A close-up photograph of a child's hand and face. The hand is in the foreground, with fingers slightly curled. The face is in the background, looking towards the camera. The skin is dark brown. The background is a blurred red and white.

# CHILDREN ON THE STREETS OF MWANZA HEADCOUNT FINDINGS 2014

RAILWAY  
**children**  
Fighting for street children



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# STREET HEADCOUNT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH LIVING AND WORKING IN MWANZA 2014

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This 2014 Mwanza Headcount was coordinated by Railway Children Africa in partnership with local authorities and charitable organisations in Mwanza – namely Kivuko (Railway Children Africa’s project), Upendo Daima and Caretakers of the Environment (COET).

We would like to thank the departments of Social Welfare and Community Development as well as the police of Nyamagana and Ilemela municipalities for providing approval and input, and for availing field data collectors from their workforce in support of the survey.

A special thanks also goes out to the former street youth who participated in the field work and whose knowledge of the environment was crucial to guide the methodology and carry out the survey.

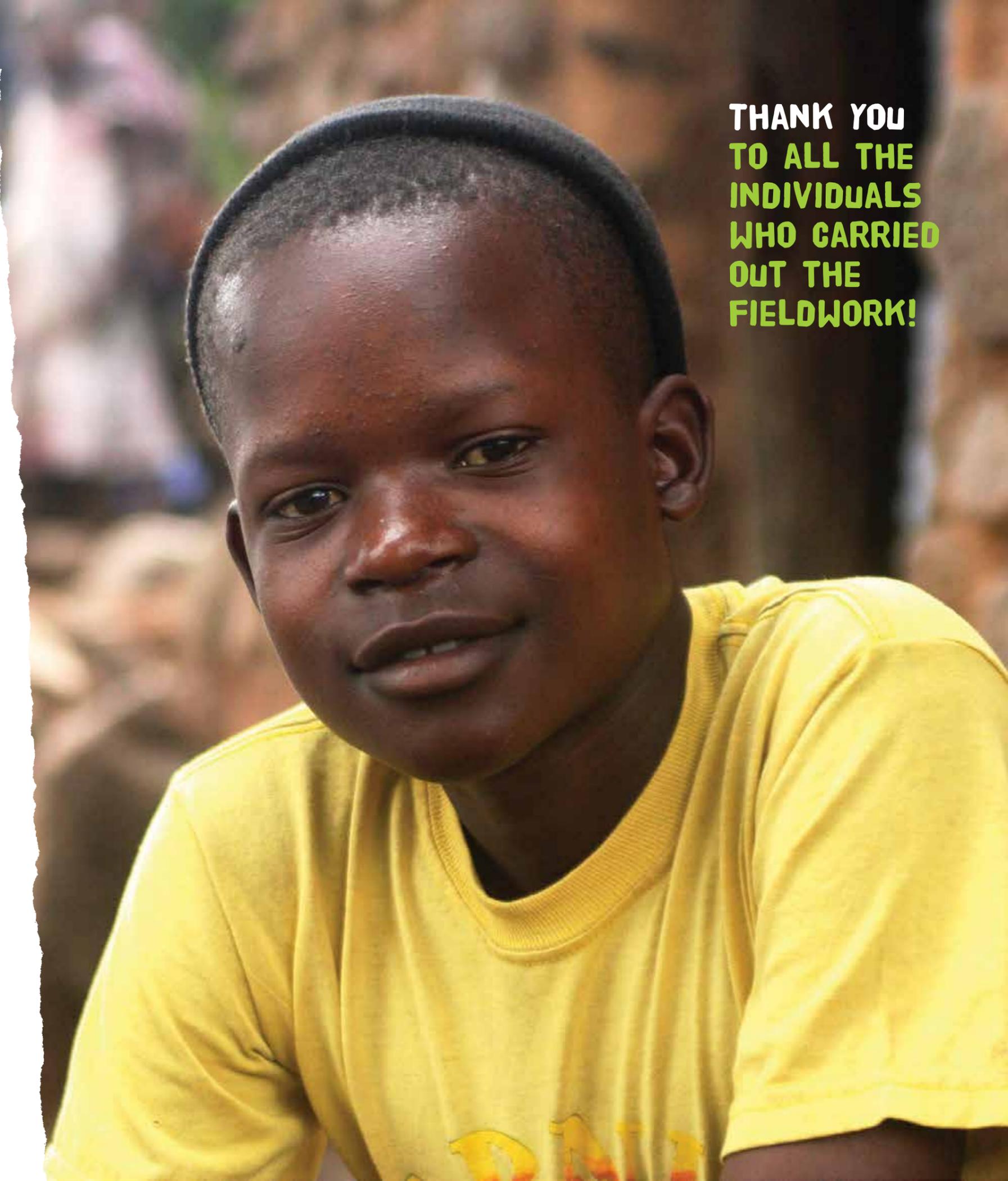
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## TEAM MEMBERS

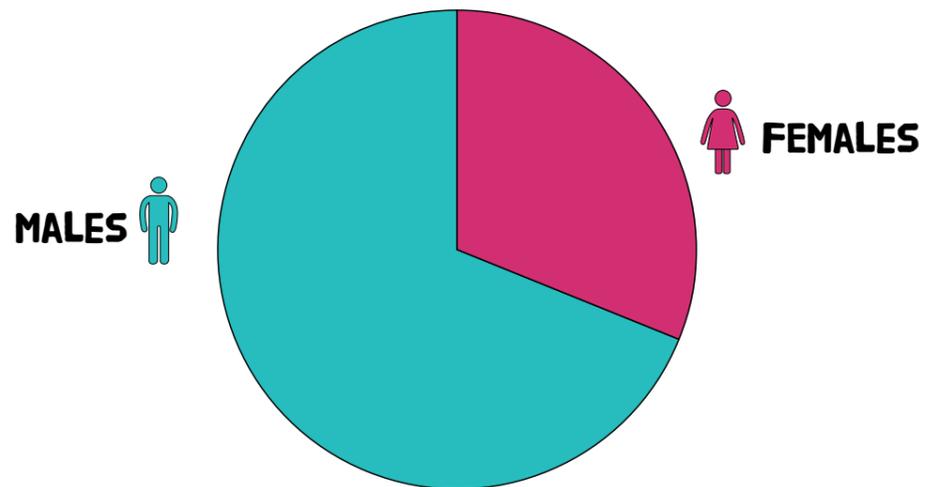
Elias Anthony (Kivuko), Daud Anthony (COET), Said Ramadhan, Mwazo Saidi, Kulwa Bisansaba, Baraka Salum, Deogratias Mamiro (COET), Davina Martine (COET), Clara Ndilla (COET), Pauline Somangezi (Police), Paulo Lughali (Upendo Daimia), Shabani Saidi, Saidi Abdallah, Irene Kamaro, Rico Ndarro, Stella John (COET), Monica Cyprian, Simon Emmanuel, Lweganwa Kainoli, Vincent Wana (COET), Dennis David (COET), Omary Charles (COET), Emaus Emmanuel (COET), Erick Charles, Sadock John (COET), Milanga Ally (Upendo Daimia), Ntoki Julius, Emmanuel Mathias, and Innocent Evarist.

THANK YOU TO ALL THE INDIVIDUALS WHO CARRIED OUT THE FIELDWORK!



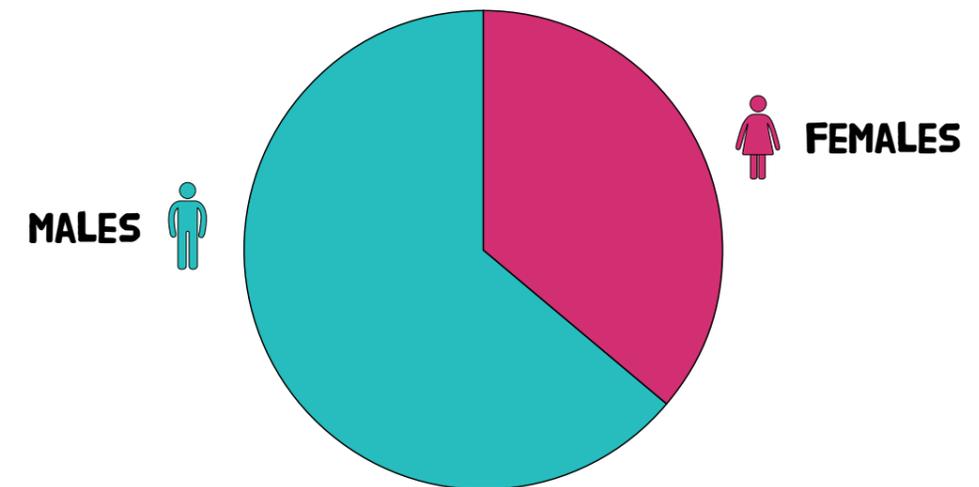
## DAY

-  **1548** TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH
-  **483** FEMALES AGED 0-25
-  **1065** MALES AGED 0-25
-  **230** CHILDREN AGED 0-10
-  **65%** DECREASE FROM LAST YEAR IN THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND YOUTHS BEGGING ON THE STREETS
-  **28%** DECREASE FROM LAST YEAR IN THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN AGED 0-10



## NIGHT

-  **1118** TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH
-  **380** NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH SLEEPING ON THE STREETS
-  **405** FEMALES AGED 0-25
-  **713** MALES AGED 0-25
-  **82%** INCREASE FROM LAST YEAR IN THE NUMBER OF FEMALES AGED 0-25 SLEEPING ON THE STREETS
-  **100%** DECREASE FROM LAST YEAR IN THE NUMBER OF MALES AGES 0-6 SLEEPING ON THE STREETS
-  **127** NUMBER OF SEX WORKERS



## INTRODUCTION

This report contains the findings of the third 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 a significant amount of time on the streets. Like its predecessors, this report shows the number of children and youth who are either partially or completely connected to the streets.

The purpose of conducting this headcount survey was to establish the number of street based children and youth so that we are able to compare findings to previous counts. In that way the findings presented in this report are unique as they provide a comprehensive picture of the numbers of street connected children over time and in different settings of the city. By comparing survey results we are able to understand the impact our work, as well as inform our future strategic response for street involved children and youth.

This survey was conducted in December 2014 and was initiated and coordinated by Railway Children Africa in collaboration with Mwanza City Council, Ilemela District Council, Ilemela Police Department and involved Upendo Daima, Caretakers of the Environment Tanzania (COET) and Kivuko (a project of Railway Children Africa), all of whom deliver programmes for street involved children and youth and their families. These partners have been working to provide support and reintegration for children on the streets since our first headcount(2012) and the findings in this report create further motivation to provide better outcomes for street involved children in Mwanza.

