

CHILDREN ON THE STREETS OF MWANZA

Headcount
Findings
2013

RAILWAY
children
Fighting for street children

CONTENTS

Summary of Key Findings	2
Introduction	3
Background : Tanzania	4
Background: Mwanza	5
Last Year's Findings	5
Other Recent Surveys in Mwanza & Tanzania	6
Headcount Methodology - General Overview	6
Method of Mwanza Headcount 2013	7
Categories	8
Considerations in Age Categories	8
Scope: Areas and Shifts	9
Coordination, Team Leaders and Profile of the Counters	9
Process	9
Documentation and Validation	10
Considerations	10
Findings and Observations	11
Discussions and Analysis	16
Recommendations for Action	18
Appendices	20

HEADCOUNT OF STREET-LIVING AND WORKING CHILDREN IN MWANZA 2013

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SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

DAYTIME:

- 1526 children and youth in total were counted

Of these...

- 1361 were children below 18 and 165 were youth aged 19-25

Of the children aged below 18...

- 418 were girls
- 943 were boys

Of the youth aged 19-25...

- 74 were girls
- 91 were boys

NIGHT TIME:

- 390 children and youth were found sleeping on the streets

Of these...

- 169 were children below 18 and 221 were youth aged 19-25

- 10 were girls

- 380 were boys

- 156 girls involved in sex work were counted

INTRODUCTION

This report contains the findings of the second annual "headcount" of children and youth who are "connected to" the streets of Mwanza, Tanzania. The children and youth who are the focus of this survey are those who live and/or work on the streets, as well as those who spend significant amounts of time, or whose lives are to a large extent controlled by, or dependent on, the streets and the opportunities available there.

The purpose of conducting this headcount survey was to establish the number of street-based children and youth so as to inform ongoing strategic responses by various actors, as well as measuring the potential impact that existing services have on the population of children and youth over time. From the results of the survey, we hope to gain better understanding about the situations of different populations (in this survey defined as "categories") of children and youth that are on the streets, allowing us to reflect on how we can best shape our programmes to respond to their diverse needs.

The headcount survey is based purely on observation and the data represents the population of children and youth on the streets of Mwanza in mid-December 2013. It makes available data on the numbers of children who are on the streets during the daytime as well as night time and gives a breakdown of gender, ages and activities in which children are involved. Importantly, it also provides a count of children who sleep on the streets and who are thereby believed to be homeless and detached from their families.

BACKGROUND: TANZANIA

Tanzania ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991, and by doing so it committed itself to creating domestic legislation for children. This triggered a lengthy process of reviewing existing laws containing elements concerning children with the ultimate aim of putting in place a Children's Act. This law reform process eventually led to the enactment of the Law of the Child Act (LCA) in 2009. Even though a number of national policies and programmes on child welfare and development have been in place over the years, the enactment of the Law of the Child was a significant milestone for children's rights.

A number of regulations have been drafted emanating from the LCA, and several of these are directly relevant to services for children who have ended up on the streets – such as regulations on children's homes, children's crisis centres and child protection. Some of these regulations are still in the making. Local authorities and especially social welfare departments at district and ward levels have the greatest mandate and obligation to implement the LCA and its regulations, partly by utilising and coordinating existing services for children whether these are governmental, nongovernmental or private. The official ultimately responsible for fulfilling this duty is the Social Welfare Officer. Specifically, Social Welfare Officers in the local government have the responsibility to:

- assist in the reconciliation between children and their carers
- keep a register of the most vulnerable children (MVC)
- provide assistance and accommodation to children who seem lost, abandoned or seeking refuge
- investigate in collaboration with the police any cases of violations of children's rights.

Actual implementation of the law and its regulations on a local level is still in initial stages in many ways, and there is still a great need for resources and specific implementation plans which can allow for long term changes in the standard of services, procedures and manpower.

Ministries relevant to children in Tanzania (Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare) have shown great commitment to children's issues including the issue of children on the streets over the past few

years. This has been evident through a number of joint initiatives with stakeholders from civil society and other government departments such as the ministry responsible for local government authorities. Some examples of this are:

UNICEF – in collaboration with the ministries, local authorities and implementing partners – are developing a child protection model by piloting programmes in a small number of districts. This is a key initiative that aims to implement the LCA on a practical level and inform regulations on child protection. A national multi-sector task force is in the late stages of developing a National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Response on Violence Against Children. In many towns local police authorities have now put in place Gender and Children's desks to cater for the needs of women and children where they come into contact with authorities. The department of Social Welfare now has an established presence at district levels and to some extent at ward levels. In the past Social Welfare Officers only existed in small numbers on a regional level.

The National Plan of Action for Most Vulnerable Children (NCPA) has been key in addressing the urgent situation of child vulnerability across the country over the past few years – the Department of Social Welfare in partnership with NGOs managed to reach 857,118 children across the country during the plan's first phase. An evaluation and review process of this plan took place in 2012 with the aim of renewing the plan for 2013–17. One of the critiques that emerged about the NCPA as it was implemented in its first phase was that it did not include coverage for children who are out of home i.e. those who live in care, prisons or on the streets. Furthermore, it did not include violence against children at home as a vulnerability factor and did not touch upon the issue of child protection, rather it focussed predominately on meeting children's material and educational needs.

A consultation process for the NCPA in its second phase showed commitment from both government and civil society to address these areas among others, and improve linkages to other policies and regulations mentioned above. Railway Children Africa participated actively in the consultation process with the aim of ensuring that street connected children are considered in the plan so that interventions for the same may be recognised and coordinated within its implementation for the next five years. In February 2013 the NCPA II was launched by the government in Dodoma.

BACKGROUND: MWANZA

According to the 2002 National Census¹, Mwanza has a total population of 476,646 (Nyamagana District 210,735 and Ilemela 265,911). The current population is estimated to be just above half a million people with an annual natural growth rate of 3.2% and rural to urban immigration almost 8% (National Population Causes 2002). The population density is 134 people per sq. km, being the second in the country after Dar es Salaam.

Many people in Mwanza (70%) live in the unplanned settlements. These settlements lack basic facilities like roads, schools and water. Some of them are located on very steep rocky hills; reaching them and providing basic sanitation systems becomes very difficult. According to a report on street life in urban Tanzania², urban growth has resulted in an increase in unsupervised children either living alone or working on the urban street. Mwanza is no exception; the rate of urban population growth has been rising resulting in an increase in the number of children and young people working and living on the streets.

