

HAVE YOU SEEN HER? IN SEARCH OF THE STREET GIRL CHILD IN KADOMA AND HER SECURITY CONCERNS.



SEARCWL-UZ

RESEARCH PROPECT PAPER

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES-PRACTICAL PAPER

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

This research was part of a wider study on the safety of females in cities. Kadoma City was chosen by the Women's Law Centre as a study site. My group, The Strategists, was looking at the security concerns of six categories of women in different circumstances; women with disability, elderly women, girl street children living on the streets, the security concerns with regard to inadequate housing and public transport, and service provision by the Municipal Council and policing.

My topic was on the security concerns of the girl street child.

1.2 Back ground

In 2003, UNICEF put the estimate of the number of street children worldwide at 100 million however the exact number is not known. Mufune, P. (2000) says that the street youth phenomenon is global and that the concept of street child is now commonly used in Africa. For the southern Africa region the number began to escalate in the 1970s. For Zimbabwe this seems to have come to prominence with the economic meltdown of the 1990s and the HIV and AIDs pandemic that ravaged the country. The majority of street children are boys but girls have been coming in. In 1991, a survey in Zimbabwe estimated girls were 5% of the total number of street children.

A situational analysis¹ carried out in 2001 of orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) and adolescents included a study of 260 street children 40 of whom were girls. At that time there were 12 street children in Kadoma. The report did not indicate how many of the 12 were girls.

A street child has been defined² as the girl or boy for whom the street is the habitual abode or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults. Another definition of street children is by UNICEF; children who work and /or sleep on the streets. These are further categorized as children *on* the street and children *of* the street. Street children range in age from five years to 20 years (Mufune, 2003). Children of the streets are those who are homeless, live and sleep on the streets, are totally on their own or live with other street children or street adults. Those on the street have homes to which they return to every so often and for some every night. They earn a living on the streets through begging and vending.

My target was the girl street child whose habitual abode and source of livelihood is the streets of Kadoma. This whole research was designed around the assumption was that there were such girl

¹ Funded by UNICEF in 2001

² Inter NGO 1985

street children in Kadoma. That formed the basis for the research problem and the research questions as indicated here below. I was to find out that that was not the case.

1.3 The Research Problem

Having started with the assumption that there were street girl children in Kadoma, the research problem was to identify and analyse the security challenges facing them, with the key objective of ascertaining their security situation, whether they were at risk or whether they themselves posed a security risk to others. To enable us do this we made certain assumptions which translated into our research questions:

1.4 Initial assumptions

1.4.1 Some girl children find the home environment problematic as a result of which they run away to the streets where they are exposed to violence

1.4.2 The home environment may be over protective towards some girls as a result of which they move out of their homes

1.4.3 The home environment may be abusive towards some girls as a result of which they move out of their homes

1.4.4 Some girl children living on the streets may be exposed to violence

1.4.5 Some girl children living on the streets may be involved in under age sex

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 Do some girl children find the home environment problematic such that they go onto the streets where they are exposed to violence?

1.5.2 Is the home environment overprotective towards some girls leading them onto the streets?

1.5.3 Is the home environment abusive towards some girls leading them onto the streets?

1.5.4 Are some girl children living on the streets exposed to violence?

1.5.5 Are some girl children living on the streets involved in underage sex work?

1.6 Area of research

The research was to be limited to girl street children living on the streets of Kadoma and it's the high density suburbs namely Rimuka, Ngezi and Waverly.

CHAPTER TWO: Methodology and methods

2.0 Introduction

I left for Kadoma with a serious predicament. On the last day of preparations for the research, one of my lecturers, Dr. Amy Tsanga said that while on the pre view visit of the research site she had not seen any street children. My immediate reaction to my supervisor was to change the research topic. But no, I would have to go the ground and carry out my research.

A girl street child would be any girl below the age of 18 for whom the street was home, and in the alternative, for whom the street provided her livelihood by whatever means³. This could be by begging by day, hawking items, and practically having some kind of shelter or sleeping place on the street.

I had seen street children; girls accompanying blind beggars in Harare. The literature⁴ I had read had indicated that in 2004 there were 12 street children in Kadoma. The indicators were that the numbers could only increase as the effects of the HIV pandemic and the deteriorating economy continued to bite with increasing poverty levels, and breaking of the traditional family set up.

Still, there were no girls on the streets who answered to the definition of the street child.

2.1 Looking for the girls: scouting the area.

The starting point was to address the first three research questions: whether the trigger factors we had assumed force some girls to run away from home to the street exist. We had problematized the home environment to be either abusive or overprotective. Not having found any girls living on the streets I got the information from the others.

Number of people interviewed

Girls living on	girls on the street	Boys on the	parents	police	courts	Orphanages	Institutes	Kadoma county council	Relevant NGOs**	Social welfare	Faith based	Others***
0	3	3	1	2	2	1	10	2	8	1	4	7

The table shows the number of interviewees and where they were located.

It is clear that no girl living on the street was interviewed.

*Kadoma Remand ant Training Institute eight girl inmates and two of their minders

³ Inter NGO 1985

⁴ A Situational Analysis of Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children and Adolescents In Zimbabwe Background Papers, August 2001 pp 89-104

****Tsungirirai**

*****Members of the class who were conducting related research i.e. prostitution as a source of livelihood, domestic workers, overcrowding in homes, public transport**

2.2 The case of Tendai*⁵

The Acting District Social Welfare Officer Kadoma began by saying that

“The issue of girls living on the street is not a common problem”

In February this year he conducted a round up on the streets and found five children, four boys and one girl aged eight years old.