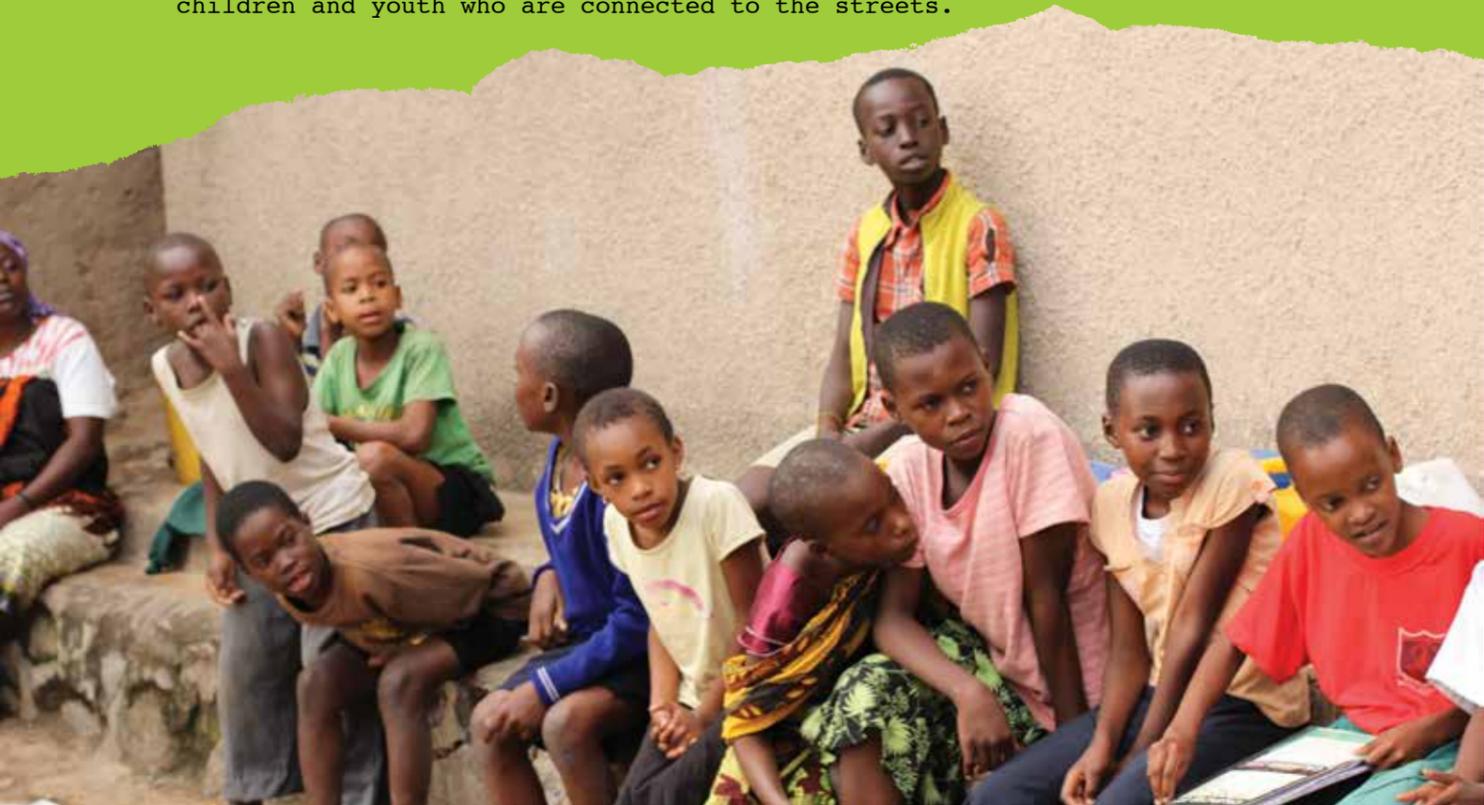
This headcount survey is based purely on observation and the data represents the population of children and young people on the streets of Mwanza at one particular point in time. This population is subject to periodic shift in size depending on the movement of the children and young people across the city. Despite this, we are confident that data from this report provides a useful guide to the general size of the population of children and youth who are connected to the streets.

## 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 government, non-government 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 longterm changes in the standard of services, procedures and manpower.

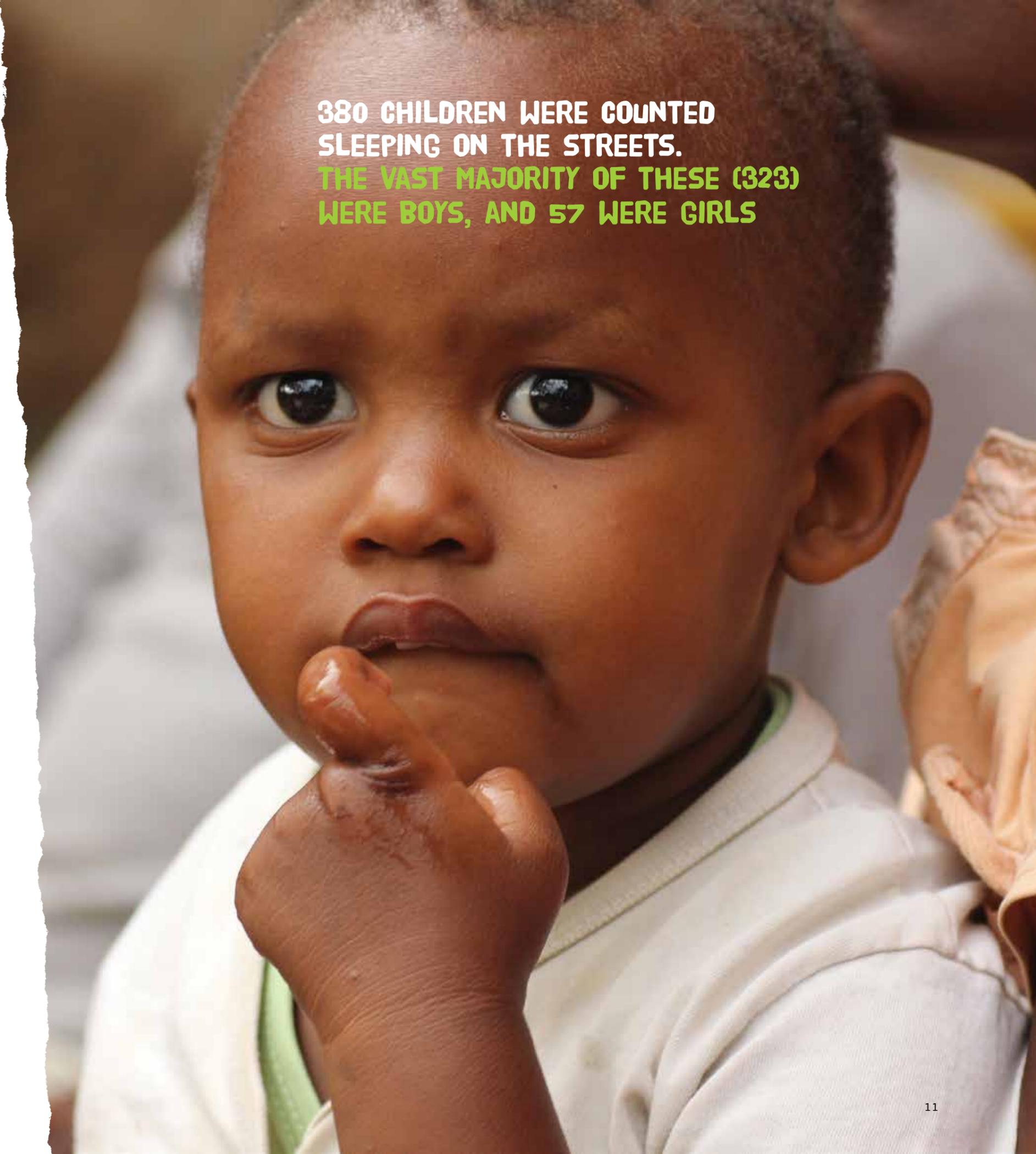


Ministries relevant to children in Tanzania (Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare) have shown great commitment to children's issues including the issue of children on the streets over the past few years. This has been evident through a number 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:

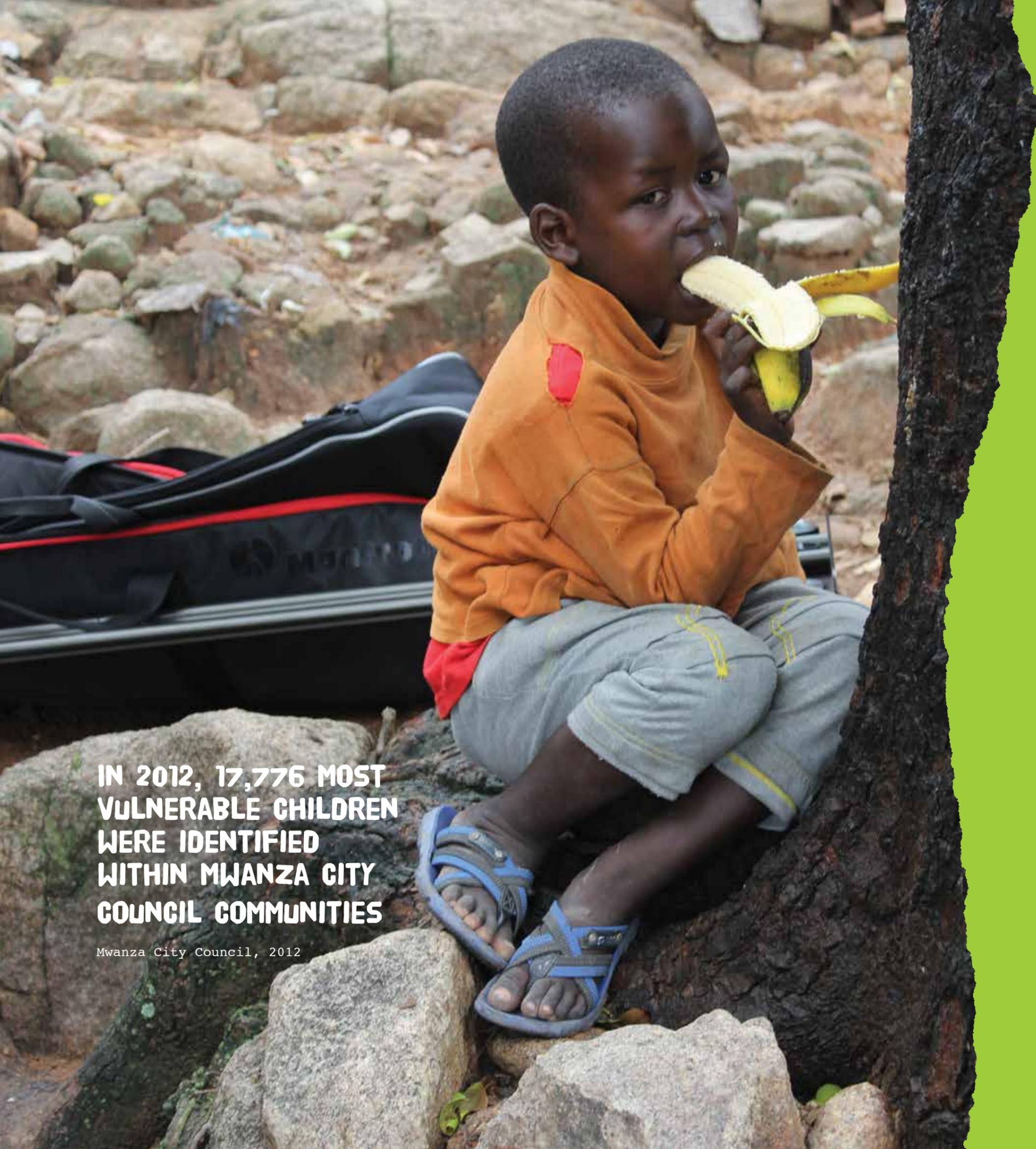
UNICEF – in collaboration with the ministries, local authorities and implementing partners – have over several years been developing a child protection model by piloting programmes in a small number of districts. This is a key initiative that aims to implement elements of the LCA and its regulations. A National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Response on Violence Against Children has been developed and is in early stages of implementation. 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 focused 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 current five years. In February 2013 the NCPA II was launched by the government in Dodoma.