In 2012, 17,776 Most Vulnerable Children were identified within Mwanza City Council communities (Mwanza City Council, 2012). We know that many of the children on the streets counted in our survey are not included in this number. Equally, many of the identified MVCs across Mwanza are potentially at risk of going to the streets.

The need for data – purpose of the survey

Partners supporting this second annual survey understand the importance of regular data collection so that we may know the true nature and extent of the phenomena of children and youth living and working on the streets of Mwanza. We have experienced that there is an ongoing national as well as international discourse that the situation of children on the streets is constantly growing and is out of control. However, we believe that the situation is manageable if services can be adapted to these children's needs by taking into account the statistics with which we are presented and working together with key stakeholders in implementing national programmes and regulations. Knowing the number and basic characteristics of these children, and how such criteria change over time, is a necessary step in planning and monitoring effective service provision.

LAST YEAR'S FINDINGS

The headcount conducted in 2012 revealed a total of 1,888 children and young people (84% male and 16% female) living and working on the streets of Mwanza, between 11th October and 18th October of that year. This number represented children and young people that were counted at specific times and in specific streets; we can therefore assume that a number of children and young people were not counted.

The majority of those counted were between the ages of 11 and 14 years with 639 children represented in this age group. Of these, 523 were boys and 116 were girls. Of particular concern were the 86 children under six years of age. Sixteen girls were counted on the street with their babies and an increase in girls on the street becoming pregnant and raising their babies on the street had been witnessed by outreach workers in the two years prior to this survey.

Livelihoods undertaken by children and young people showed a distinct gender split with more girls engaging in fixed or casual work whilst boys were counted in moveable business or found to be jobless. Casual or daily workers however represented roughly equal numbers across the gender split. It was observed that begging represented a very small number at 3%, due to less tolerance in the Mwanza community over recent years, so children and young people performed some sort of work in order to earn money.

¹<http://www.lakezonedesire.com/Zones/Mwzna%20City%20Profile.pdf>

² <http://www.streetwise-africa.org/mss/pdf/mwanza.pdf>

OTHER RECENT SURVEYS IN MWANZA AND TANZANIA

As previously mentioned in the headcount report of 2012, several surveys of children on the streets have previously been carried out in specific towns in Tanzania by using different methods, including, but not limited to the following:

Mkombozi, an NGO operating in Moshi and Arusha towns, has carried out several surveys starting in 2006 to obtain statistics of children and young people on the streets. These surveys applied a method where interviews were conducted with children and young people available during a 12 hour period. The most recent survey, carried out in 2010, counted a total of 1108 children and young people in the two towns combined, with a total of 261 of these being on the streets full-time. The findings showed a significant decrease of children and young people in Arusha town since the latest count, and an increase in Moshi.

Railway Children and several local partners in Mwanza carried out a similar survey in 2008, revealing that 392 children and young people were living full-time on the streets. The majority came from homes with either single parents or grandparents, and economic hardship at home was identified as the leading causal factor for them coming to the streets. Domestic violence was almost as common in triggering a child's move from home. Just over a quarter had never attended school, while 45% had dropped out. Note that this number was derived from a different methodology than that of the current survey, and we cannot therefore directly compare the results of the two.

HEADCOUNT METHODOLOGY GENERAL OVERVIEW

The headcount methodology is a technique for collecting quantitative data regarding the numbers of street connected children and youth. Its main aim is to survey this population at a certain point in time within a specific geographical locality. The methodology seeks to gain data on all observed street connected children and youth within a geographic locality and, as such, it does not use any form of sampling nor does it apply averages or estimations.

This technique was pioneered by Patrick Shanahan from the organisation StreetInvest during his work in Ghana in the 1980s and 1990s and has more recently been used in a UNICEF commissioned study in Addis and Adama in Ethiopia (2010) and in a national headcount in Sierra Leone (2011). The headcount in Sierra Leone has led to a

national strategy which is currently being implemented to ensure street children, no matter where they are across Sierra Leone, have access to a 'safe adult'. Most recently, the methodology has also been applied in a Barclays Ghana funded project in Kumasi, Ghana, in 2013.

In summary, a geographical area is divided into at least two different zones and teams of data collectors are allocated to these zones. They will move as a team on foot and count their zones twice, and then swap zones with a different team and carry out the same exercise. They then go back to their original zones and do a final count, and this data is used as the final data since the experience, knowledge and routine of the team in question will be viewed as the most reliable when the final count is conducted. The data from previous dates is used mainly as a validation of the final findings.

Children and youth are counted according to a set of categories that are defined ahead of the count - these typically define children by gender, age and the activities they are involved in when counted. The headcount method builds purely on observation and not on any interaction with children, and as such, the observational skills and experience of the counters are of critical importance.

As any methodology, head counting has its limitations and is not 100 per cent accurate. It is virtually impossible to know that every child living and working on the street has been accounted for. What the methodology utilised in this study can verify is that, at the point of counting, the children presented in the final figures were observed on the streets.

Another limitation to head counting is that the method brings the risk of double counting children to some extent since children may move between different areas and therefore may be counted more than once. Furthermore, children may be double counted if they suddenly change activities since different data collectors count children involved in different activities. Lastly, since the method is based on observation, children's ages always need to be estimated judging from their appearance and will therefore not always be precise.

While conducting this second annual survey, we very much felt that many of these limitations were manageable and could be minimised through proper planning and consideration, and that the methodology does help us to understand the current situation on the streets.

METHOD OF MWANZA HEADCOUNT 2013

AIM AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this year's survey was similar to that of 2012 - i.e. to obtain the number of street connected children and youth in Mwanza town. As this is the second headcount survey, part of the purpose this time is also to compare the two sets of data - the findings from 2012 against this new data. In this report, this comparison is made in the context of the data itself, but also in the context of a number of methodological developments that have been made since the first count and which are likely to have affected the findings of the survey to some extent.

Learning from gaps in the methodology of last year's count, we aimed this year to get robust evidence of the numbers of children who actually live and sleep on the streets full-time. Furthermore, the importance of counting female children and youth has been more clearly emphasised in the methodology this time around.