Tendai’s case presented a unique opportunity. She was found on the streets begging .She was an orphan, born of an unmarried mother. Whoever her father was, he was not involved in her life. She was dependant on an elderly, visually impaired, single guardian, her grandmother who was also in need of care, to fend for her, and ensure that she attended school. She had dropped out of school. They were living in poverty in a one roomed house in Rimuka. The probation officer had to recommend foster care. Her story demonstrated a problematic home environment and gave an insight as to some of the factors that trigger some girls to run away from home to the streets.

2.3 Following the leads

It emerged that the category of street children was that of children on the streets, who have a home but were forced by circumstances at home earn their livelihood through begging and vending.

”We do not have girl street children living on the streets (but)... girls and boys who sell things in the street ...because they are running away from harsh conditions at home caused by relatives, step parents.”⁶

As I searched for girls living on the streets I did find some girls and boys vending soft drinks biscuits and bananas to earn a living. In this case poverty was the trigger.

“There are girls who have babies in Ngezi and Rimuka who come to sell their wares in town”⁷

Abandonment by parents was another category that emerged. A parent simply walked away and left the child either on her own or in the care of elderly relatives.

“The father of Tinashe fled to S, Africa, his mother is deceased, and his grandmother is visually impaired. He walked from Gokwe to Rimuka.”⁸

⁵ Not her real name. The District Social Welfare officer did not give her name

⁶ Reverend Gwena of the Anglican Church Kadoma

⁷ Beverly Fagosi resident Rimuka

⁸ Beverly Fagosi aunt to Tinashe

For some of the girls the home environment was so harsh that they did not even have a place to sleep at night. They were forced into prostitution and to hunt for men to marry them out of their problematic homes

“...overcrowding in Rimuka has gone to an extent where some residents sleep outside the house due to lack of space... some girls have been tempted to engage themselves in prostitution and to hunt for marriage partners from local beer halls as means to avoid the overcrowded homes...the girls are common patrons in the local beer halls”.⁹

With all this evidence there were still no girl street children.

I sought to find out why.

“There is National Plan of Action for OVC. It has been in force since 2004. We have an organisation by the name Tsungirirai in Rimuka. It runs an OVC programme in all 17 wards of Kadoma Urban. It has trained both adult and child led Child Protection Committees. These Committees identify the OVC; their details are entered in the OVC Village register. It is kept by the Village secretary. The Children’s needs are identified and then a follow up is made where they are linked to various organisations e.g. Catholic Relief services, Jekesa Pfungwa VulingQondo, Goal Zimbabwe, for various forms of assistance. There is also another community based effort run by Mrs. Magama... The data captured in the Village Registers is for the communities to monitor the situation of the children and accordingly guide interventions designed to address their plight”¹⁰

That sent me looking for this Tsungirirai and the Child Protection Committees. Tsungirirai is a non-governmental organisation based at Rimuka which works hand in hand with the District Welfare Office to assist HIV and Aids orphans, child victims of abuse and children with disability. Upon the launch of the CPCs

“The volunteers went door to door with the registers in their wards and registered all the OVCs.”¹¹

From the Focus Group Discussion with some of the officials of the CPCs from some of the wards in Rimuka I learnt that

“The first project of CPCs was to take back all the school dropouts to school... The first thing we did was to round up all the children, with the help of Department of Social Welfare and to take them back to school. We liaised with Head teachers to ensure the children were retained in school. This was important because of stigma *some of the children had been on the street*, others had had babies, and others were HIV positive. There was need therefore to have the head teachers on board so that they could understand the children” (emphasis added)

⁹ Bessie Tom, resident Rimuka

¹⁰ the Acting District Social Welfare Officer

¹¹ Nancy Tsungirirai

It was getting clear as to why could not find any children on the streets. The interventions by Tsungirirai and Social welfare were keeping children off the streets.

The Ag. District Social Welfare Officer said that some former street girls could be found at the Kadoma Remand Home and Training Institute. I did not find a single girl who had come from Kadoma.

2.4 Painting the night green!¹²

There were hints that some girls were ‘night street children’. That they only came out at night for prostitution and to look for husbands. This was confirmed by the police though they did not provide any statistics. An officer from Rimuka Police Station said

“We do carry out raids. The youngest (girl) we caught was 15 years but it is difficult to tell the ages because they do not carry identity cards and they even lie about their real names. They pay their fines at the police station and are released. I have never referred any to the Victim Friendly Unit (VFU)”

An officer from the VFU said

“We do conduct raids in the streets for women who are soliciting for immoral purposes. The average age of those we catch is 16 and above.”

These assertions coming from officialdom led me to interview two classmates whose researches related to commercial sex workers. They told me they had not come across any underage ones.

I needed to find out this for myself so I went out at night accompanied by a male group member, a local escort and my interpreter who could pass for an underage girl at night. I realized that my age and language problem would be a barrier in accessing the girls if we found them. In the circumstances, we decided that my interpreter would do the mingling with the girls and I could then have an interview with any that would agree. She dressed the part and we went to the night spots in Rimuka.

¹² My research “kit” provided by SEARCWL was a print green bag, hat and piece of clothe!



Photo 1 my interpreter and I on the search for the night street girls. Notice her attire.

I walked the main street in Rimuka. I entered bars I would never enter in my ordinary life. They were noisy with blaring loud music, crowded, poorly lit smoke filled places. There was hardly any room to sit. We had to squeeze in at the entrance which was narrow (I wondered what would happen in the event of a fire!) and equally crowded. Twice I had to bear the indignity of having some man grab my “butt”. I took a strategic place where I could just stand and observe. There were no underage girls in sight except perhaps, for the one who was spirited away.