**380 CHILDREN WERE COUNTED  
SLEEPING ON THE STREETS.  
THE VAST MAJORITY OF THESE (323)  
WERE BOYS, AND 57 WERE GIRLS**



**IN 2012, 17,776 MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN WERE IDENTIFIED WITHIN MWANZA CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITIES**

Mwanza City Council, 2012

## BACKGROUND MWANZA

According to the 2012 National Census<sup>1</sup>, Mwanza region has a population of 2,772,509 with Nyamagana and Ilemela Districts, together making up Mwanza town, hosting a population of 363,452 and 343,001 respectively. The region has a three percent annual population growth rate, which is the eighth highest in the country. Furthermore, Mwanza is the sixth most densely populated region with 293 people per square kilometre.

Seventy percent of people in Mwanza 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 Tanzania<sup>2</sup>, 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 the headcount and defined in this report are not included in the City Council identification processes since these are community based and as such count children who live at home. However, 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 third annual survey understand the importance of regular data collection so that we may know the true nature and extent of the phenomenon 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 these change over time, is a necessary step in planning and monitoring effective service provision.

## PREVIOUS COUNTS

Railway Children Africa has conducted three previous surveys to obtain an accurate number of street connected children and youth. The first of these, carried out in 2008, provided the first glimpse into numbers of street connected children and youth in Mwanza. The method used during this count was vastly different to those used in subsequent surveys and therefore it will not be referred to further in this report.

The second survey, carried out in 2012, adopted the headcount methodology, which provided a more accurate number of street connected children and youth. The survey revealed a total number of 1,888 children and youth (84% male and 16% female) on the streets, with the vast majority of those aged between 11 to 14. As this was the first survey that Railway Children Africa conducted with the new methodology, a number of improvements were made the following year, which made it difficult to directly compare the findings of the 2012 and 2013 counts.

The second survey using the headcount methodology, conducted in 2013, contained a number of methodological developments, which allowed for more robust evidence of children who are fully connected to the streets. The survey introduced a night count, which enabled us to record numbers of sex workers as well as children sleeping on the streets. The addition of further categories gave us more information about the numbers of girls connected to the streets, and by increasing the age of those eligible to be counted to 25 we gained data on older youth, relevant since some of our programmes provide services for them. Further advancements were applied and they are highlighted in the 2013 report<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>United Republic of Tanzania 2013 <sup>2</sup><http://www.streetwise-africa.org/mss/pdf/mwanza.pdf>  
<sup>3</sup>[https://www.railwaychildren.org.uk/media/11744/children\\_on\\_the\\_streets\\_of\\_mwanza\\_headcount\\_2013\\_full\\_report.pdf](https://www.railwaychildren.org.uk/media/11744/children_on_the_streets_of_mwanza_headcount_2013_full_report.pdf)

Due to the inclusion of a night count, the findings presented in the 2013 report were reported separately as day and night counts to ensure that double counting was avoided. This enabled us to analyse the findings in a cohesive way and create a report, which was an accurate reflection of street connected children and youth in Mwanza.

The 2013 survey revealed a total number of 1526 children and youth (68% male and 32% female) on the streets during the day. Similar to the 2012 headcount, the vast majority of these children were aged between 11 and 14 years and took part in various small income generating opportunities.

During the night, it was discovered that 666 children were working or idle on the streets. Of these, 390 (380 males and 10 females) children and youth were sleeping on the streets in various locations. 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.

While some may consider the number of sleeping children high, we knew from experience that many children and youth do not sleep outside on the streets, but rather rent and share rooms, live in camps or even stay in guesthouses that resemble brothels, which are part of the sex industry. Keeping this in mind, we became conscious that the numbers from the headcount alone do not even come close to representing the whole population of children and youth who are street involved and completely detached from their families. Consequently, we decided to conduct a 'Ghetto Count' that would allow us to obtain the numbers of these children and youth who are on the streets, yet out of sight during night hours.

The Ghetto count was carried out in 2014 by Railway Children Africa and was the first survey of its kind. The findings of the survey confirmed our initial thoughts: that a number of girls who were street connected were not visible, and were sleeping

in camps, ghettos, and guesthouses. The survey showed a total number of 370 girls living in these places with almost 50% of them under the age of 18. A further 590 boys were also found to be residing in camps, ghettos or guesthouses with almost 30% of them under the age of 18.

The surveys mentioned above have shed light on the size and characteristics of the population of children and youth connected to the streets in Mwanza. Through these surveys Railway Children Africa is able to understand the scope of services that would be required to address the situation on a city-wide level, and to base interventions and outreach work in particular locations and times. The findings in the previous counts will be used within this report to analyse whether numbers of street connected children and youth have either increased or decreased and also to assess whether our interventions are having an impact on the numbers of street connected children and youth.



## METHODOLOGY

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 counts 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.

### Limitations of the methodology

As with any methodology, head counting has its limitations and is not a hundred percent 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.

The methodology could be criticised for its lack of participation with the children themselves. However, to have adopted a more participatory approach that included street connected children in the counting process would have been to run the risk of the results being prejudiced by the children themselves. For example, a street connected child may be predisposed to warn friends to make themselves scarce during the counting process, or mislead the counters as to the areas which the children frequent.

While conducting this third 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.



## AIM AND PURPOSE OF THE 2014 HEADCOUNT

The purpose of this year's survey was similar to that of 2013 – i.e. to obtain the number of street connected children and youth in Mwanza town. The intention was also to compare the two sets of data – the findings from 2013 against this new data.

The headcount exercise took place over a nine-day period, with two days' training and five days of the actual headcount. Prior to the training, 35 counters were identified and selected from organisations in Mwanza. The criteria for selecting the team was mainly people who have experience of working with children living and working on the streets. Within the 35 counters were police officers, para-social workers and street connected youth. The rest were staff and volunteers from three charitable organisations namely: Kivuko (Railway Children Africa's project), COET and Upendo Daima.

## MITIGATING RISKS

One of the most prevalent risks during the headcount 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:

- Mapping. To improve logistics and minimise double counting of children, zoning was applied. Similar to last year, this meant that the city was split into various zones which reduced the risk of children moving between zones during the day and as a result minimised double counting.
- Timeframe of counts. Each zone was counted during a single day to decrease the likelihood of some children being counted in multiple days.

## THIS YEAR'S SURVEY WAS LARGELY BUILDING ON THE METHODS AND PLANNING FROM PREVIOUS SURVEYS

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. We have made the following key improvements to the survey method and structure over the past 2 years:

- Role of team leaders. The roles and responsibilities of the team leaders carrying out the field work were to supervise and manage the 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.



## 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 - SOMEONE WHO IS REQUESTING MONEY OR FOOD FROM LOCALS.**
- **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 AND YOUTH - THOSE WHO ARE EITHER ASLEEP OR APPARENTLY SETTLED IN THEIR SLEEPING AREAS. THESE CHILDREN ARE CONSIDERED TO BE LIVING IN THE STREETS FULL-TIME.**

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. Another symbol was also added for individuals who had a disability.

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 independently. 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.





## COORDINATION, TEAM LEADERS AND PROFILE OF COUNTERS

An organising team of two people consisted of two Railway Children Africa staff. 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 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 – police officers and para-social workers provided our teams with support and dynamics in which both staff and government representatives experienced meaningful learning from each other.

## HEADCOUNT PROCESS

This year's survey was largely building on the methods and planning from previous surveys, and the whole exercise required limited preparation as largely the same people were responsible for coordination and team leadership. 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 commenced with a one-day training session for the approximately 35 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.

## 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.

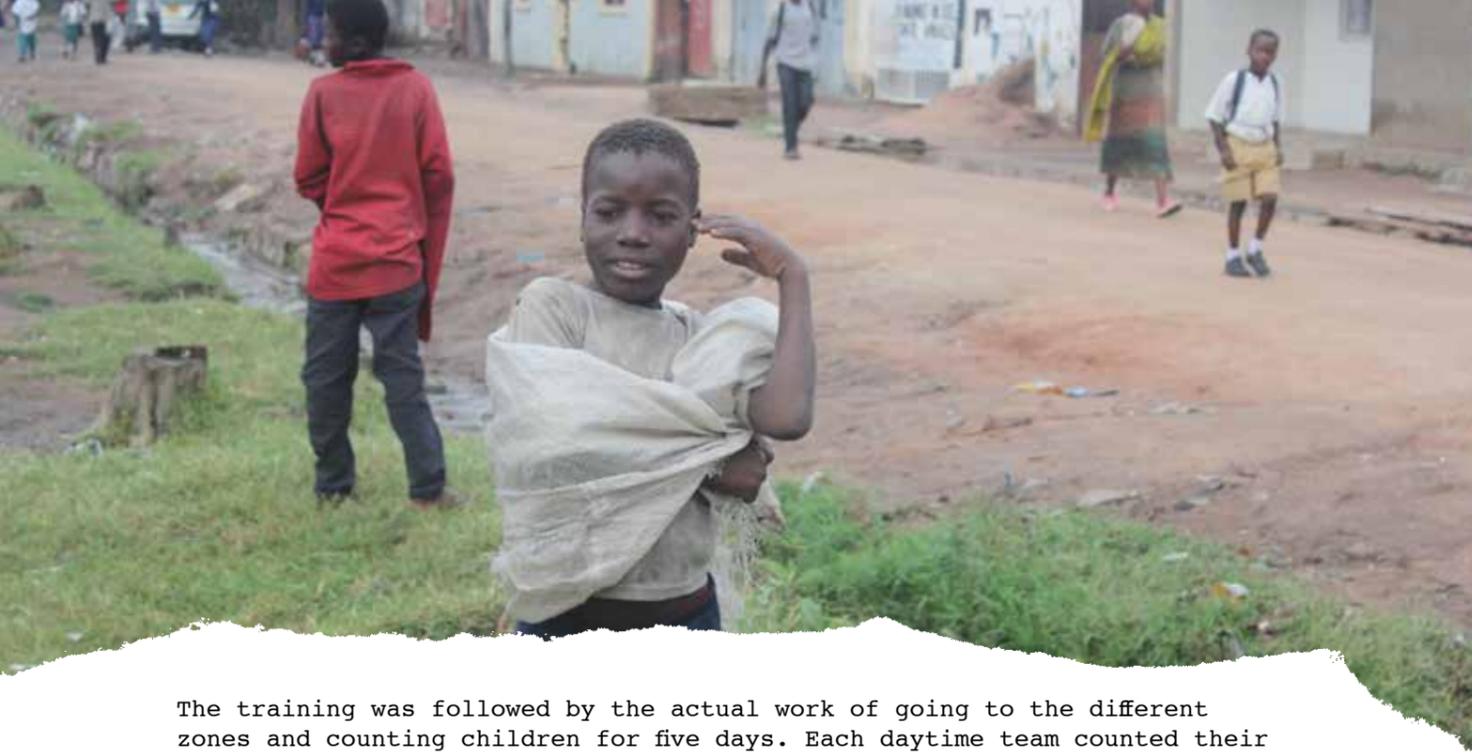
Mwaloni and Kirumba – this included Mwaloni fishmarket and surrounding area, Kirumba with focus around the dump, nightclubs and market area.

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, key zones such as Igombe Village and Ilemela corner were included as we are aware from last year's headcount that these areas are common for young night time sex workers.

In the 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 10.00 pm and ended around 3.00 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. As such, these two timings resulted in different sets of data.



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 with the exception of the town centre. An extra count was added to the town centre to verify the data due to some mapping issues. On the fourth count we found there were minimal differences and therefore decided to proceed with presenting the data from the original third count.