INCREASE IN SCOPE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

- Night time counting was introduced. The main aims of this were to count female children and youth involved in sex work and, importantly, to count children sleeping on the streets. Daytime and night time data are presented separately in order to avoid double counting as the same children may have been counted in the daytime and at night.

- New categories. Night time counts also brought the introduction of two new categories:

1. "sex workers" i.e. children and youth assumed to be engaged in prostitution
2. "sleeping" children and youth. Late at night, they were counted separately to all other categories in order to avoid double counting of children who were awake late evening, and then seen sleeping later in the night. Note that in 2012 children who were counted as being "jobless" during the day were assumed to be full-time children.

- **Inclusion of youth aged 19-25.** In 2012 we only counted youth observed to be 19-20, whereas this year we went higher in age. Some of our programmes offer services to older youth, hence the need for this data.

Improvements in method: mitigating risks to survey

One of the most prevalent risks is double counting of children and youth. If children move between different zones during a shift of field work, they may be seen by two different teams and thereby counted more than once. Double counting can also occur by a single team: if there is not enough common understanding of which child should go into which category, different people may count the same child in different categories. For example, one member can count a child who is begging, only for another team member to be counting the same child a few minutes later when the child is "jobless". Whilst it is impossible to avoid double counting completely, the following actions were taken to reduce the chances of this.

- **Change of map.** To improve logistics and minimise double counting of children, zoning was applied differently this year. The city centre was seen as one single zone as opposed to last year when each zone actually contained part of the city centre as well as areas outside town (bus stands, market places etc). This year instead of each zone bordering the next, we introduced gaps so that zones were geographically separate from each other. This meant that the risk of children moving between zones during the day was minimised, and therefore so was the risk of double counting.

- **Timeframe of counts.** Each zone was counted during a single day, rather than over two days last year. This decreased the likelihood of some children being counted two days in a row.

We have found that consistent attendance of the team members and sound people management is the area that will determine the most whether a survey like this becomes successful or not. A number of improvements were made this year:

- **Role of team leaders.** The roles and responsibilities of the team leaders carrying out the field work were much more central this time - both methodologically as well as in supervising and managing team members. Part of their role was to facilitate discussions and analysis in the team and as such the selection of these leaders was critical. Coordinators of the exercise mainly dealt directly with team leaders in planning, monitoring and analysis rather than with all the individuals involved.

- **Two daily meetings.** All groups had to meet at the start of the day and at the end of the day in a central location, and groups were not to head out before their meetings were complete. These occasions offered breakfast and refreshments as well as an opportunity to check in on people's general welfare. These daily meetings not only increased the energy and performance of the group, but also encouraged individuals to keep time.

Other improvements to the method were:

- Last year, everyone in a team counted all categories of children. This year, each team member focused on counting only one category of children. Additionally, at least one person, usually the group leader, counted every category so that overall each category had been counted by at least two people. Part of the verification of findings was to make a comparison between the two sets of findings within the group and discuss why any discrepancies may have occurred. The success of these discussions depended on the ability of group leaders to facilitate dialogue effectively and ensure that all team members had their voice heard and were happy with the final figures for each area.
- Number of counts. Each area counted during the daytime was counted five times in total as opposed to three times in 2012. The increase in counts gives more practice to the team conducting the final count of their area, and gives more validity to the final findings.

CATEGORIES

Each individual was counted according to their age and a category which describes what they were doing at the time of counting, as follows:

Fixed business - a business which has a fixed location but not necessarily a permanent structure

- Moveable business - a business which moves around
- Begging
- Jobless - idle or not trying to make money at the time of counting

During night counts, the above four categories were applied, and the two below were added:

- Sex workers - girls who are observed in locations known for prostitution
- Sleeping children - those who are either asleep or apparently settled in their sleeping areas

Furthermore, a set of symbols were applied during the count to mark when a girl either had one or several small children, was pregnant, or both.

The age categories were 0-6, 7-10, 11-14, 15-18 and 19-25.

CONSIDERATIONS IN AGE CATEGORIES

It needs to be noted that when children, i.e. under 18, were counted, our method assumed that all apparently street involved children should be counted - i.e. all children working or spending time on the streets. This is because we believe that in general, the best place for children under 18 is in education or in a safe job if in their late adolescence. A child working on the streets is often a vulnerable child - at home as well as in the work place. All these children are counted because they are relevant to our work of preventing children from going to the streets or helping them leave street life. In addition, a child who starts out working on the streets can often get sucked into various aspects of street life and/or start living full-time on the streets.

When it comes to the youth, however, a different distinction was made. It would make the count less relevant if all people aged 19-25, and who work in the relevant areas, were counted - these are obviously adults and it is age appropriate for them to work in town areas. Our target population is street youth who are long-term homeless or without a permanent or decent home, and who depend on the streets for their daily living. An experienced street worker or a former street youth (both making up part of our teams) is generally able to tell these youth apart from other young people judging by the location they spend time, their demeanour, their occupation or simply the fact that they are known to them. Therefore, these considerations were made when counting the age category of 19-25 year olds.

SCOPE: AREAS AND SHIFTS

Mwanza town was divided into four different 'zones' for the count:

Town centre - this included Mwanza city centre, excluding the main market.

Off Kenyatta road - this included Nyegezi bus stand, Buhongwa, Mkuyuni, Bugando and Bugarika.

Mwaloni and Kirumba - this included Mwaloni fishmarket and surrounding area, Kirumba with focus around the dump, nightclubs and market area.

Off Nyerere road - this included selected areas of Igoma, Nyakato including Buzuruga stand, Buswelu and Mabatini.

At night, a version of the same zones was applied, excluding some of the areas where children only spend time during the day. In addition, Igombe Village and Ilemela corner were added to the Kirumba zone as we were working under the assumption that these areas are common for young night time sex workers.

In daytime, the four zones were covered by the same number of teams with five to six people in each team. They met up around 8.00 am and arrived at their zones to start the work at around 9.30 am. They then worked up to the time of the end of day meeting which took place around 4 pm.

Two teams were set up to focus exclusively on night time counting - they counted one zone per night and it therefore took them two days to collectively cover the entire area of the survey. Their shift started at around 10 pm and ended around 3 am. The first half of this shift was focused on counting children who were out and about, including those engaged in sex work, and the later part of the night mainly aimed to count sleeping children.