In one of the bars in Rimuka, my contact made contact with a “woman” who appeared to be under age. She agreed to an interview.

We stood outside under a light talking. I observed that her age could have been anywhere between 17 and 22 years old. We had got only past the introductions when some two men, one armed with a big torch, came and simply led her away into the darkness. Though she came back about 10 minutes later and we were still standing where she had left us she totally ignored us and went back into the bar. My interpreter later followed up but did not find her. She also made contact with some adult commercial sex workers who referred us to a specific bar in Kadoma town where they said we would find the underage girls.

In this bar there were more women some looking young. My interpreter easily interacted with them. We did not find any we could say with any certainty was below the age of 18.

To triangulate the information from the police I went to the court. There were no statistics of any girls brought in either for loitering, or having committed any offences while in the streets, or as victims of offenses while on the streets .The Area Public Prosecutor confirmed this with some statistics of women rounded up for purposes of prosecution- Kadoma Magistrates court- up to and including 26th April 2013.

The table shows that no underage girl has been prosecuted for loitering from 2011 to date yet the police said they arrest them in routine raids.

Data from the Area public prosecutor

Year	Age of women rounded up for prosecution		
	Below 18	18-22	23-30
2011	NIL	10	8
2012	NIL	NIL	NIL
2013	NIL	1	NIL

2.5 Where are the Girls?

The alleged night street girls were also missing. My search was in vain. What was emerging is that the girls were out there somewhere. Why could I not find them? Some explanations were given for this phenomenon.

The Community Services Officer in Rimuka said that the girls actually came to the streets but

“The girl child cannot sleep outside for two days. A man will pick her and find options for her. There is some form of child smuggling for the labour market, as house maids where they are also abused”

I made use of another classmate who was conducting research on domestic workers. She reported not coming across any underage ones.

The police further explained that

“When a girl who is under age goes missing she will have eloped to her boyfriend or she could have been taken by a gold panner and rented for a house in what we call “*kuchayamapoto*”.¹³ These girls are usually 14, 15, and 16.”¹⁴

There were suspicions of sexual exploitation

“Sometime last year there was an informant that there was an elderly woman staying with young girls in the single quarters and using them for prostitution. We did not investigate because the informant disappeared. In any case we did not have any reports of missing children.”¹⁵

While in the field we learnt that there was a place referred to as “Pink House” in Rimuka where young girls were kept for purposes of prostitution. We were not able to follow up that link to its logical conclusion as the two informants would not give more information only insisting that the place was well known.

Applying the grounded theory approach assisted me to conduct this search for the girl street child living on the streets. At the end new question was forming itself; could there be trafficking of girls for labour and sexual exploitation out of Rimuka?

I started with my Research Questions and had to redesign my research to accommodate the issue why

Problematic home environment + trigger factors ≠ girl children on the streets?

2.6 Actors and Structures

Considering that the area of study is the security of females in certain circumstances the criminal justice system had to come into play. This was the police, the Victim Friendly Unit, the Area Public Prosecutor, the Court, the Council and the District Social Welfare Office which doubles up as the Probation Office, together with their stakeholders who include Tsungirirai and members of the community. These act within a legal framework that determines the way they deal with the girls.

¹³Cohabitation in Shona

¹⁴ Police officer Rimuka

¹⁵ Police Officer Rimuka

The District Social Welfare office laid a basis for my search for the girls with Tendai's case¹⁶ and by conceding that the problem girl street children existed though not common. I was able to see how his office linked up with Tsungirirai to ensure that there were no street children.

It was apparent that the link between the police, VFU and the Children court was weak. Girls arrested on the street who were supposed to get to the court never did. Underage girls in *kuchayamapoto* relationships were accepted as normal and suspicions of sexual exploitation of girls were not investigated despite clear provisions of the law, hence perpetuating trigger factors that could send girls to the streets.

The Children Court is established under the Children Act no.5:06 under s.4. S. 12 provides for the children's courts intervention to bind over a person who has the custody of any girl or child or young person to exercise proper care and supervision in two broad categories; where it is satisfied the girl under the age of 18 is

“exposed to the risk of seduction or prostitution or is living a life of prostitution;” or

Where

“a child or young person is neglected or maintained in domestic circumstances detrimental to his welfare; “

These two descriptions capture all the categories of the child in need of care and specifically the trigger factors that would have forced a girl out of home.

The Area Public Prosecutor provided data on cases of violence against women and girls which established that indeed some girls experienced both physical and sexual abuse at home. But that did not push them onto the streets.

The implementation of the Children Act and the Criminal Codification Act appeared to contribute to the factors that make the home environment difficult for girls.

Despite the clear provisions of s. 12 of the Children Act no person had been brought to court to be bound over for the protection of girls who had been “married” off illegally.

The Marriage Act 5:11 condones marriage of underage girls at 16¹⁷ years. The Customary Marriages Act 5:07 does not provide any age limits for marriage. The only qualification is being an African. This appears to be the basis for marrying off girls at 12 and the reluctance by the police to take appropriate action.

¹⁶ Mentioned above

¹⁷ S. 22 of the Marriage Act

The information from the police and VFU indicated that no effort was being made to establish the ages¹⁸ of the girls who were arrested in the raids. In line with the best interests of the child principle the option they had in case of doubt was to refer the case to the children's court.

By failing to do so the girls remain out there but passing themselves off as adults.

Out of the interviews with officials of Tsungirirai, it became clear that the community was concerned for its vulnerable children. The CPCs that were active are supporting the government in its efforts implement the National Plan of Action for OVC.