## DOCUMENTATION AND VALIDATION

During the field work, counters were each asked to record one category, such as movable business, which enabled them to focus on one aspect. 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 used 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 Africa and the group leaders to further look at the findings and analyse them. We used this time mainly to scrutinise the data collected as well as the methods used. We also hypothesised why there were significant increases and decreases in certain categories.

## 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 that potentially affected the daily data.

- December was time for school holidays, and we can assume 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.
- On certain days and in certain areas, a large as operating making the numbers of children and youth extremely high on those days. The moving market did not operate during the final count otherwise the numbers of this headcount would be higher by several hundred, representing children who work in this moving market.
- 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, we discovered a new sleeping place where a number of girls were found, which was not covered in the previous year. The location was only discovered thanks to one of our street connected youths informing their team leaders. As a result, the number of sleeping girls presented in this report has doubled. It is worth reiterating that this does not necessarily mean that there has been an actual increase in girls sleeping in the streets given that this location was not included last year. Lastly, we can safely assume that there are a number of places that we will have missed from the night count and that the number of children and youth who are sleeping on the streets will be higher than the number reported in this count.

## FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The following section contains the key findings of the 2014 headcount exercise in Mwanza. The findings are presented together with analysis and reflection by partners, including data collectors, who carried out the survey. Their experiences from the fieldwork as well as prior experiences help contextualize the findings and provide essential knowledge to the numbers of children on the streets in Mwanza.

## FINDINGS: NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH LIVING AND WORKING ON THE STREETS

### DAY TIME - MALES

Categories	0-6 years	7-10 years	11-14 years	15-18 years	19-25 years	Total
Fixed Business	2	55	140	149	43	389
Moveable Business	3	18	105	166	79	371
Jobless	6	41	104	87	24	262
Begging	2	7	31	2	1	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>1065</b>

### DAY TIME - FEMALES

Categories	0-6 years	7-10 years	11-14 years	15-18 years	19-25 years	Total
Fixed Business	0	62	94	88	25	269
Moveable Business	0	27	59	51	60	197
Jobless	0	5	6	1	0	12
Begging	0	2	1	0	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>483</b>

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>1548</b>
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### NIGHT TIME - MALES

Categories	0-6 years	7-10 years	11-14 years	15-18 years	19-25 years	Total
Sleeping	0	29	93	96	105	323
Sex Work	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fixed Business	0	4	18	26	52	100
Moveable Business	0	0	11	8	5	24
Jobless	0	35	69	75	51	230
Begging	0	8	16	12	0	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>713</b>

### NIGHT TIME - FEMALES

Categories	0-6 years	7-10 years	11-14 years	15-18 years	19-25 years	Total
Sleeping	5	10	20	11	11	57
Sex Work	0	0	14	40	73	127
Fixed Business	0	2	15	26	46	89
Moveable Business	0	1	3	3	1	8
Jobless	0	18	52	46	8	124
Begging	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>405</b>

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>1118</b>
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The most important finding from the headcount is the size of the population of children and youth who are sleeping, living, and working on the streets of Mwanza. Between 10th December 2014 and 18th December 2014, the headcount identified a total number of 1548 children and youth living/or working on the streets during the day. During the night a total of 738 children and youth were identified as either spending time or working on the streets with a further 380 recorded as sleeping on the streets of Mwanza.

Both of these numbers represent children and youth that were counted at specific times and in specific streets, and we can therefore assume that a number of children and youth were not counted. Numbers of children in the daytime, early and late night time (including sleeping children) have been presented separately to avoid double counting. We can assume that many of the 738 children and youth counted at night are included in the 1,548 counted in the day.

It should be noted that the number of children and youth seen during the evening hours has been collected separately from those who were found sleeping on the street later in the night. This is to avoid double counting as we assume that some of the children counted in the evening will also be those sleeping on the streets. These data sets are however presented together under the heading "night" throughout the report for the sake of simplicity.

The following section will analyze the data by location and provide insight into numbers of street connected children.

## LOCATIONS

The general observation from data collectors was that children and youth were found to be around market places, dumpsites, the lake and at bus stands. At market places children were generally either looking for food, or engaged in income generating activities while bus stands, similar to previous years, remained an entry point for children from other areas to enter the city. A number of children and youth were found at bus stands engaging in work from cleaning buses to carrying people's luggage.

Determining the correct locations to count is essential in headcounts and the following locations have been chosen based on our experiences of working with street connected children and youth.

### Off Nyerere Road

Similar to last year, Off Nyerere Road is the most populous area where street connected individuals can be found. A total number of 511 children and youth were counted in this zone; of these 360 were males and 151 females. The zone, which contains the areas of Nyakato, Mecco, Mbatini, Buswelu and Igoma, has a number of bus stands as well as business areas which could explain the high count. Igoma is one of these areas in Mwanza that produces the most street connected children, and 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.

Compared to the 2013 count, there was a 17% reduction in the number of children and youth counted in this area, with the largest decrease in the age category of 11-14. However, the 11-14 category also remained the most common, whereas the least common age category was youths aged 19-25. The vast majority of these children and youth (386) were engaged in both fixed and moveable businesses.

Another notable reduction is the age category of 0-6 years, in that this year no children were recorded whereas last year there were twenty-four children in this category. Workers have hypothesised that the reduction is due to children migrating to other areas such as the town centre and other marker areas.

During the night, a total of 218 children and youths were found to be on the streets with 138 being males and 80 females. Of these, 39 children and youth were found to be sleeping on the streets with the vast majority of those (37) being boys aged 7-18. Young girls were also present on the streets with ten girls aged 7-10 being spotted jobless and roaming the streets at night.

### City Centre

The city centre area is one of the largest areas in this count and as a result had to be split into two. The central market, otherwise known as Soko Kuu, Mwaloni fish market and Kirumba market were counted as a separate area to the rest of the city centre. This separation is based on logistics as well as our experience that the majority of children working in these places would often return home. On the other hand, children congregating in the centre of town are more likely to be fully connected to the streets and often have no ties to their families.

The city centre contains the areas of Capri Point, Kamanga, and Nyamagana and has a number of bus stands, hotels and traffic lights where street connected children and youth hang out. A total of 293 (209 boys and 84 girls) children and youth were counted in the day. Most of these children and youth (224) were engaging in either fixed or moveable businesses, whereas last year most individuals were either begging or jobless. Over the past year, local authorities in Mwanza have demonstrated a stricter approach to children begging, and we believe this may explain the tendency for the decrease in this category - these children have found other ways of earning money.

One of the major differences in this count is the decline in the numbers of children aged 0-10. Last year, a total of 20 children (17 males and 3 females) aged 0-6 were found on the streets. This year the number has drastically reduced by 90% with only two children recorded on the streets, both male. Another change was in the age category of 7-10 where last year the number of children recorded was 53 (38 males and 15 girls). This year the number has declined by over 50% to 24 children (12 males and 12 females). It may be that this reduction is due to increased efforts by local organisations to target younger children within their services.

During the night and similar to last year, the city centre is the most populous area when it comes to children sleeping on the street. A total of 187 individuals were counted sleeping on the streets and of these 23 individuals were under the age of 10. When analysed by gender, we can see a significant decline in the number of boys aged 0-10 sleeping on the streets with an 85% decrease.



**Soko Kuu, Mwaloni fish market and Kirumba**

The areas in this zone contain a number of markets, which explains why this zone has the second highest number of street connected children and youth. Last year, Soko Kuu was counted as its own zone whereas this year it was put together with Mwaloni and Kirumba for logistical reasons.

The zone comprises the central market, fish market as well as a smaller market where a number of children and youth can be found working. Of the 495 children counted (326 males and 169 females) in these areas, the majority (403) were working in either a fixed or moveable business. Compared to last year the number of children and youth found in this category declined by over 10%.

The most populated age category found in this area was 11-14 with a total of 157 children and youth recorded. This was similar to last year when a total of 164 children were counted in this category. Most of these individuals were engaged in fixed businesses of selling fruits, nuts, ice-cream etc.

During the night, a total of 250 children and youths were found to be on the streets with 146 being males and 104 females. Of this, 63 children and youth were found to be sleeping on the streets, all of them boys and most of them (30) being aged 11-14. This area also produced the highest number of female sex workers with a total of 48 recorded. Twelve of these girls were young - aged between 11-14 - whereas last year there were no sex workers in this age category visible on the streets.

**Off Kenyatta Road**

This zone included Nygezi bus stand, Buhongwa, Mkuyuni, Bugando and Bugarika. Similar to Soko Kuu, last year two data sets were collected for this area, however, this year we combined the areas for logistical reasons. This zone contained a number of places from residential locations, markets and bus stands.

Two hundred and forty-nine (170 boys and 79 girls) children and youth were counted in this area, with the leading age category being children and youth aged 15-18 (79), 16 of whom were girls. Compared to last year, this area saw a 104% increase overall with the largest difference in the age category of 11-14. There were also notable increases in the age categories of 15-18 and 19-25. These increases may be attributed to the inclusion of a new area where children and youth congregate. Unknown to us last year, Mkuyuni is an area which has a market and a field where both partially and fully connected street children gather.

Similar to other zones, the most popular activities in which individuals participated were moveable businesses or fixed businesses, with 212 individuals engaging in these activities. The least populous category was begging.

In the night count there were 230 children and youth counted on the streets. Of these 91 individuals were sleeping on the streets, including nine boys aged 7-10. Most of the sleeping boys were in the age category of 15-18 where 35 boys were found.



**DATA COLLECTORS OBSERVED THAT CHILDREN AND YOUTH WERE FOUND AROUND MARKET PLACES, DUMPSITES, THE LAKE AND AT BUS STANDS**

# CATEGORIES BREAKDOWN

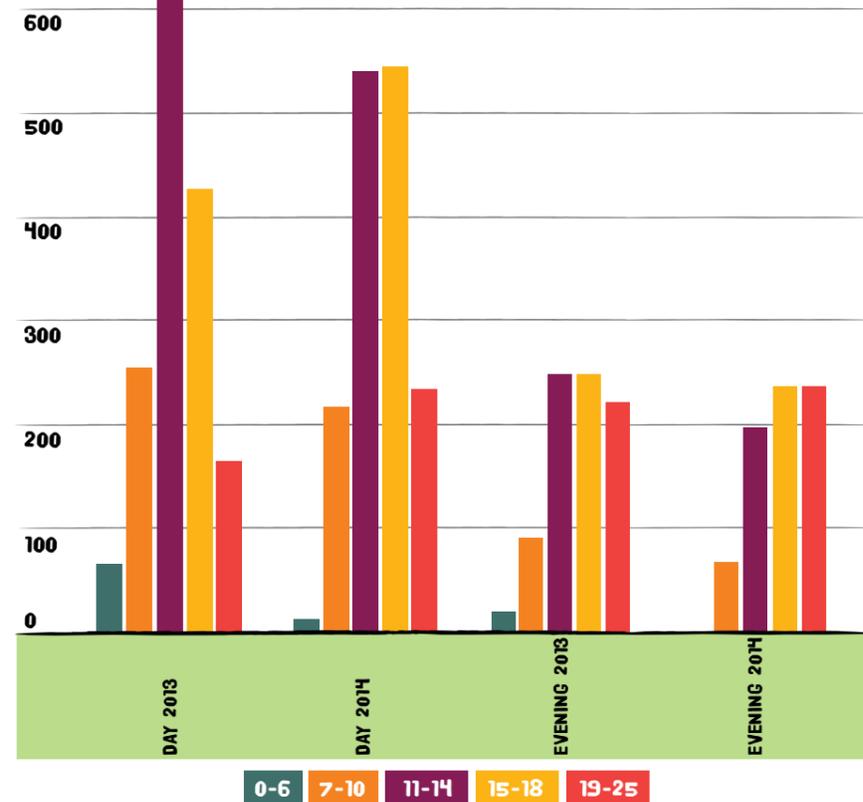
## Age distribution

The most common represented age category shifted this year from 11-14 to 15-18. For the last two years, children and youth aged 11-14 has been the most populous group of street connected children in Mwanza, with 639 counted in 2012, and 612 in 2013. That number has since declined to 540 this year, with 404 boys being counted and 160 girls.

