2003).

Despite the fact that there is a reform in the legal and policy frames which promote the rights of the street children and an increase in the involvement of the NGOs to address the problem of the street children, the magnitude of the problem is still increasing (FDRE, 2007). The intervention mechanisms of both governmental and nongovernmental organizations, to deal with the problems of street children in Addis Ababa, have not so far shown a visible result in reducing the intensity (FSCE, 2003). In most cases such interventions failed to bring a desired outcome in the lives of the street children, not only due to the lack of sufficient resource, but also by the lack of proper planning and policies of the government (Grundling and Grundling , 2005).

In the absence of any relevant literature on the policy situation of the street children in Addis Ababa, the researcher practical investigation on the issue resulted in justifying that there is no comprehensive policy document for these children. However, as indicated above, both the magnitude of the problem and the number of interventions to address it are increasing.

Therefore, in this study, an attempt will be made to explore the policy framework of interventions to address the problem of the street children in Addis Ababa and provide recommendations to realize an appropriate policy.

1.3. Objectives of the study

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of this research is to explore the policy framework of interventions established to address the problems of the street children in Addis Ababa and provide recommendations to realize a citywide policy.

1.3.2. Specific Objective

In line with this, the specific objectives of the study attempted to:

- ✓ Assess how the interventions for street children in Addis Ababa are established and governed.
- ✓ Assess the actual and potential challenges of administering the interventions in Addis Ababa.
- ✓ Identify major factors that may hinder formulation of a citywide policy to address the problem of street children in Addis Ababa.
- ✓ Indicate a workable policy option to address the problems of street children.

1.4. Significance of the Study

Children represent hope and the future in every society; therefore, solving the problems of the children in general and the street children in particular can serve as an input for sustainable development. In the last 50 years various interventions have been conducted by different actors to address the problem of street children in Addis Ababa. Nevertheless, the magnitude and scope of the problem is still increasing.

Therefore, the practical significance of this study is to contribute directly for the improvement of the policy framework that governs interventions on street children in Addis Ababa. The study will serve directly to Addis Ababa City Administration by indicating the overall policy situation of interventions and mechanisms for its improvement. In addition to this, the study will attempt to add some theoretical contribution on the literature concerning the issue of street children and efforts to address their problem.

1.5. Scope of the Study

Streetism is becoming one of the major challenges of all urban areas of Ethiopia. Especially, the capital city Addis Ababa is among the cities that are highly affected by the problem of street children. Since 1974, there have been attempts to conduct a research concerning the problem of these children in the country in general and in Addis Ababa in particular.

Majority of the previous studies focused on the causes, magnitude and nature of the problem of the street children. This study, rather than attempt to repeat the previous studies, it will focuses and limit to explore the policy framework for interventions established to address the problem of street children in the city. Specifically, this research will focus to exploring the policy and institutional structures established to administer the interventions. Due to this, the study will confine to explore how the interventions on the street children are established and governed and the major challenges that the city administration have been facing in administering the interventions.

Concerning the direct support for the street children in the city, most of the services came from nongovernmental actors such as: NGOs, FBOs (Faith Based Organizations) and CBOs (Community Based Organizations). Among these actors, the study will take NGOs as primary actor involved in conducting interventions. These organizations will be selected among others because they are the major actors involved in conducting interventions. However, the study will not include the effectiveness, success and limitations of specific organization/s and intervention/s. Instead, it will be limited to explore a policy option that could guide all the interventions to common goal, creating cooperative environment and providing a sustainable solution to the problem.

On the other hand, primary data will be collected from different stakeholders including the street children. Though the term children in Ethiopia include all children below the age of 18, the street children will be included in the study are children above the age of 14. The minimum age limit will targeted by the research

on the belief that children below this age would not understand the issue easily. As a result, children who were working or living on the street will be taken as the major sources of data

1.6. Sampling Techniques and Methods of Data Collection

1.6.1 Sampling Techniques

The target populations of this study will comprise three different groups, namely; street children, experts/officials from the concerned governmental and nongovernmental organizations. Through the use of convenience sampling technique, a total of 190 samples will be taken from these groups of which the street children will beconstitutes 80 % of the total respondents. The experts/officials from governmental and NGOs comprises 10% each.

The only criterion to include the street children in the survey will be age. The children thatwill be randomly selected and included in this study will be those who are above the age of 14. This is done on the belief that those children above the age of 14 can easily understand and appropriately respond to the survey questionnaire.