2.7 Methods

In collecting data I used various methods as can be gleaned from the methodology

2.7.1 Observation

Going out at night to look for the girls in the bars was an eye opener for me. Any unaccompanied woman walking into those places was fair game. In one of them you could just see the ladies sitting or standing by themselves drink in hand. The poor lighting could easily camouflage one's age.

2.7.2 Interviews

These were conducted in different modes. For the young girls in the Kadoma Remand Home and Training Institute, the girls were brought in a group. I explained the purpose of my visit and requested them to share their experiences with me. After that I chose a secluded place where I sat on the ground with my interpreter. This enabled the girls to feel comfortable with me and to open up and share their stories. The unfortunate thing is that some of them expected me to solve some of their problems.

For one of the boys who were selling bananas I bought some from him and in the process of choosing my bunch and looking for the money in my purse, I was able to talk to him, very informal.

The same applied to the three girls who were vending on the streets. We talked as we bought drinks from them. Their interview was challenging. We were at Waverly Bus Stop and there many people and buses and combis. My interpreter for the day had a headache and was not enthusiastic about the interview. She wanted to interview and at the same time record the answers to save on time but that drew the attention of some men who demanded to know our mission. She explained but the information I got was scanty and did not place them within the description of street children. It was

¹⁸S. 82(1) of the Children Act

Whenever in any proceedings in terms of this Act, other than criminal proceedings, the age of any person is a relevant fact of which no or insufficient evidence is available, the officer presiding at those proceedings may estimate the age of that person by his appearance or from any information which is available, and the age so estimated shall, for the purposes of this Act, be deemed to be the true age of that person.

not just question and answer but a broad question asking them what their challenges were and why they were on the streets.

2.7.3 Focus group discussion

I held this with some of the members of the CPCs in Rimuka. It helped me to get an over view of what was happening in some of the wards and the activities Tsungirirai was carrying out, and how each member was trying to apply what they had been trained to do in the separate wards. Some shared their village registers with me.

2.7.4 Use of group members

Considering the period of time we had and the number of interviewees, I had to rely on group members to collect some of the data for me. I also sought information from members of other groups who were handling some aspects of my study in theirs. In some instances it was not possible to have questions put, translated, then answer. A group member who spoke Shona would pose the questions then translate the answers

2.7.5 Perusal of records and official documents

It was necessary to obtain whatever statistics were available to embellish and triangulate my findings. Most government departments did not have statistics but the Area Public Prosecutor and Tsungirirai supplied some. They were useful in providing a view of the reality and exposing the gaps in data capture.

2.7.6 Photography

I was able to capture some of the interviewees on camera for record purposes and particularly with the exhibits that I intended to rely on.

CHAPTER THREE: Does the System really work?

3.0 Introduction

My research was aimed at girls living on the streets in Kadoma and specifically their security concerns. I did not find any girls living on the streets. It would appear that this is an outcome of the effective implementation of the National Plan of Action for OVC 2004.

I was thus compelled to review my initial assumptions so that I would be able to find out whether this was really the case. This was guided by the fact that the triggers for street life are all there. Interviews revealed the possibility of “living” on the streets at night.

Little is known about street girls because the majority of street children are boys (Dube, 1999). (Mufune, 2000) says that all studies report that street youth are mostly male. He argues that part of the reason for this is because of the socialization of girls as child minders and domestic workers. (Rurevo and Bourdillon, 2003) are of the same view. (Dube, 1999) adds that their absence can be explained by the generally subordinate place of women in society which treats them as minors and seeks to control their sexuality.

In 2001 a study on street children in Zimbabwe stated that of the 260 street children who were studied only 40 were girls. Although 12 of the children were said to be from Kadoma there was no specific mention of the number of girls. A country wide study carried out in 1991 estimated that only 5% children living on the streets were girls.

3.1.2 Where it all seems to begin

S. 23(2)¹⁹ of the old Constitution allowed discrimination on the basis of age. Granted, the new Constitution takes care of that at s.56 (3)²⁰. For the girl child this resulted in laws that discriminate her negatively but hope lies in the amendment of the same in accordance with the new Constitution.

There is no definition of a child in the current Constitution in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) or African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) to which Zimbabwe is a signatory. The Children Act contains a multiplicity of definitions dividing childhood into three parts, infant, child and young person .A child is defined as any person below the age of 16 and includes an infant. An infant is a person below the age of 7, while a young person

¹⁹ (2) For the purposes of subsection (1), a law shall be regarded as making a provision that is discriminatory and a person shall be regarded as having been treated in a discriminatory manner if, as a result of that law or treatment, persons of a particular description by race, tribe, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed, sex, gender, marital status or physical disability are prejudiced—

²⁰ Which lists age as one of the prohibited grounds

is defined as any person who has attained the age of 16 but has not yet reached the age of 18 and “minor” means a person less than 18 years.

The legal frame work emanating from this Constitutional omission has not been protective to the girl child. This was noted as a concern when the review of the existing laws and policies was carried out in preparation of the National Plan of Action for OVC 2004. The review recognized the precarious position of the child in the dual system of law that is the legal system in Zimbabwe. At page 10 it states

“Legal issues pertinent to children in Zimbabwe are subject to a dual legal system, comprising customary law and legislation found in the Constitution and statutes. The existence of these two systems in the absence of a provision in the Constitution of nondiscrimination on age and sex and derogations of the non-discrimination principle on matters related to customary and family law can result in situations where one system can contradict the other or discriminate against children.”

3.1.3 Back ground to the child protection committees

At the time of the launch of the NPA for OVC, it was projected that by 2005 there would be approximately 1.1million children under the age of 15 orphaned due to AIDs in Zimbabwe.