Another notable change was the decline in the number of children age 0-10. Last year, there was a total 321 children in this category, counted during the day, whereas this year the number had declined to 230 showing a decrease of just under 30%. Additionally, the category 0-6 years saw a decrease of over 80% from 66 children recorded last year to only 13 recorded this year.

During the early night, the vast majority of individuals on the streets were evenly spread across the age range of 15-25. Most of the boys found in the night were jobless, whereas most of the girls were often engaged in sex work or were jobless. Additionally, there was a significant decline in the number of boys aged 0-6 sleeping on the streets with none recorded this year, the number of girls aged 0-6 increased to five, with most of them sleeping with their teen mothers. This is explained further in the children sleeping on the streets section.

## AGE COMPARISON OF BOTH DAY & NIGHT



## Gender distribution

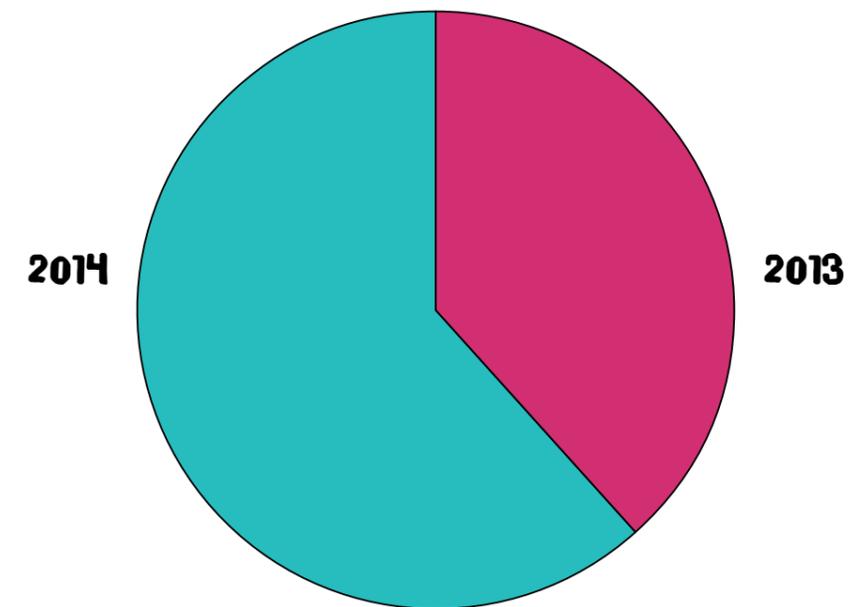
Around one third of all children and youth counted during the daytime were girls, with 483 females of 1526 counted. The highest representation for boys was in the age category of 15-18, whilst for girls the representation stayed the same as last year, with 11-14 being the main age category.

Last year, the number of girls sleeping on the streets totaled ten with all of these girls being aged 11-25. However, this year the number recorded was 57 with 15 of them being ten years and under.

One of the reasons which could explain this increase is due to street connected youth being included within the headcount team. The youth provided the team with new information on a specific location where girls were sleeping and this resulted in an increase in the number of girls recorded. Last year, this specific location was not covered in the headcount and we can therefore assume that we missed this hidden population in the previous count.

Also during the night, girls were generally more visible this year than last year, with 270 being observed. This is a 60% increase compared to last year, where the number totaled 168 girls living, working or sleeping on the streets.

## NUMBER OF GIRLS FOUND IN THE NIGHT



## Girls with small children or who are pregnant

Among all the girls counted during the day, 18 females had at least one child. For the first time two males were counted with a child during the day. Whilst in the night, ten females were counted with a child and one female was counted as pregnant. Of the females who were counted during the night six of them were sleeping on the street with their children.

**Sex workers**

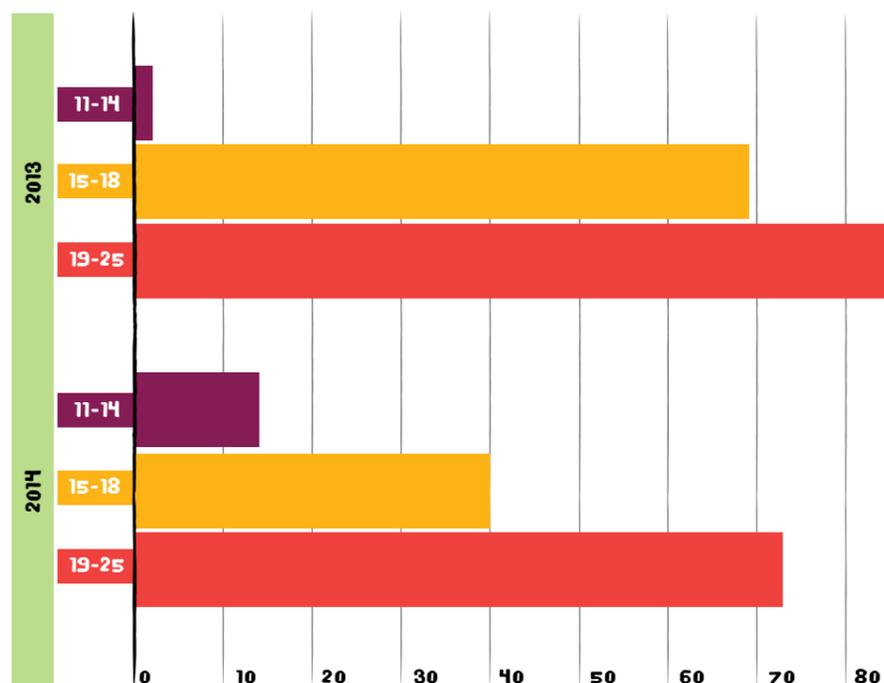
This category was only counted during the night shifts and comprises girls who are seen in areas common for sex work and whose clothes, demeanour and behaviour indicate that they are engaged in sex work. In all areas, we only counted girls outdoors and not inside guesthouses or bars that are common for sex work. One hundred and twenty-seven individuals, all females, were counted, mainly in the town centre and Kirumba. Seventy-three of these were youth aged 19-25, 40 were aged 15-18 and 14 were aged 11-14.

As mentioned above, the actual numbers of young sex workers are far higher than those recorded in this count. The 'Ghetto Count' we conducted last year reflects this. The scope of the Ghetto Count included entering some of the guesthouses (run as brothels) where girls reside, and a further 122 females were recorded engaging in sex work. Whilst both the Ghetto Count and this current count provide us with some data, we can safely assume that the number is far from the truth.

Street workers have reported that several guesthouses in town are practically run as brothels, and that there are a number of younger girls who rent rooms by the night to receive their customers rather than linking connecting 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.

Considering all this, there was a significant increase in the number of young girls - aged 11-14 - who were counted in this category.

**AGE COMPARISON OF SEX WORKERS**



**Sleeping (full-time)street children and youth**

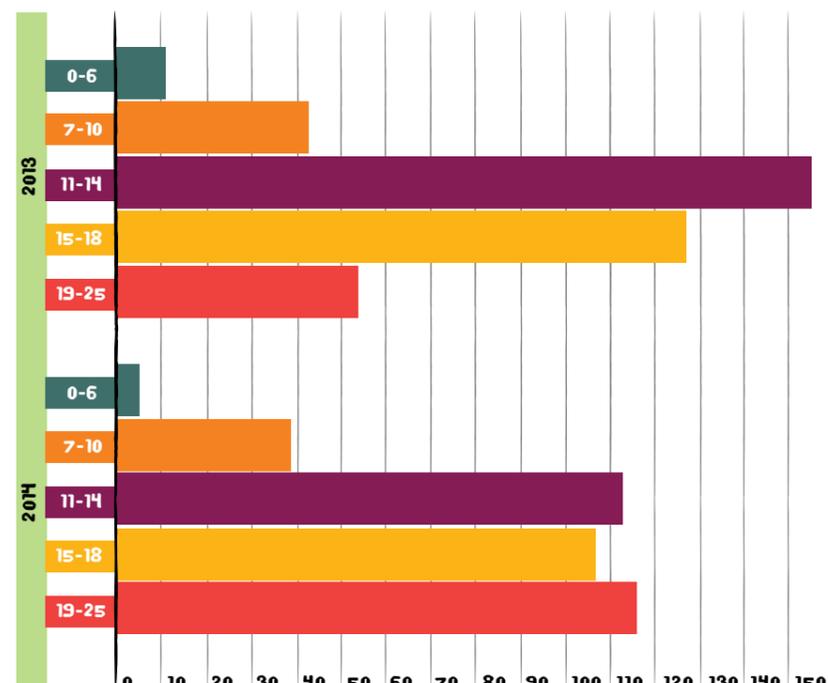
Most children and youth sleeping in the streets are often disconnected from their families and are unprotected. This year 380 children were counted sleeping on the streets. The vast majority of these (323) were boys, and 57 were girls. Overall there has been an 82% increase in the number of girls sleeping on the streets compared to last year, but as explained previously this may be attributable to improvements in coverage during field work rather than an actual increase. Of the 57 girls, 15 were under the age of ten whilst another 20 were between the ages of 11 and 14.

The number of boys sleeping on the streets has also changed significantly, with 15% fewer boys counted sleeping on the streets this year compared to last. Furthermore, a significant reduction has occurred in the category of boys aged 0-6, since in last year's count the number of boys sleeping on the streets was 11, whereas this year there were no boys recorded in that age category. Reductions were also noted in other categories with a 33% decrease in the age bracket of 7-10 and a 38% decrease in boys aged 11-14.

The biggest age group amongst children and youth sleeping on the street has also shifted from last year's age bracket of 11-14 to 19-25 this year. Last year there were 155 children recorded in the 11-14 age range whilst this year that number has declined to 113. At the same time, the number of youth aged 19-25 has increased from 54 to 116, making it the most populous age category.

This is the second time we have conducted the night count and we believe from our experience that a number of children and youth may have been missed. Methodological advancements will continue to affect the data and we can assume that a number of sleeping places are still unknown to us.