COORDINATION, TEAM LEADERS AND PROFILE OF THE COUNTERS

An organising team of three people consisted of two Railway Children staff and one person from StreetInvest. Their role was to plan, prepare for and manage the whole exercise.

Six team leaders from our partner organisations worked directly with the organising team in leading the many data collectors. This reduced the workload for the organising team but also offered group leaders an excellent opportunity to hone

their skills in leadership and also in teambuilding and analysis.

The role of team leaders was heavily emphasised this year. Indeed it was profiled as a particular skill and leaders received separate certificates that show their skills in leadership, accountability and active listening. Team leaders on the whole were found to be enthusiastic, analytical in probing the results with their team and committed to what is a time-consuming and laborious task. They displayed excellent skills in time keeping and the success of the headcount depended very much on them keeping their teams together and content.

The wider group consisted of a variety of people. Except for project staff, many of whom are experienced with street work, the teams included a number of youth who in the past have lived on the streets for longer periods of time. The presence of the youth was essential, especially as part of the night teams where they were able in advance to identify crucial locations to visit in order to count, for example, sleeping children and female sex workers. Additionally, part of what kept the night teams safe was not only the contextual knowledge of the youth, but their personal relationships to many of the children and youth who were counted. During the day, the youth were very helpful especially when it came to distinguishing between street connected youth and other youth who come to town to work. Lastly, representatives from the government completed the teams - one police officer and several para social workers provided our teams with support and dynamics in which both staff and government representatives experienced meaningful learning from each other.

PROCESS

This year a lot of preparation was done in advance by the Railway Children headcount team, and this ensured a big saving of time and energy with the whole group during the actual survey. Team leaders, areas, shifts and coordination were all decided in advance during a series of meetings between the partner organisations and representatives from social welfare.

Together with the team leaders, the teams were constructed in advance in order to ensure that there was balanced representation in each team. People were assigned to a team on their first day.

The exercise then kicked off with a one-day training session for the approximately 30

people involved, and this day provided guidance in the method as well as field exercises where the teams got to practice head counting and thereby experience and address potential challenges that are inevitably part of the method.

The training was followed by the actual work of going to the different zones and counting children for five days. Each daytime team counted their zones twice, i.e. on two consecutive days, then swapped with another team to count a different zone for two days. Lastly, they came back to their original zone for one last day: the data presented in this report is from that last day. The team conducting the final count were experienced and well informed about the environment of their zone, as they were counting the same area for the third time. At night, a similar structure was applied although since there were only two teams, each area was counted a total of three times rather than five.

DOCUMENTATION AND VALIDATION

Different from last year, participants were asked to count only one category each. In addition, the team leader of each group counted *all* of the categories. Where a group had six members, the group leader and one other counted *all* the categories. This method provoked interesting discussion at the end of each day in terms of whose figures were the most reliable. This meant that participants really had to think about their style of observation - it therefore made the counting more analytical rather than feeling like a tokenistic exercise for participants.

Group counting sheets were created this year in addition to individual counting sheets. This meant that group leaders had to discuss with respective team members and compile agreed figures onto the overall sheet at the end of each shift.

Data was scrutinised daily by the group as well as the coordinating team, and the coordinating team would then directly type all the compiled results into an Excel spreadsheet.

Some weeks after the data was compiled, a meeting was held with Railway Children and the group leaders to further look at the findings and analyse them. We used this time mainly to scrutinise the improved methods used and how they compared to last year's methods, and how these improvements are assumed to have affected the quality of the data from one year to another. All these points are detailed in this report.

CONSIDERATIONS

It is not only the methodology applied that has a great impact on the findings. The environment in which we were counting also introduced a number of factors which would potentially have affected the daily data.

- We counted during the rainy season and during some days some of the teams had to wait for as long as two hours for rains to pass before proceeding. We do however assume that the children will similarly go to hide from the rain and that most of them will still have been spotted once the sky cleared up again.

- December was time for school holidays, and we can make the assumption that some of the children who are included in the final count were working on the streets during their holidays and would otherwise not be present on the streets.

- In the town centre, numbers could fluctuate greatly from one day to another. We are aware that different companies, individuals, churches and charities provide food or activities for street children in the town centre on different days, and we believe that this can be part of the reason behind the changes in numbers in the town centre from one day to another. The last count which is presented in this report was not one of the highest or the lowest counts in the town centre, and we therefore feel that it provides a good representation of reality.

- During the night, counting sleeping children provided a number of challenges. Many sleeping locations are well hidden and the team needed to be aware of them in advance in order to access them - this may have led to us missing out on a number of locations. Additionally, some of the younger children sleep in the staircases and porches of business buildings which are guarded at night - they pay private security guards in order to access these safe places to sleep.

There are a couple of such know locations where the night teams were refused entrance to count the children. For these reasons, we can safely say that the numbers of sleeping children that were counted during the survey is not the entire population of children living full-time on the streets.

FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

Numbers counted during the daytime and night time are shown in the tables below.

DAY TIME						
Male						
Categories	0 - 6 yrs	7 - 10 yrs	11 - 14 yrs	15 - 18yrs	19 - 25 yrs	Total
Fixed business	9	52	136	203	54	454
Moveable business	1	21	123	80	26	251
Jobless	26	45	102	24	10	207
Begging	20	39	50	12	1	122
Total	56	157	411	319	91	1034
DAY TIME						
Female						
Categories	0 - 6 yrs	7 - 10 yrs	11 - 14 yrs	15 - 18yrs	19 - 25 yrs	Total
Fixed business	1	63	132	92	37	325
Moveable business	0	4	40	9	27	80
Jobless	3	22	15	4	10	54
Begging	6	9	14	4	0	33
Total	10	98	201	109	74	492
GRAND TOTAL	66	255	612	428	165	1526

NIGHT TIME						
Male						
Categories	0 - 6 yrs	7 - 10 yrs	11 - 14 yrs	15 - 18yrs	19 - 25 yrs	Total
Sleeping	11	43	150	125	51	380
Sex work	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fixed business	7	13	19	16	49	104
Moveable business	5	20	12	41	9	87
Jobless	3	52	42	50	37	184
Begging	0	0	0	15	0	15
Total	15	85	73	122	95	390
NIGHT TIME						
Female						
Categories	0 - 6 yrs	7 - 10 yrs	11 - 14 yrs	15 - 18yrs	19 - 25 yrs	Total
Sleeping	0	0	5	2	3	10
Sex work	0	0	2	69	85	156
Fixed business	6	4	10	46	41	107
Moveable business	0	0	0	7	0	7
Jobless	0	2	0	4	0	6
Begging	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	6	6	12	126	126	276
GRAND TOTAL	21	91	85	248	221	666

FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS (CONTINUED)

OFF NYERERE ROAD

The zone we referred to as 'Off Nyerere Road' contained the areas of Igoma, Nyakato, Mecco, Buswelu and Mabatini. With its several bus stands and business areas, this was the zone containing by far the highest numbers of children during the day. Six hundred and fifteen children were counted in this zone, of these 416 were boys and 199 girls, and the most common age category among these children was 11-14. Only seven youth were counted. The vast majority (490) of all children were in either fixed or movable business. One hundred and twenty-three children here were below the age of ten.