The AIDs pandemic saw an increase in child and grandparents headed families. It also led to strained extended families as more children were left without both parents. In its analysis of the OVC problem it indicated that as at 2002 there were 12000 children living on/off the streets and 5000 were in institutions. With the projection of an increase in the number of OVC, an increase in the number of children living on/of the streets was a reasonable expectation. Street children were included in the definition of OVC.

It was further noted that though the laws and policies existed they had not been implemented for lack of resources. The law and the policies had also never envisaged child or grandparent headed families and the result was an alarming increase in child abuse. It became urgent to address the needs of the OVC, their families and communities.

For Rimuka before the CPCs the situation was terrible. This how Mazviwe Mapiriyao put it,

“Because of HIV and AIDs, many people died many parents too. Young girls were just going to the pubs to look for money, and or husbands to marry them through sex work. For example my neighbour she ran away at 13. She would go to pubs at night; she got infected with a sexually transmitted infection. She was suffering. I took her to hospital. Later she became pregnant. She does not know the father of her child. Now she is a young mother... In schools they were dropping out for lack of school fees and school boxes...”

The government did not have the capacity to deal with the accompanying problems and sought to harness the efforts of Non- Governmental, Private Volunteer, , Community Based, Faith Based

Organisations and Traditional Institutions, through partnerships and collaborative efforts known as Child Protection Committees.

At Pg.14 the NPA states,

“Government has adopted a decentralized approach to care and support for vulnerable children, with programmes coordinated by the local authorities through the Child Protection Committees at district, provincial, and national levels.”

The Acting District Social Welfare Officer in Kadoma indicated that it was neither the government nor the local authority that was running the CPCs

“We have an organisation by the name Tsungirirai in Rimuka. It runs an OVC programme in all 17 wards of Kadoma Urban. It has trained both adult and child led Child Protection Committees. These Committees identify the OVC... There is National Plan of Action for OVC. It has been in force since 2004.”

In Kadoma these CPCs were only launched in June 2010 barely two years ago and six years after the launch of the NPA for OVC. This was confirmed by members of the CPCs and Nancy the intern at Tsungirirai.

“Tsungirirai launched the CPCs in 2010. In June 2010, Development Officers invited us to three day workshop in Rimuka hall to discuss the care of OVC and those on Anti Retroviral Treatment. We launched CPCs in each of the 17 wards of Kadoma and each had seven CPCs. In the beginning there were 126 CPCs. People volunteered to run the CPCs in the community. “(Bertha Madaba CPC member)

The immediate duty of each CPC was to identify the OVC in their wards and capture data related to the causes of the vulnerability and the interventions required.

“Social Services gave us the Registers and we moved door to door taking record of each OVC in each household.” (Bertha Madaba CPC member)



Photo 2 with Bertha Madaba in her house in Ngezi



Photo 3 with Plaxedes Ndhlovu and the OVC village registers

(Though they are referred to as village registers they contain information for the entire ward)

According to the District Social Welfare Officer

“The data captured in the Village Registers is for the communities to monitor the situation of children and accordingly guide interventions designed to address their plight. Children

face different challenges e.g. working children- work for a living, domestic employment domestic violence, poverty. I do not have statistics”

This was confirmed by the members of the CPC.

“This would enable us to reach them quickly in case of anything food, clothes, medication.”(Bertha Madaba)

What is notable is that most of the OVC are girls. According to Bertha

“Most of them are girls- (In my ward) each register has 225 names, 180 are girls. The register is for children from age 0-18.”

Mazviwe Mapiriyao from Rimuka Ward 5 said

“My ward has 550 orphans, 48 child headed families...³/₄ of the orphans are HIV positive, ³/₄ of child headed families are headed by girls.”

Upon launching the CPCs, Tsungirirai embarked on dealing with the problems of the OVCs

“The volunteers went door to door with the registers in their wards and registered all the OVCs .Some had dropped out of school, others were HIV positive, and many were orphans. In 2012 we had 26,618 children in Kadoma Urban and 4, 2 01 were OVC, 524 were out of school. The first thing we did was to round up all the children, with the help of Department of Social Welfare and to take them back to school...”

Statistics of the number of children who had been rescued from the streets, how many they were, how many were girls, how many lived on/off the streets were not available. I made follow ups with emails and phone calls but the same were not availed.

3.2 Where it is in black and white

The DSW is relying on Tsungirirai and the community to implement the NPA for OVC. Though it is effective, it has been found to be problematic. This was noted in one study by (Loewenson R, et al 2008) at page 6 quoting from (Foster 2007)

“community safety nets target households in greatest need, respond rapidly to crises, are cost efficient, based on local needs and available resources, involve the specialized knowledge of community members and provide financial and psycho-social support. Their main limitations are lack of material resources and reliance on the unpaid labour of women”

The CPCs are run by volunteers in the community. Out of the surviving CPCs 38 are headed by women while only 4 are headed by men. This supports the finding that the community programs rely on the unpaid labour of women. Some of them are reeling under the same burden of caring for orphans

“My family was affected by HIV. We were born 11 children, 9 girls, 2 boys. By 2006 all my siblings had died leaving 19 orphans one of whom was 3 weeks old. Two of the children died. I remained with 17 plus my only child. My husband died in 2001.I live with these

children, 6 are still going to school. That is why it was easy for me to volunteer for Tsungirirai. I hated seeing the orphans not going to school, the girls going to town at night.”
(CPC member)

Secondly not all CPCs are active as they rely on the voluntary spirit of those who run them. Taking into consideration that the volunteers have families to fend for, including other orphans, they may not be able to devote their full attention to this “full” time job.