**SLEEPING CHILDREN COMPARISON**



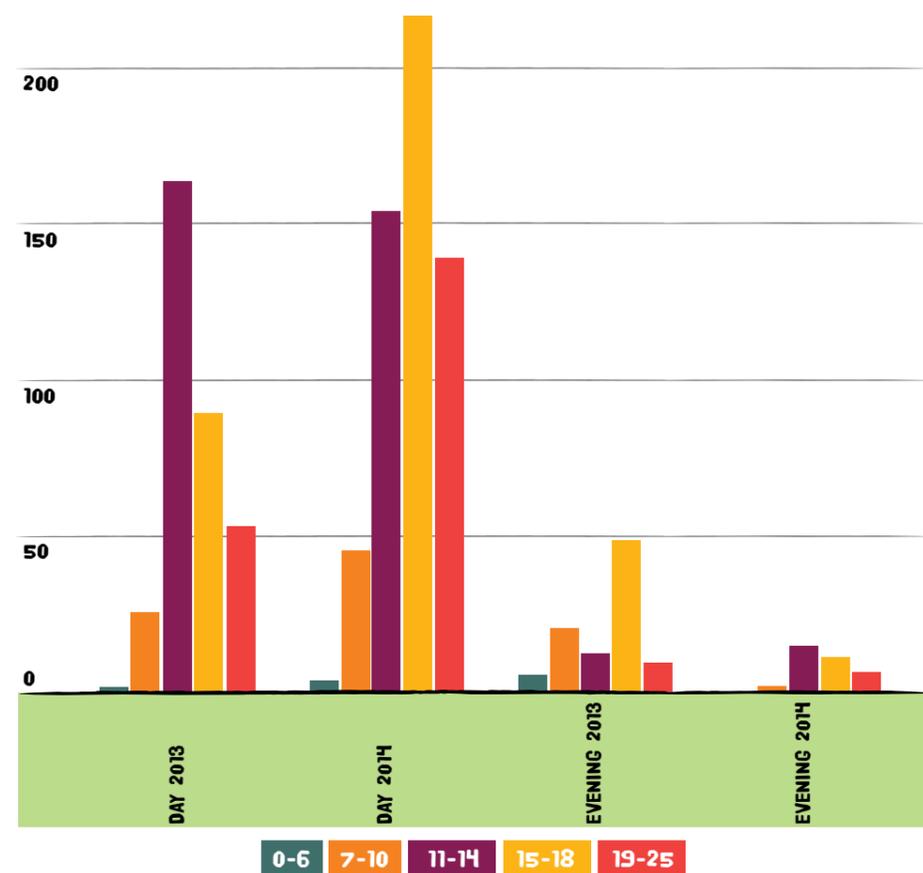
### Fixed business

During the day and similar to last year, fixed business was the highest represented category, comprising almost half the individuals (658) counted. Across the age categories of children and youth in fixed businesses, the most prominent was children aged 15-18 where it was found that 544 (404 boys and 160 girls) children and youth were working in fixed businesses.

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 a 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 observed that some of the children in fixed businesses are used as cheap labour, sometimes being forced into the situation by relatives.

In the night, 189 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 formed the majority in the night.

### FIXED BUSINESS DAY & NIGHT



**568 CHILDREN AND YOUTH (371 BOYS AND 197 GIRLS) WERE IN MOVABLE BUSINESSES - 48 OF THESE WERE BELOW THE AGE OF TEN**

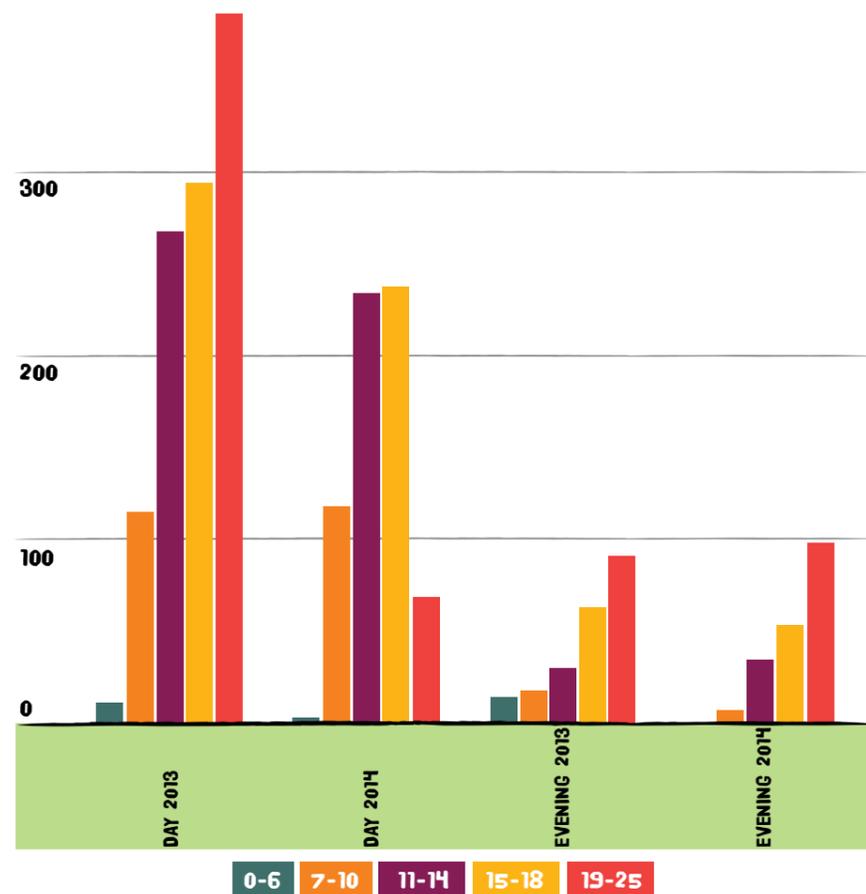
### Moveable business

Five hundred and sixty eight (371 boys and 197 girls) children and youth were in moveable businesses, with 48 of these being below the age of ten and 164 in the age group of 11-14. Compared to last year, there was an increase of over 40% in the number of children and youth engaging in moveable businesses. Teams observed that these children and youth are often moving around alone selling different items such as ice cream, nuts, plastic bags and coffee.

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, only thirty-two children and youth were recorded in this category with the majority of them being 11 and older. In contrast to fixed businesses, moveable businesses account for less than quarter of activity on the street.

### MOVEABLE BUSINESS DAY & NIGHT



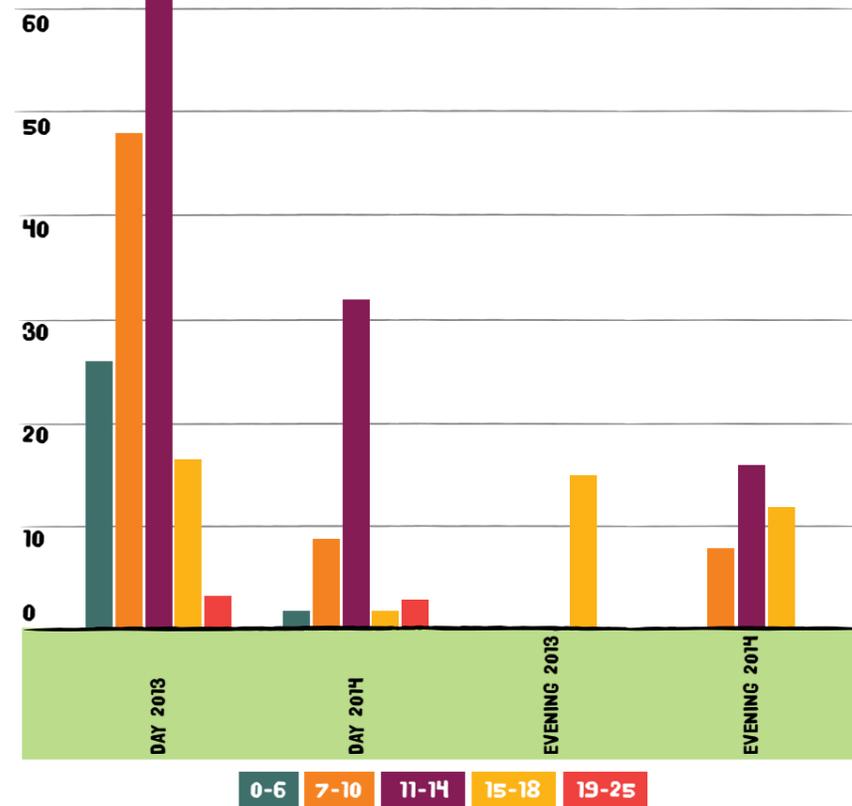
### Begging

In the daytime, 48 children were counted as begging on the streets with 43 boys and five girls recorded. Across the age categories of children and youth begging on the streets, boys aged 11-14 were the most common, whilst it was less common for older youth to beg. Similarly to last year, street workers spotted most of these children begging in the town centre with 29 children recorded in this zone.

Interestingly, the number of children and youth counted begging on the streets in the day was significantly decreased - by 70% - compared to last year. This could be explained by a number of reasons including increased announcements in town by local authorities that begging in public is not allowed. Also, we can hypothesise that children have moved to other kinds of solutions such as business activities, since begging is becoming riskier and might therefore be less lucrative than it was last year.

During the night count there were 36 children begging, all of them boys and under the age of 18. In contrast to the day count, the night count has seen an increase in begging; last year the number recorded was only 15 whereas this year the number has spiked to 36. It may be that children find it easier to beg at night due to less monitoring by local authorities, or perhaps the authorities are more tolerant at night given the fact fewer members of the public are out on the street.

### CHILDREN AND YOUTH BEGGING ON THE STREETS



**Jobless**

This category represents children and youth who are idle when counted. Two hundred and seventy-four children and youth (262 boys and 12 girls) were jobless with only a few of them girls. The highest numbers were found around off Nyerere Road and Soko Kuu areas with boys aged 11-14 representing over a third of those counted.

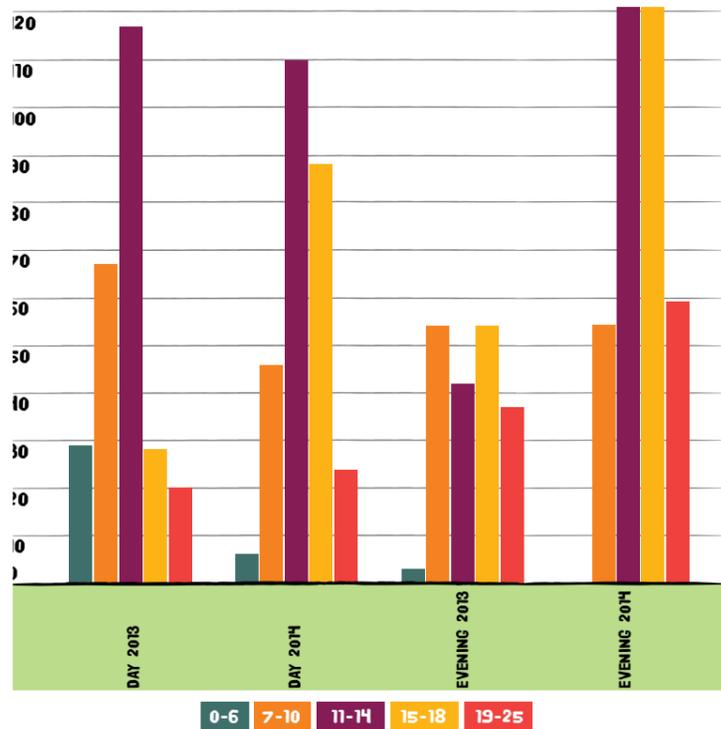
Since last year's survey, the number of children and youth found jobless has remained the same. Differences are seen in gender where there has been a significant decrease in the number of girls found jobless on the street. On the other hand, boys aged 15-18 saw a 70% increase, with most of them being observed in the off Nyerere Road zone.

During the night count, 354 youth and children were counted as jobless. Unlike last year, where the vast majority of individuals counted were boys, this year's count showed a significant increase in the number of jobless girls. One hundred and twenty-four girls were recorded this year showing an enormous increase from the six that were counted last year. Worryingly, most of these girls were ages 7-18 with 18 of these aged 7-10.

Boys found jobless in the night accounted for 65% of the total number of children and youth counted. The vast majority of them were aged 11-18. In comparison to last year there was an increase of 10% in the total number of boys who were counted as jobless.

From our working experience, we know that children seen at this late hour will often be the full-time children who will go to sleep on the streets. 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.