It was found that in Buswelu centre, which was a new area to us, there were generally no children seen.

We believe from experience, observation and this data that most of the children on the streets of this zone are there to make a living - it is highly likely that many of them live around the same area and go home to their family at night. Igoma is one of the areas in Mwanza that produces the most street children; it seems likely that many of the children counted here are from poverty stricken homes where one or several children are out of school and therefore at risk of going to the streets.

During the night in this zone, 43 children were found sleeping. Most of these children were counted in Igoma, and the majority of them were in the younger age brackets. Quite a number of children were also out and about in the evening, and around half of these were counted as jobless.

CITY CENTRE

The city centre was counted as two separate areas. The central market, known as Soko Kuu, was counted independently, and remaining areas of the centre comprised the rest of the zone. We made this division partly for logistical reasons, but also because the working children of Soko Kuu are in our experience often of a different profile - living at home and working in the market - than children in other central areas

who are more often assumed to be full-time on the streets.

In Soko Kuu alone, a total of 298 (178 boys and 120 girls) children and youth were counted. Two hundred and twenty-seven of these were in either fixed or movable businesses, 29 were jobless and 42 were begging. Boys aged 11-14 were the most well represented group in the market area with 74 individuals.

In the rest of the city centre, 232 (181 boys and 51 girls) children were counted. As opposed to the other areas, the majority of these children were not in businesses. Seventy-three and 53 were jobless and begging respectively - together these groups total 126 children and youth. Twenty of these were very young children in the age category of 0-6. We believe that this is an indication that the town centre hosts a higher proportion of full-time street children than other areas since in our experience full-time children will commonly be seen begging or idle. However, it appears that this mainly applies to the boys - out of the jobless and begging children only ten were girls, whereas the rest of the girls were working in businesses.

During the night, the city centre is the most populated area when it comes to children sleeping on the streets: 277 individuals were counted sleeping in this zone. All the girls and most of the younger children who sleep in the streets were spotted here. The city centre is one of the more common areas for sex workers - 30 individuals in this category were counted here and most of these were older youth.

MWALONI AND KIRUMBA

The centre of Kirumba and Mwaloni fish market and its surrounding areas made up one zone. This zone had two different market places and, as such, showed higher proportions of working children. Of the total 259 children (169 boys and 90 girls) counted in these areas, the majority (186) were working children observed in fixed or movable business. Fifty-four of all the children counted in these zones were under the age of ten.

During the night, 27 children and youth - the majority of whom were younger - were counted sleeping in Kirumba and most of these were found around the market area. Kirumba area is common for young sex

workers since it has a number of night clubs. Thirty girls engaged in sex work were counted outside these clubs, but the majority of these were aged 19-25.

OFF KENYATTA ROAD

This zone included Nyegezi bus stand, Buhongwa, Mkuyuni, Bugando and Bugarika. Two separate data sets were created for these areas with Bugando and Bugarika counted separately.

In Nyegezi, Buhongwa and Mkuyuni, 104 (80 boys and 24 girls) children and youth were counted. The leading category here were male children aged 15-18 with 49 individuals, 47 of whom were doing business.

Bugando and Bugarika were included in the headcount for the first time. In Bugarika, focus was placed on the market area, which is very much in the middle of a residential area. Groups counting here were faced with a dilemma in terms of which children in this area we should include in the count. In the central areas a total of 18 children were counted, and all of these were working. However, when counters had a look around the area, they discovered that in places like video shacks that are connected to the residential areas, a large number of children could be spotted during the day. These children would look similar to street based children, i.e. their appearance and clothing as well as the locations where they were spotted make it likely that these were vulnerable children who live at home. We decided not to include these children in the count in order to keep consistency with the methodology applied in other areas, as nowhere else did we extend the method to looking inside structures such as video shacks or go into residential areas. In summary, even though Bugarika gave a low count, it was very much experienced as an area where many at-risk children stay.

In the night counts, a modest number of children and youth (43) were found sleeping in this zone, and these were all in the area of the Nyegezi bus stand. Most of these were older children and youth.

IGOMBE VILLAGE

This area was only counted during the night. No children were found sleeping here, but this area contained by far the

highest numbers of young sex workers: 69 were counted during the final night count. The majority of these girls were aged 15-18 and were thereby a generally younger population than sex workers in the city. We can assume that these girls live in or around Igombe village as it is quite far from town.

The teams speculated that this area contains a high number of sex workers due to it being a fishing community with many men travelling and staying there temporarily away from their families, and as such these men are commonly the customers of these young sex workers.

AGE AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION

Sixty-six children were under the age of 6 and 255 were in the age group of 7-10. In other words, 321 children out of the total of 1526 were below ten years of age. The most well represented age category, as last year, was children aged 11-14 with a total of 612. Four hundred and twenty-eight children were counted in the age category of 15-18, and lastly in the category of youth aged 19-25 we counted 165 individuals.

Around one third of all children and youth counted during the daytime were girls: 492 out of 1526. Both boys and girls had highest representation in the age category of 11-14. In the age category of 0-6 the gender distribution was much more uneven: 56 boys and only ten girls. Among both boys and girls, the most common category was 'fixed business' - and for girls 325 of 492 individuals counted were in this category. For boys on the other hand, slightly fewer than half were counted in fixed business.

In the daytime, as is detailed above, the gender distribution was approximately 1/3 for girls and 2/3 for boys. At night however, the vast majority of children and youth who sleep in the streets are boys - this survey counted 380 boys and ten girls sleeping outside during the night.