The use of community volunteers without complete government support, especially when the same community is hard hit by a deteriorating economy, high level of joblessness, is not reliable. It is bound to snap. The same report at pg 24 states

“This form of support may however not be sufficiently continuous or robust to cope with the needs of large numbers of vulnerable children, and the extended demands that are reported to be placing stress on households. The full extent and nature of this stress appears to be poorly documented.”

This is reflected by the falling out of some of the initial volunteers. This puts the efficacy of the systems in dealing with the issue of street children in question.

There was no available evidence in the records of any actual monitoring by any official e.g. from the Department of Social Welfare Services or the local authority. The Municipal council is not actively involved in the CPCs but sets aside 8000 USD²¹ p.a. for child protection which the council disburses as it pleases.

3.2.1 The clash of the laws

Are the laws in place supportive of the CPCs agenda in their effort to keep children off the streets? As noted earlier, the legal framework in its present form contains loopholes that make that the system not work properly.

The Marriage and the Criminal (Codification and Reform) Acts in their present forms appear to condone early marriages for girls. For example the import of s.64 (2) of the Criminal (Codification and Reform) Act is that a girl above the age of 12 and below the age of 16 can give consent to sexual intercourse. It provides

A person accused of engaging in sexual intercourse...with a young person above the age of twelve years but of or below the age of fourteen years shall be charged with rape...unless there is evidence that the young person--:

a) was capable of giving consent to the sexual intercourse and

²¹ Shylett Dzivai- Ag. Director Housing and Community Services

b) gave his or her consent thereto

This provision appears to have been interpreted to mean that it is up to the girl to show that she did not consent. This formed the basis of a heated discussion between the Area public prosecutor, me, and my other two group members during his interview.

This when read together with s .22 (1) of the Marriage Act Chapter 5:11 which states

“No boy under the age of eighteen years and no girl under the age of sixteen years shall be capable of contracting a valid marriage except with the written permission of the Minister, which he may grant in any particular case in which he considers such marriage desirable.”

The effect of this girls as young as 12 get “married” by men whose only intention is to avoid legal action and as soon as they get to a safe age they abandon them. This is because

“...though some times the men “marry” them at an early age to avoid legal consequences.”
(*Plaxedes Ndhlovu CPC member*)

Gertrude Jaji a resident of Rimuka had her experience to share

“My son works in the goldmines. This 14 year old girl came here saying that he is her husband. Her father reported to the police who told us to sort out the matter. The girl was taken away but she came back. She stays with me as my “murora”. When my son is away she plays with the other children. When he comes home they do their thing as husband and wife.”

This kind of situation exposes the girls to further vulnerability, of being young wives and young mothers and is condoned by the law enforcers and the community.

There is some evidence that the law is not being enforced in tandem with the work of the CPCs.

The Children Act Chapter 5:6 was enacted to provide inter alia for the “protection, welfare and supervision of children and juveniles”²². At s.12 it is empowered, where it is satisfied upon the complaint of any person, that

(a) a girl under the age of eighteen years is exposed to the risk of seduction or prostitution or is living a life of prostitution

to bind over the parent or guardian of that girl to exercise due care and supervision over her.

A resident of Rimuka Bessie Tom told us that

“... some girls have been tempted to engage themselves in prostitution and to hunt for marriage partners from local beer halls as means to avoid the overcrowded homes”

²² Preamble

The police routinely arrest²³ these girls from the streets in raids on women suspected to be soliciting for immoral purposes.²⁴

However they do not present the girls to court which is in violation of the procedures that are set down. According to the APP any girl below the age of 18 caught in the raids should be processed by the VFU and referred to the Children court for the appropriate action.

The officer at Rimuka said he had never referred any girl to VFU despite noticing the age. The Magistrate said no cases of young girls arrested from the streets had been brought to court. It is the duty of the court to assess the age.

This lack of sensitivity to these matters is further supported by what the police officer from Rimuka said

“Sometime last year there was an informant that there was an elderly woman staying with young girls in the single quarters and using them for prostitution. We did not investigate because the informant disappeared. In any case we did not have any reports of missing children.”

In the community it is not abnormal for a 14 year old to be in a *kuchayamapoto*²⁵ relationship with a man or married man whose wife is away. The same girl could move from one man to another depending on the circumstances. This clearly violates the provisions of s. 12 of the Children Act.

3.3 Human rights framework

Zimbabwe is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the Southern Africa Development Community Protocol on gender and development. These human rights instruments do not address the plight of children living on the streets per se. They go around it by speaking about all the children as having equal rights. This is seen in the definition of a child²⁶ as any human being below the age of 18 years. Specific issues of sex and gender are not addressed as girls and boys are generally treated the same way.

The legal framework in Zimbabwe currently treats boys and girls differently, for instance girls can get married even below the age of 18, and below 16.²⁷

²³ As was seen in Chapter two

²⁴ These could be under s. 25 of the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act Chapter 9:07 which states “2 (f) any person being or loitering in any place under such circumstances as to afford reasonable grounds for believing that he has committed or is about to commit an offence”

²⁵ cohabitation

²⁶ Art 1 of CRC and 2 of the ACRWC , Art 1 SADCP

²⁷ Marriage Act s. 22

The ACRWC diverts with special measures²⁸ in respect of female and disadvantaged children to enable them achieve their right to education. This recognises that the girl child starts off already with a disadvantage for instance of heading the family in event of death of parents, being married off early for various reasons, being discriminated in preference to the males in the family. This plus compulsory free primary education²⁹ would reduce the vulnerability of girls, but the Education Act falls short of these obligations. (Stewart 2004) says that s.4 puts the onus on the parent to ensure that a child gets education. There is no real obligation on the government to ensure low fees so that children from poor families can access education.