**CHILDREN AND YOUTH JOBLESS ON THE STREETS**

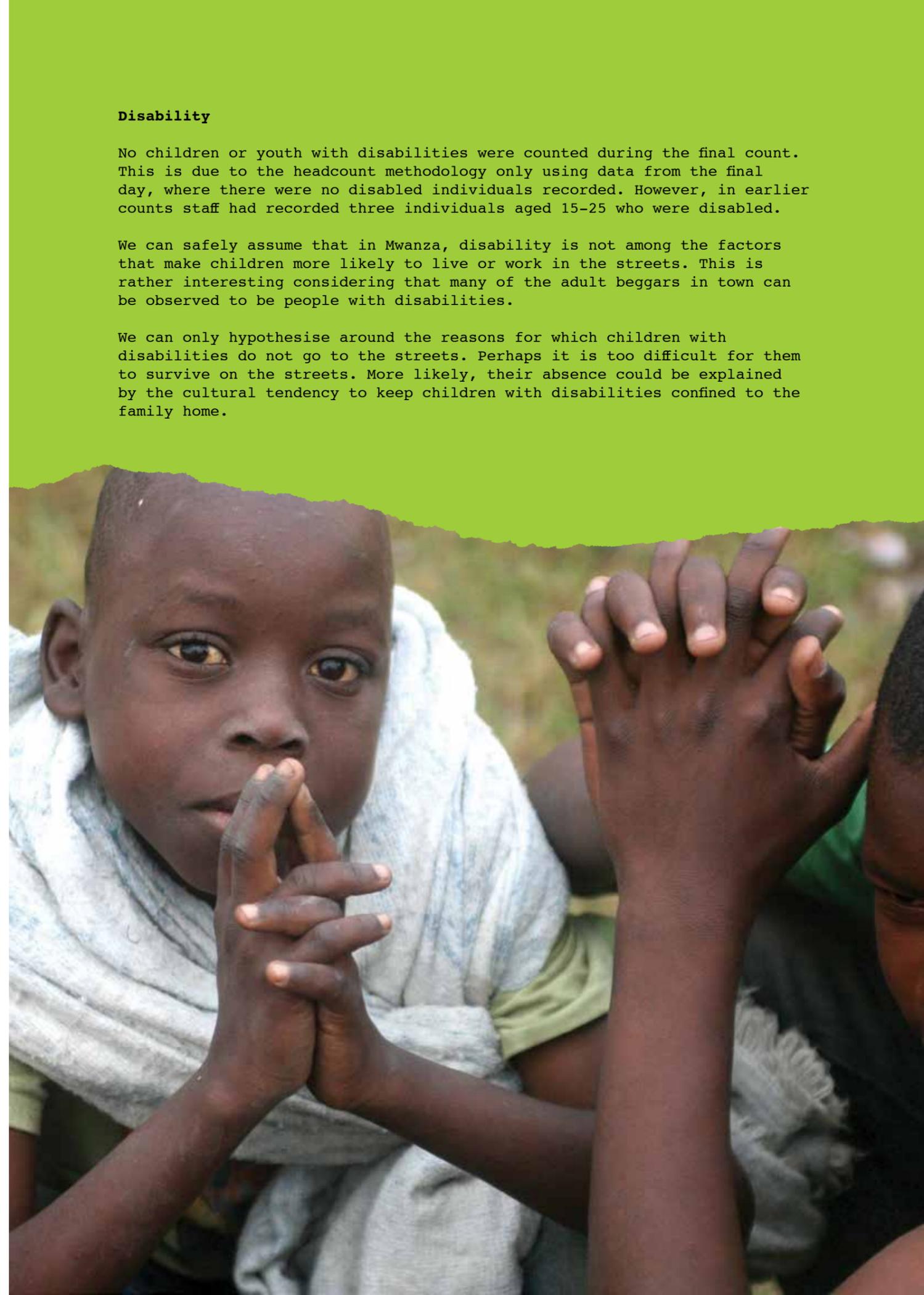


**Disability**

No children or youth with disabilities were counted during the final count. This is due to the headcount methodology only using data from the final day, where there were no disabled individuals recorded. However, in earlier counts staff had recorded three individuals aged 15-25 who were disabled.

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 on 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 ANALYSES

This final part of this report will try to explain some of the findings highlighted above. The analysis will be informed by the experiences and expertise of street workers who have worked in the field for a number of years. Their invaluable knowledge on the phenomenon of street connected children and youth forms an essential component of understanding the background of these individuals. Here we will try to explain the reasons for some of the changes that have occurred and also provide reasoning as to why children may migrate to the streets.



### Children who are full-time on the streets

Since last year, we have been able to capture the number children and youth sleeping on the streets. This has enabled us to provide a more robust and comprehensive report. We also understand that headcounts do not capture all children and youth and that the number presented in this report should be regarded as a minimum.

Undoubtedly, we know that 380 children and youth were sleeping unprotected on the day of the headcount. This number is similar to last year where 390 children and youth were recorded, however, upon closer inspection of categories we are able to see that significant changes have occurred.

One of the most significant decreases noted this year was the number of boys aged 0-10 sleeping on the streets. Street workers have hypothesised that this decrease can be attributed to the work of the organisations operating in Mwanza who meet the needs of younger street connected children. From our experience, targeting younger children and new arrivals can increase the chance of children being successfully reunified with their family. We know that once a child has spent a couple of months on the street they are more likely to develop behaviours that make them increasingly difficult to work with. These behaviours are often developed as a coping strategy to survive on the streets and with the traumas they have experienced.

As a response, Railway Children Africa and its partners have worked intensively to try and reach newcomers to the streets within two days. This is carried out through street workers maintaining relationships with key stakeholders who inform them of younger children arriving to the street.

Additionally, youths entered into our programmes are encouraged to refer any young children to one of our street workers. It is possible that these strategies as well as other NGOs operating in the areas have contributed to this decline in boys aged 0-10.

Workers have also hypothesised that Tanzanian society, in general, has more awareness of children going missing due to a number of factors such as the introduction of the Law of the Child Act and increased reporting of missing children by media outlets. As a result, communities may be more likely to provide protection to young children and also more likely to refer children to social welfare. At this stage this is purely conjecture and we have no evidence to back up this hypothesis but it is considered an area that warrants more research and potentially greater collaboration between NGOs and communities in the protection of children on the streets.

A notable increase this year was the number of girls found sleeping on the streets. Whilst we acknowledge that this increase may be due to improved mapping by our team, we also note that girls were generally more visible on the streets. As noted from the Ghetto count, the number of girls who are fully street connected is far higher than the number recorded in this report. However, these findings reveal that some girls do still sleep visibly outside in town areas and unprotected dwellings. Street workers have hypothesised that access to rooms can sometimes be difficult and that costs involved in renting rooms is far higher than sleeping on the streets, where paying a watchguard to sleep near the building they are guarding is far cheaper.

In order to continue to prevent younger children sleeping on the streets, and to target the increasing population of sleeping girls, Railway Children Africa and its partners have programmes that respond to their diverse needs. Street based outreach work is a central component of these programmes which focus on creating a safe relationship between individual children and 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.

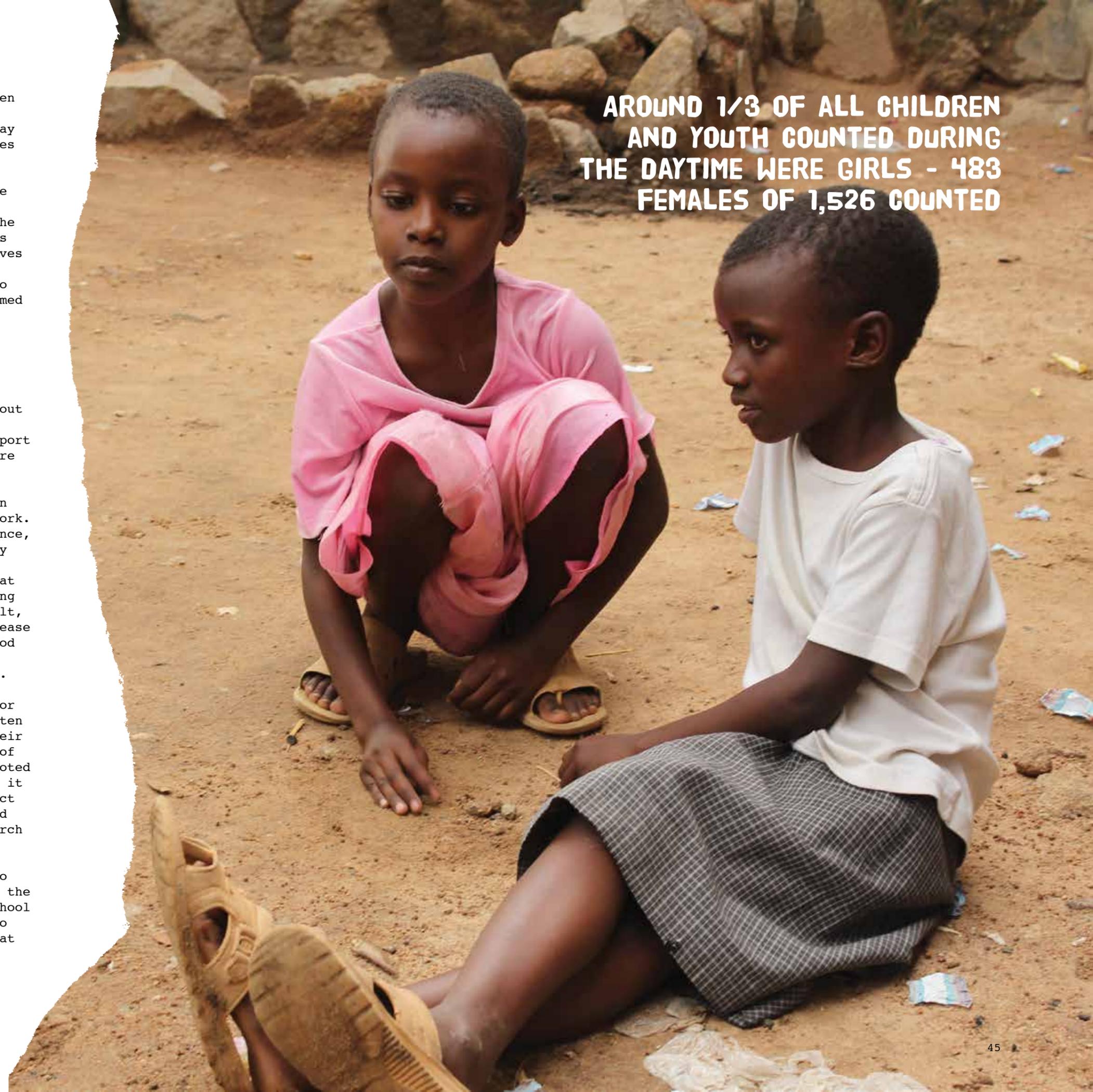
### Girls

During the last few years we have placed particular emphasis on trying to learn more about female children and youth who are often less visible on the streets. The findings in this report highlight the increasing number of girls who are visible on the streets during the nights.

It is assumed that many of these girls found on the streets in the night are engaging in sex work. Project workers have noted, from their experience, that a number of older sex workers are actively befriending younger girls and encouraging them to engage in this practice. They have noted that as sex workers get older their income generating opportunities generally decrease and as a result, these women recruit younger girls to help increase their income. Older women can offer clothes, food and accommodation to young girls on the street who in turn are expected to engage in sex work. As most of these girls are detached from their families, we assume that it is very difficult for these girls to leave a madame and that they often have to engage in sexual encounters without their consent, which in turn increases their chance of contracting STIs including HIV. It should be noted that we have very limited evidence of this and it can be also assumed that older women are in fact offering protection to go girls. In order to find the true meaning of the practice further research should be conducted.