GIRLS WHO HAVE SMALL CHILDREN OR WHO ARE PREGNANT

Among all the girls counted during the day, five were pregnant and two of these already had at least one small child. Furthermore, four other girls had small children.

SLEEPING - FULL-TIME CHILDREN

Three hundred and ninety children were counted sleeping in the streets during the third and final night count. The vast majority of these (380) were boys, and ten were girls. Of these ten girls, two girls aged 15-18 were visibly pregnant and one girl aged 19-25 had a small child who was sleeping with her on the streets. None of the girls were below ten years of age.

Just as during the day, the most common age group among children sleeping in the streets was 11-14 with 155 individuals counted, five of whom were girls. Quite a number of very young children, all boys, were counted sleeping in the streets - 11 were of the age group of 0-6 and 43 were aged 7-10. One hundred and twenty-seven children aged 15-18 were counted and lastly 54 were youth aged 19-25.

This is the first time a count of sleeping children has ever been done in Mwanza as far as we are aware. We can safely say that the children who were counted do not make out the entire number of full-time children - there were a few places where we were denied access during the night, and one can also expect that there may be other more hidden sleeping places which are still unknown to us. We also avoided entering a small number of potential sleeping locations due to security risks.

SEX WORKERS

This category was only counted during the night shifts and comprises girls who are seen in areas common for sex work and whose clothes, demeanour and behaviour reveal that they are engaged in sex work. In most areas, we only counted girls outdoors. In Igombe village, the team did however enter the bars of some guest houses and this is where some girls were counted.

One hundred and fifty-six sex workers, all female, were counted, mainly in the town centre, Kirumba and Igombe village. Eighty-five were youth aged 19-25, 69 were aged 15-18 and two were aged 11-14.

We have strong reasons to assume that this number is far from the true number of young sex workers. Street workers are aware of several guest houses in town that are practically run as brothels, and where a number of younger girls rent

rooms by the night in which they receive their customers rather than linking up to them out on the streets. Additionally, we can assume that many girls relevant to the count and who find their customers on the streets would have been with customers inside rooms at the time of our count. In Igombe village we enquired about rooms in a couple of the guest houses common for sex work, and most of them were occupied.

Considering all this, a rather high number of young girls were still counted in this category.

FIXED BUSINESS

During the day, fixed business was by far the category with the highest number, holding approximately half of the individuals of the entire survey: 779 children and youth (454 boys and 325 girls). Across the age categories of children and youth in fixed businesses, boys and girls appeared in similar numbers as opposed to other categories - for example 61 boys and 64 girls were below the age of ten, and 136 boys and 132 girls were aged 11-14. The age group with the highest numbers was boys aged 15-18.

We can make the assumption that a majority of the younger children in fixed businesses are working for someone else - either as an employee or perhaps helping a parent or a relative by keeping their shop in the market. From our experience, some of them are likely to be working on casual basis of their own initiative - for example cleaning or washing dishes for somebody in exchange for a day's pay or a meal. Also, staff in our partnership often observe that some of the children in fixed businesses are used as cheap labour, sometimes being forced into the situation by relatives.

In the night time, 211 children and youth were counted in fixed businesses, with an even representation of girls and boys. While younger children were well represented in this category during the day, older children and youth made out the majority in the night. At night, many in this category would be selling food or goods in the late evening markets.

MOVABLE BUSINESS

Three hundred and thirty-one (251 boys and 80 girls) children and youth were in movable businesses, with 26 of these being below the age of ten and 163 in the age group of 11-14.

Teams observed that these are often children moving around alone selling different things, more likely to be coming from home. For example, during the survey mangoes were in season and quite a number of small children in Igoma seem to have been sent to sell these in the central areas. Furthermore, some of the younger children in this category are those who move around the city collecting scrap metals and plastics to sell as recycling materials - these children are just as likely to be full-time as part-time on the streets. In market areas, young boys selling plastic bags and offering to carry the bags of shoppers was a common sight.

At night, this was a category dominated by boys - of 95 individuals only seven were girls and all seven were of 15-18 years of age. Twenty-five boys were very young children under the age of ten. In contrast to fixed business, the category of movable business had only nine youth aged 19-25.

The different gender representations in fixed versus movable business during late night potentially shows that most young girls working on the streets late at night are indeed in fixed businesses rather than movable - this is possibly for security reasons.

JOBLESS

This category represents children and youth who are idle upon being counted. Two hundred and sixty-one children and youth (207 boys and 54 girls) were jobless with only a quarter being girls. The highest numbers were found in the city centre and off Nyerere road which was also the most populated zone of all. Boys aged 11-14 represented over a third.

Since last year's survey, we believe that the majority of children and youth in this category may be those who are full-time on the streets since most part-timers will come to town to work and then return home. Full-time children will however spend their recreational time and

rest on the streets in between other activities.

In the night count, 190 children were counted as jobless and the vast majority of these were boys - only six were girls. These are children who are awake and out and about from 10 pm and onwards. Most of the boys counted were children below 18 years, and 55 of these were below the age of ten.

From our working experience, we know that this category of children seen at this late hour will often be the full-time children who will go to sleep on the streets around midnight. We also know that many of the full-time children will be hidden at this hour watching movies in the many video shacks around the city.

BEGGING

In the daytime, 155 children were counted while begging - 122 boys and 33 girls. Begging is typically an occupation for younger children - very few were older children and youth. Twenty-six children (20 boys and six girls) were below the age of ten and 48 (39 boys and nine girls) were 7-10 years of age.

For young boys, the city centre was the most common place for begging. For girls on the other hand, the main market (Soko Kuu) and the area of Mwaloni fish market were the most common areas for begging.

At night, begging was not a common occupation at all. Only 15 children were seen begging and all of these were boys aged 15-18 in the city centre.

DISABILITY

No children with disabilities were counted. We can safely assume that in Mwanza, disability is not among the factors that make children more likely to live or work in the streets. This is rather interesting considering that many of the adult beggars in town can be observed to be people with disabilities.