ACRWC provides for a minimum age of 18 years for marriage³⁰ but the SADC provides a derogation from that by allowing state parties to legislate for under age marriages- which is retrogressive for girls. It is expected that the laws in will change with the new Constitution.

The new Constitution at S.81 provides for the rights of the child which include equality before the law, and the best interests' principle. This will require to be translated into the Children Act so as to capture the provisions of Article 3 of the CRC which provides a broad description of the application of the principle.

If this was being applied, then the legislature would have amended the Marriage Act among others, the police would not treat cases of suspected girl child sexual exploitation casually.

3.4 Conclusion

The issue in this chapter was to find out whether it is the effective implementation of the National Plan of Action for OVC policy and the law that have ensured there are no street girls in Kadoma. A critical analysis shows that the policy and the laws would not be sufficient to keep girls off the streets. This means that there must be other factors that have ensured that there are no girls living on the streets. These would need further investigation which was not possible on my part in the one week I conducted this research.

²⁸ Art 11(3) (e)

²⁹ Art 11 (3)(a)

³⁰ Art 21

CHAPTER FOUR: Glimpses

4.0 Introduction

The profile of a street child as defined either as homeless or living on and off the street does not fit the Kadoma situation. There is the third category referred to as

“...the ‘children at risk...’ These are the children of the urban poor and they form the reservoir from which street children emerge “(Baybuga and Celik 2004) pg 2.

It is only recently in June 2010 that efforts were made to remove children from the streets. I have shown that the preventive and protective systems are yet to be entrenched. Children slip through the system and end up on the streets every so often.

The District Social Welfare Officer found Tendai and four boys on the streets of Kadoma in February this year. It was not clear how long the girl had been on the streets, whether she had been living on the streets or had come only that day to beg. The two boys Tinashe and Cosmas I found outside the supermarket in Kadoma town occasionally spent nights under the cars. According to Tinashe’s aunt

“Sometime if I don’t get them to come home they sleep under the cars.”

The girl vendors present another category at risk. Each was living with a guardian and each had to work as a street vendor to contribute to family income.

The Community Services Officer in Rimuka gave another category of those who arrive on the streets and are not lucky to be rescued by social services but land in the hands of internal child smugglers.

The night streets girls whom everyone spoke about but who I never got to meet form the worrying category.

There is sufficient evidence that the children in Rimuka and Ngezi constantly face the risk of becoming street children.

Kadoma is located in Mashonaland West which is the third poorest province with poverty prevalence at 72.4% and extreme poverty at 28.1%.³¹ I have demonstrated the prevalence of orphans, elderly and child headed homes.

The hence the following findings

³¹ Zimbabwe Poverty Report 2011

4.1 Potentially at Risk?

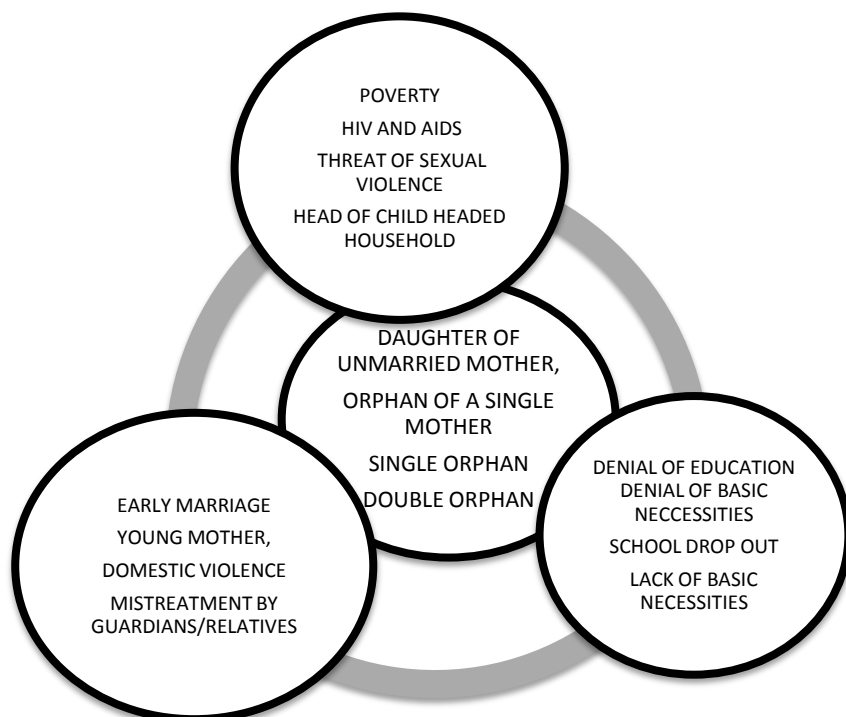
Nancy, an intern at Tsungirirai, confirmed that sometimes problematic homes led girls to run away from home.

“We found that girls do run away from home to get away from home where there may be abuse by guardians and also poverty.”

Was it because they found the streets safer than home? According to Nancy

“The street is not necessarily safer but there they feel at home because they meet girls who are like them who understand them and their problems unlike at home where they are different from others particularly where they are orphans and they are not treated well by the guardians.”

The table below demonstrates my findings. It is based on all the interviews I conducted including with the girls in the Remand Home. The potential girl street child is in the centre and her risk status is determined by her parentage. A single orphan has lost one parent, a double orphan; both. The outer circles show the additional factors that would push her into the streets if there are no interventions. The circles and their interconnections demonstrate that these do not occur in isolation but can occur in any combination in the life of one girl.