During the day numbers of girls were similar to last year with the age category of 11-14 being the most common. It is assumed that this out of school population is at very high risk of migrating to the streets permanently. We can hypothesise that these girls are forced by their circumstances to offer cheap labour or help out their family businesses.

**AROUND 1/3 OF ALL CHILDREN  
AND YOUTH COUNTED DURING  
THE DAYTIME WERE GIRLS - 483  
FEMALES OF 1,526 COUNTED**



## Boys

Boys accounted for some of the most marked changes this year with significant declines in younger children and increases in older youths. These changes contributed to the shifting in age categories where boys aged 15-18 overtook boys aged 11-14. For the last two years, 11-14 remained the most populous category across the whole headcount, however, a decrease in their numbers this year has meant that 15-18 is now the most populous category. The majority of these 15-18 year olds were recorded as engaging in moveable and fixed businesses.

We can hypothesise why these particular boys are likely to migrate to the streets. First, the shift in age category could be explained by the completion age of primary education, which is currently 15. Upon completion of primary school children will be expected to transition to secondary school, however, for most vulnerable boys their parents are unlikely to be able to afford secondary school fees and as a result employment is the only option. Street workers have suggested that a large number of these vulnerable boys have migrated with the aim of finding employment. Once employed these individuals will support themselves as well as their families.

Another hypothesis is that boys aged 11-18 are at 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 there are problems in the family such as violence or poor relationships boys are more likely to uproot and migrate to the city. Also, during adolescence boys are likely to start prioritising relationships and as a result peers may be more influential which may contribute to their migration to the streets.

Another significant change noted is the decrease of the number of boys aged 0-10 counted during the day. Overall numbers declined by just under 30%, with a vast reduction of 88% in children aged 0-6. These reductions are similar to those reported in the number of young children sleeping on the street. As hypothesised earlier, we assume that increased awareness of the existence of societies and organisations trying to reach this population within two days of reaching the streets have contributed to the decline of young street connected children.

## Working Children

The majority of children and youth who were recorded during the day were working children. These individuals worked in markets, streets and bus stands and it is presumed that their employers were either family members or they were working on their own accord. Working children are likely to be from households where economical problems are rife and this results in children being sent to town to sell goods or engage in other activities.

From our experience, children come from households where adults are unable or unwilling to support them due to poor relationships, old age and other family problems. Due to these circumstances a vast amount of children miss out on schooling and the cycle of poverty continues. Additionally, as a number of these children are stepchildren they are often given less attention compared to other children in the same household.

To address this phenomenon it is essential that preventative outreach programmes are in place to help the family meet its economical and emotional needs. We have seen that incorporating a family therapeutic approach can help build and maintain

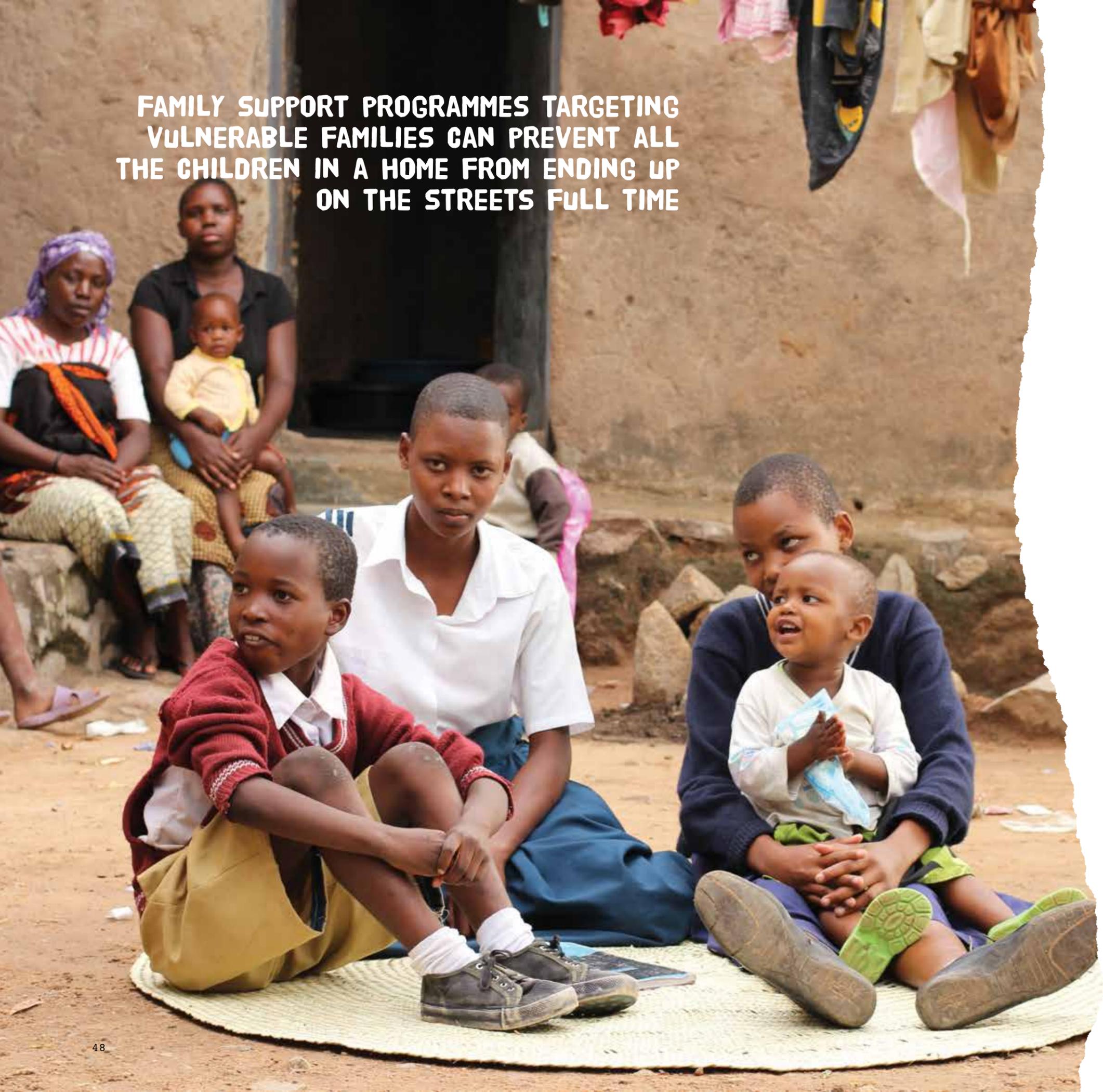


**THE MAJORITY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH RECORDED DURING THE DAY WERE WORKING CHILDREN**

lasting relationships. By providing this type of outreach work we are able to emphasise the importance of education to the family and also assist transferring responsibility from child to the caregiver.

Whilst the majority of working children are regarded to be partially connected to the streets, a number of children are expected to be full-time, especially with the decline in begging being reported this year. The number of children begging on the streets has declined by over 65% and it is believed that these individuals have taken up other businesses. Begging on the street has become less acceptable compared to last year and a number of round ups by both social welfare and the police have contributed to children engaging in other activities.

Street workers have noticed that children are engaging in income generating activities such as collecting bottles, selling plastic bags, assisting people with their shopping and selling scrap metal. This last year selling scrap metal has become one of the most popular ways of generating an income. The demand for scrap metal is far higher than other activities and therefore more lucrative for street children. However, workers have noticed that some of the metals being sold are not from dumpsites and that street connected individuals will steal valuable metals from houses as well.



**FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMMES TARGETING VULNERABLE FAMILIES CAN PREVENT ALL THE CHILDREN IN A HOME FROM ENDING UP ON THE STREETS FULL TIME**

**Young children who live on the streets full-time**

Even though there is a significant reduction in this age group, this survey still reveals a significant number of children below 10 years of age living full-time on the streets. We need to continue giving these children high priority within our programmes and protection in residential centres while we work towards reunifying them with their families. Early intervention through regular street outreach to the various locations covered in the survey is necessary if we are to target and engage with these children effectively. Programmes that exist for their 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**

In two consecutive annual surveys we have counted approximately 1500 children on the streets in the day time, most of whom are working and are assumed to reside at home. Families where at least one child is out of school and/or working on the streets is most often a vulnerable family where things have started to go wrong, and where the other children are also at risk. Family support programmes targeting these vulnerable families can prevent all the children in a home from ending up on the streets full time.

That is why Railway Children Africa and its partners currently provide preventative outreach work in the most vulnerable wards of Mwanza. Such programmes offer comprehensive support when needed and enable families to improve their relationships, economy and connections to other people or institutions in the community. The headcount findings broken down geographically can help programmes in targeting areas where significant numbers of vulnerable children work and live.

**Boys aged 11-14 and 15-18:  
Implications for family work**

Two consecutive headcount surveys show that boys entering adolescence seem to be the most likely group to enter the streets full-time. This year the 15-18 year old boys were equally numerous. We believe that factors for many of these adolescent boys, especially if they are the oldest son, may be that they are pushed or compelled to become breadwinners, they lack the opportunity to go to secondary school and they are exposed to peer pressure in the community or the streets.

When working with families where a child or children fit this profile, interventions should be planned to take these reasons into account. Family relationships are crucial and efforts to strengthen the quality of these should always be the main theme of any programme for street connected 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.

While we recognise that it is important for youth and children to contribute to their family income, this should not be at the cost of a child's education or development. We believe caregivers should carefully consider responsibilities bestowed on a child and how these responsibilities may in turn impact their future livelihoods.

Lastly, family workers should take into account the increasing importance of peer groups for children 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**

Two different surveys conducted in 2014 - headcount and 'Ghetto Count' combined - prove that the larger population of street involved female children and youth reside in rented rooms (ghettos), camps and brothel-like guesthouses, rather than in the streets. As such, girls are a significant yet hidden group and they need to be targeted where they reside and spend time, or in locations common for sex work. These female children on the streets are particularly vulnerable to different forms of abuse and exploitation, and run a high risk of becoming pregnant or exposed to STIs and HIV/Aids. The two surveys recorded girls living with their babies or young children in the streets, guesthouses, ghettos or camps. These females require a two-fold approach where the mother and baby are worked with together. Emphasis needs to be placed on necessary medical care, nutrition, protection and emotional care for the babies while at the same time working with the mother. The approach much also include helping young girls through their pregnancy and ensuring a safe delivery. Female children or youth, with or without their own child, need to be treated through individual emotional support, sexual and reproductive health support and helped to explore ways to get out of a life in prostitution.

**Youth aged 18-25, male and female**

We know from experience that many of the 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 offering friendship, psychosocial support and encouragement for behavioural change throughout a longer period of time. Perseverance by project staff and organisations is absolutely crucial. While youth remain on the streets, the understanding of the impact of peer pressure is key and this needs to be integrated into interventions through engaging with

other youth and stakeholders who they come into contact with on a daily basis. Interventions need to place significant focus on helping youth chose a trade supporting them to earn an income and secure housing, but only once they have managed to achieve a level of healthy behaviours and make well-informed choices about available and realistic options. Lastly, we know from consultations with children that older youth, commonly male, are one of the key abusers of younger children in the streets. Therefore, engagement with youth needs to encourage protection of their younger peers so as to ensure that the risks facing children who enter the streets are decreased.



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**children**  

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**Fighting for street children**