We can only hypothesise around the reasons for which children with disabilities do not go to the streets. Perhaps it is too difficult for them to survive in the streets. More likely, their absence could be explained by the cultural tendency to keep children with disabilities confined to the family home.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Railway Children already has qualitative evidence from Tanzania and Kenya around the reasons children go to the streets in general, such as family violence and neglect, poverty and the lack of access to an education³. Among the organisations involved in conducting this survey, there is also a great deal of working experience directly from the field. The following discussion is partly informed by this evidence and experience, and attempts to hypothesise around the different categories of children; their reasons for being on the streets, their specific situations; and furthermore it aims to make some comparisons between the populations of children in these various categories and their respective unique circumstances. The recommendations in the last section of this report aim to be practical and talk about the different interventions that need to be in place for the different groups of children that are highlighted in this discussion. Even though we recognise that structural change and policy implementation are going to be necessary for addressing the root causes of this situation on a national level, the recommendations in this report relate mainly to the considerations that need to be made when designing interventions that target the different groups of children and youth highlighted below. The findings bring a number of implications for our programmes, and as such, they are also very much related to our working context and development of existing programmes in Mwanza.

2012 VERSUS 2013 FINDINGS

The methodological changes detailed earlier will have had a significant impact on the final data, making any real comparison of the findings from 2012 and 2013 difficult. The first headcount was very much a learning experience for us, and looking back at the methods used, the risk of double counting would have been much more prevalent. The 2012 headcount yielded a higher total number of children than the current study, but this does not necessarily mean that the number of children and youth has decreased. The

2013 count was made through a more solid methodology and we believe that this set of data is as robust as it could have been using the headcount methodology. This also means that when we replicate the survey again in 2014, we can make relatively accurate comparison from one year to another.

CHILDREN WHO ARE FULL-TIME ON THE STREETS

Even though we have long known that there are high numbers of children sleeping on the streets, this is the first time we have evidence of just how high these numbers might be – and as stated earlier, we are aware that we were not able to access and count in all sleeping locations and that the final number is therefore a minimum.

Without a doubt, at least 390 children and youth were sleeping unprotected outside in the central areas of Mwanza on the day of the headcount.

We know from experience that a much higher number of girls are on the streets and disconnected from their families than the ten counted during the survey, and that many of these live in shared rooms commonly known as “ghettos”. These are usually overcrowded, housing a number of girls who depend on the streets, commonly on sex work, for their survival. These findings reveal that very few girls actually sleep unprotected on the streets at the moment, and we can assume that most of them rather sleep in shared rooms. The girls who sleep in shared rooms, a group that we still need to gain more understanding about, are however not necessarily more protected in general just because they sleep inside. We suspect that many of them are out on the streets at night engaged in sex work, and as such they would still be considered a group at great risk.

The staff conducting the survey testify that, in general, children are increasingly moving away from sleeping in the streets, i.e. outdoors, as of recent years. Even though they don't decide to go back to their families, they will often decide to sleep in a shared room rather than sleeping outside. This means that there is still little change in their life situation, and that they have simply become more invisible to us during the night. Only a couple of years back, high numbers of children would sleep in

³ 'Struggling to Survive - Children Living Alone on the Streets in Tanzania and Kenya' Railway Children, 2012

the most central streets of town, some even having arranged their own bedding and mosquito nets on the pavement near Mwanza's only traffic light. This is a sight which is becoming rarer due to the risks that children face during the night. The local authorities are becoming less and less permissive of children sleeping visibly outside.

This group of children - i.e. children who are full-time in the streets - have diverse backgrounds and reasons for why they have ended up in this situation. One thing that they have in common is that once they have spent a few months on the streets, they become increasingly difficult to work with due to the behaviours they adopt - behaviours that arise from the traumas they are exposed to on the streets, as well as the strategies they develop to survive. As time goes by, their relationship to their family also becomes more and more distant. Despite the difficulties involved in delivering an effective programme for them, these young children who are on the streets full-time are the group we are the most concerned about.

The vast majority of these children will require a great deal of support to get off the streets, and a programme that exists to help them needs to respond to the diverse needs of the children themselves as well as their families. Street based outreach work needs to be a central component of these programmes, focused around creating a safe relationship between individual children and the workers. The goal of such work should be for the child to make the decision to leave the streets themselves. In our experience, a child who leaves the streets through force or through a social worker's persuasion is more likely to return to the streets than a child who has made an informed decision to change their situation.

GIRLS

We are constantly trying to learn more about female children and youth on the streets since they form a less visible group. The findings of this headcount have taught us several new things about these girls and the nature of their street involvement in Mwanza at this point in time. The headcount shows that high numbers of young female children work during the day and can therefore be

assumed to be out of school and in very vulnerable situations. We can hypothesise that the younger female children are likely to have been forced by their circumstances to offer cheap labour in market places etc, or perhaps they are helping out in the business of a family member or relative. We have confirmed that during the night, other female children, more often older children and youth, work as sex workers.

We can hypothesise that most of the former group might go home at night whereas the group of young sex workers in Mwanza city are more likely to be detached from their homes and therefore have maximum freedom and minimal or no adult support or supervision.

The survey shows that very few girls in Mwanza, at the moment, sleep unprotected outside, at least not where we could find them. This calls for more research about their living situations. As mentioned earlier, we know from experience that many street girls live in shared rooms and often move from place to place, and that these are commonly involved in sex work at night. We can assume that these girls were generally not counted during the day - this is the time when they will be resting and spending time in their rooms.

BOYS AGED 11-14

Boys aged 11-14 were the largest group among all the children and youth included in the headcount. This age group gave the highest numbers of children counted sleeping on the streets during the night, and compared to other groups, they were more commonly found begging or jobless during the day counts. We can assume, as we did in last year's headcount, that the boys counted as jobless/begging may very well be the same children who sleep on the streets at night.

We can hypothesise around why boys aged 11-14, followed by boys aged 15-18, are more likely to be on the streets. First, this is the age where they enter adolescence and this may mean that they are less tied to the home and more likely to go outside the home to seek freedom or refuge due to the circumstances they face in their family. If the family relationships are poor, or if there is violence in the family, boys who would

put up with the situation as small children may be more likely to escape it when they become a bit older. Adolescence is also the age when peers start becoming more important than the parents, and this may be another contributing factor. Culturally, adolescence also brings with it a set of responsibilities for male children, especially in families that are very poor and where there is no other male breadwinner. Some boys are disciplined and work hard to support their families, while for others the burden that this responsibility brings becomes too heavy for them and rather ends up pushing them away. In our services we often see how the oldest son may drop out of school and start working on the streets, slowly getting sucked into the lifestyle of full-time street children and becoming more detached from their homes. Lastly, primary students graduate around the age of 14. In many poor families, children are not able to go to secondary school due to the associated costs, or due to failing the final exams of primary school. An adolescent boy who is left idle with little hope of continuing their studies may be more likely to go to the streets to seek a livelihood, or simply to have something to do, when it becomes clear to them that they are not going to continue getting an education alongside their peers. This will happen in the context of other factors in the family, especially in cases where there is little real support or other opportunities within the family setting to meet the needs of these boys. These factors will to an extent be relevant for the 11-14 age group, but possibly even more so for boys aged 15-18.