The streets children will be purposely selected from different parts of the city. These areas shall be Piassa, Atikelt Tera, Gojam Bernda, Awtobis, Tekle Haymanot, Leghar, and Kirkos. These areas of sub cities selected than other areas of city because more prevalent and large population of street people is found. These are due to business transactions also high around these areas than other sub-city. Children, who have been working or simply sitting idly in these places, will be approached and asked for their consent. Those children who show their willingness will be included in the research. On the other hand, the NGOs experts/officials will be selected from different organizations such as Forum on sustainable child empowerment (FSCE),Godanaw rehabilitation Integrated project (GRIP), Organization for the prevention, rehabilitation and Integration of female street children (OPRIFS) and UNICEF. Experts from government organizations Addis

Ababa city administration these are BOWCA, BOLSA and BOFED will be included in sampling.

1.6.2. Method of Data Collection

✓ **Survey Questionnaire**

A survey questionnaire is an important method to obtain large amounts of data, usually in a statistical form, from a large number of people in a relatively short time. It provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. Usually, it takes the form of a self-completion questionnaire or an interviewer may read the questions to the respondent and fill in the questionnaire on behalf of the respondent. For the purpose of this study, a questionnaire consisting of both **open** and **close** ended questions will be administered to elicit first hand information from the sample.

✓ **Key Informant Interview**

A key informant interview as an instrument for data collections has enormous advantages. These include exploring the subject in depth clarifying the findings of quantitative research.

Interview will held with 14 key informants in order to obtain qualitative data that could not otherwise be gathered by the survey questionnaire. Informants are chosen purposively. The experts/ officials will be selected by considering the positions they assumed in their organizations and the street children based on their willingness and some exposure to the issue. For the purpose of these interviews, a checklist will be prepared in order to guide the discussion.

✓ **Document Analysis**

In addition to reviewing books and journal article to render for the problem of the study conceptual and theoretical framework; a variety of documentary materials

such as proclamations, periodic reports and files from government institutions will be consulted in order to substantiate the validity and reliability of the primary data that are generated through sample survey and interviewing informants. Data that will be obtain through documentary search and interviews shall be analyzed qualitatively using quotations and reflective interpretations.

1.6. Types and Sources of Data

In order to achieve its objectives, this research will utilize both **qualitative** and **quantitative** data. The rationale for selecting a mixed approach for the study is mainly due to the nature of the problem under study and the group that will be involve in it. This is mainly due to the fact that children will not be interested to tell the truth about their lives to strangers at their first meeting. As a result, the data that will be collected through one method, for example questionnaire, has to be triangulated for its validity by the data obtained from other methods like interview.

Concerning the sources of data, the study will employ data from both primary and secondary sources. Basically, the study hugely relying on the primary data that will be collected through project fieldwork. The primary data sources include among others, street children, experts from nongovernmental organizations working on street children and concerned governmental authorities and experts.

The secondary data will be gathered through document analysis, including books, journals, legal documents, international conventions, conference papers and annual reports. The document analysis will cover all related issues concerning the problems of the street children and the efforts that have been made to solve the problems of the street children in Addis Ababa with special focus on the policy framework.

1.8. Research Design

Based on the problem under investigation, usually a study tends to be quantitative or qualitative in their nature. Mixed methods research resides in the middle of this continuum because it incorporates elements of both qualitative and quantitative

approaches. Frequently, researchers that use mixed methods employ a research design that uses both quantitative and qualitative data to answer a particular question or set of questions. This combination of methods involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of quantitative and qualitative data in a single or multiphase study. In this study a mixed approach will be utilized to achieve its objectives.

1.9. Methods of Data Analysis

The data that will be collected from the questionnaire shall be analyzed and presented descriptively. The statistical analysis will be limited to **simple statistics; description of frequencies** and **percentages.** On the other hand, the data that will be obtained through interviews and review of documents will be analyzed qualitatively by using quotations and reflective interpretations.

1.10. Chapter plan

The paper organized into five chapters. The first chapter attempts to explain the background of the study. Following this, the statement of the problem, the objective and research questions will be presented in this chapter. The second chapter deals with review of related literatures of the study. In the third chapter research design and methodology of the study is presented. The data that obtained from both primary and secondary sources will be discussed and analyzed in chapter four. Chapter five will focuses on conclusions of the study and potentially relevant recommendations to provide sustainable solution to the problems of street children.

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