If boys who are entering adolescence are more likely to take to the streets for some of the reasons above, this needs to be considered in prevention programmes and family work - both to prevent this group from taking to the streets as well as responding to the situation when things have already gone wrong.

WORKING CHILDREN

The majority of children and youth counted in the survey during the day were actually working children. Many of them worked in market places for an adult who we assume was either an employer or a relative, and others worked on their own.

Many of them may be sent to town to make a living by selling goods prepared in the family home, and these children are likely to come from households where the adults are unable or unwilling to support them due to different reasons such as old age or inability to leave the home to work, or problematic family relationships.

Some children, from our experience, may be the stepchild in their family home. In less supportive homes, this will in many cases mean that they are less of a priority for schooling and may instead be pushed to offer cheap labour as their contribution to the family. Relationships between employers of small children and the children themselves are often abusive and forceful.

Many of them might simply be from extremely poor families around the city and as such, they are forced to work instead of going to school. In our work, it is not unusual to come across families where the only adult is an aged grandmother who is no longer able to perform physical labour, and as such they are forced to rely on the children for their survival.

No matter what the reason is for these children to be spending their days working at a young age, the risks and outcomes of this lifestyle are likely to be the same. If primary school aged, they will not even get a basic education and as such have no opportunity of going to secondary school or get a higher education as young adults. When from extremely poor families, they will be more likely to remain in perpetual poverty and continue to spend their adolescence and adulthood providing cheap labour - or for girls, getting married early. The places they work in may be filled with risks and, without adult supervision, they may face a number of dangers while at work. Furthermore, they are likely to come into contact with full-time street children who work in the same place and slowly get sucked into street life as a more attractive alternative to staying in their family home where they face adult responsibilities, extreme poverty or violence, or where they the lack the opportunity to go to school.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Young children who live on the streets full-time

Very young children living full-time on the streets need to be given high priority within our programmes and protection in residential centres while we work towards reunifying them with their families. From our experience, an early intervention - i.e. helping the child off the streets soon after arrival - is more likely to be successful. As such, some elements of street work need to be focused around identifying children early on. Most of these children will benefit from a transitional period in a residential centre while we work with their family to address the reasons that made them go to the streets in the first place. Programmes that exist for these families need to be designed to respond to complex and diverse needs and their underlying theme needs to be the strengthening of family relationships and care for the children in the family.

PREVENTION: TARGET THE FAMILIES OF WORKING CHILDREN

Families where at least one child is out of school and/or working on the streets is most often a family where things have started to go wrong, and where the other children are also at risk. If these families are also affected by the most common factors that push children to the streets - poverty, violence, lack of education, lack of adult support - family support programmes can prevent all the children in a home from ending up in the streets full-time. Such programmes should offer comprehensive support when needed and enable families to improve their relationships, economy and connections to other people or institutions in the community. Such work demands considerable time and resources, but is possibly the only way of decreasing the population of street children over time.

The headcount shows that a number of areas in Mwanza are common for young child workers. We can use our new knowledge about these areas in the identification of children and families to work with as part of preventative efforts in family work.

BOYS AGED 11-14: IMPLICATIONS FOR FAMILY WORK

As mentioned above, boys entering adolescence seem to be the most likely group to enter the streets full-time. When working with families where a child or children fit this profile, interventions should be planned to take the reasons that boys of this age go to the streets into account. Family relationships are crucial and efforts to strengthen their quality should always be the main theme of any programme for street children or children at risk. Specific to this group however, focus can also be put on helping parents understand appropriate ways to respond to the needs of an adolescent as opposed to a younger child. Efforts can be made towards taking the pressure off children to be the family breadwinners before they are ready, for example, by trying to enable an older family member to make a better income. When circumstances still force them to work, and/or when they are not able to go to secondary school, efforts should be focussed around helping them to learn a profession within a field of their choice and where it is realistic for them to make a living from a young age. Lastly, family workers should take into account the increasing importance of peer groups for children of this age and try to help them forge healthy friendships with other children in the community even though they are no longer in school.

FEMALE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In general, female children on the streets are particularly vulnerable to different forms of abuse and exploitation, and run a high risk of becoming pregnant. They are commonly engaged in commercial sex work during the night. As such, prioritising them in street work and protecting them through temporary shelter is crucial especially if they are on the streets full-time. What we have learnt from this 2013 survey as well as from our working experience is that these girls are not generally sleeping in the streets - therefore we need to gain more knowledge about where they live and target our efforts around these locations.

A few pregnant girls were counted and from experience we know that several street based girls become pregnant and

have a baby in Mwanza each year since one of our programmes specifically targets these girls. Female children and youth who get pregnant while on the streets or who are already raising an infant require a two-fold approach where the mother and baby are worked with together. Emphasis needs to be placed on necessary medical care, nutrition and protection for the babies while at the same time working with the mother towards changing her lifestyle. The approach much also include helping young girls through their pregnancy and ensuring a safe delivery.

YOUTH AGED 19-25

We know from experience that many of these young people in the survey aged 19-25 have been on the streets for a number of years, and that they are often very difficult to work with due to the problematic behaviours they have developed. Efforts for these youth need to be street based and focused around psychosocial support and behavioural change. Importantly, as another step, these youth most often need support to choose and learn a trade.

FURTHER EVIDENCE OF FULL-TIME STREET CHILDREN

In order to get a more comprehensive picture of the real numbers of full-time street children and youth we would need to build further evidence around the numbers of individuals who sleep in 'ghettos' i.e. shared rooms. It may be that these are just as numerous, if not more, than the children and youth who sleep outside. We will plan a separate survey for this purpose following the headcount.

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