Factors which make the girl in Kadoma a potential street girl

Of the 11(three street vendors, eight Remand Home inmates) girls I interviewed 6 were of single mothers, four of those mothers had died. An outstanding finding was that being the daughter of a single mother placed the girl at a much higher risk of ending up in the streets.

4.2 On the streets: the security concerns

Although I did not find any girls on the streets, the research revealed that for those who were rescued from the streets, and for the potential street girls who may land there, there are real security risks. These include rape, disease, unwanted pregnancies, and early marriage, sexual, verbal and physical abuse, internal and cross border trafficking,

This is what Nancy from Tsungirirai said about the risks faced by the girls while on the streets

“They risk getting into prostitution, infection with diseases, rape which results in unwanted pregnancies, early marriage even at 12 years.”

Even the mentally challenged are not spared

“We also had cases of mentally challenged girls who beg on the streets who get raped and result in unwanted pregnancies.”³²

And for those vending in the streets, the risk involves both physical and verbal violence

“We get pushed and shoved by members of the public when selling in buses and here at the bus stage, some call us names, use vulgar language.”³³

“There is some form of child smuggling for the labour market, as house maids where they are also abused.”³⁴

“In the festive season girls are seen being taken away by people in motor vehicles.”³⁵

The other concern for all these girls is the risk of being trafficked to another country.

“Zimbabwe has been identified as a source, transit and destination country for women and children trafficked for the purposes of forced labour and sexual exploitation. Zimbabwean women and children are reportedly trafficked for sexual exploitation in border towns. Young women and girls are also lured to South Africa, the People’s Republic of China, Egypt, the United Kingdom, Canada and Zambia by false employment offers that result in involuntary domestic servitude or commercial sexual exploitation”³⁶

³² Plaxedes Ndhlovu CPC Rimuka

³³ Tambu, Bright and Pai

³⁴ CSO Rimuka

³⁵ Police officer VFU DHQ

³⁶ Child Trafficking in SADC Countries. The Need for a Regional Response

Zimbabwe has not ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Pornography.

“This Protocol recognises that girls are more at risk of sexual exploitation and encourages policies which get at the root causes of such exploitation. These factors include, more generally, poverty and underdevelopment, and more specifically, dysfunctional families, and adults who are sexually irresponsible. -³⁷

The NPA for OVC is not sufficient, neither are the systems in place. The incidence of the police not investigating a case of suspected sexual exploitation raises the question as to whether they would recognize a case of trafficking without a specific law in place and specific policies. That only heightens the risk of trafficking for the invisible girls of Kadoma.

4.3 The future

One of the interventions available for girls rescued from the streets, and girls at risk of becoming street children is committal to the Kadoma Remand Home and Training Institute. Although this may be helpful in the short term I found a concern with some of the girls about the future. What would happen after the institution?

Without a good education a girl cannot even begin to imagine she can have security in the sense of her right to good health, life and reputation. Finding herself in street situation that sends her to an institution can result in a lot of anxiety about the future.

Feri* 14,³⁸ was in the institution. Her prospects for education are doomed.

“.. I wrote my grade 7 exam and got 20 points. I am now in form one. However they only teach woodwork, agriculture and building. It is frustrating because I want to go to a real school, study and later go to university... In January I ran away to home because I want my mother to take me to school but she had me brought back here. As I continue to stay here I am missing on school and my friends are going on with school. Can't you help me talk to my mother? I have tried talking to the officers here but they are harsh.”

What emerged was that the institution was originally meant for boys. There were no arrangements for the girls in terms of training. Ms. Ndhlovu one of the care givers said

“...We do not have secondary education but they learn wood work, agriculture and building. They do not get any certificate for this training. They get a recommendation letter. Tailoring is coming soon.”

Funds were an issue and the institution was not in a position to enroll the girls with any other educational institution. A girl would only be released at the expiry of her committal period or such a

³⁷ Report on the Assessment of Situation of OVC-Youth in SADC pg 34

³⁸ Not her real name

time as may be recommended by the social worker who committed her. It also depended on the girls' parents or guardians' availability to collect her.

4.4 The Ones I found: IN THEIR OWN VOICES

Talking to the girls at Kadoma Training Institute – the remand home for boys and girls situated at Kadoma- revealed that the issues related to street and potential street girls are cross cutting. The District Social Welfare Officer had directed me to the institution saying that some former street girls could be found there. It is noteworthy that I did not find any girl from Kadoma. But it also means that the circumstances of the girls there could be similar to those who would have been committed from Kadoma. Hence the realities of these girls perhaps, illustrate what I would have found if I had found any girls committed from Kadoma.

14 year old Sekai*³⁹ was rescued from the streets of Harare and brought to this Institution. It was clear that the memories were still painful as she spoke haltingly at first, with tears in her eyes. But when the words came out they seemed to be in a hurry to get out. This is what she said

“My mother died when giving birth to me. I never knew my father. I was raised by other relatives and when I turned seven they handed me over to my maternal grandfather. We were staying in a one roomed house in Rusape. There is a time when we were not having a good relationship. One day I found him sleeping next to me. I was afraid he would rape me. I told my relatives but they did not believe me.”

She ran away to the streets of Harare. However little did she know that things could only get worse. The scar on her left eyelid will be a constant reminder of her ordeal.

“Some soldiers beat us up one day... They beat us really bad... (Tears falling from her eyes) [they] were accusing us of stealing their things...”

That was not all. She was to be exposed to sexual abuse.

“While on the street there was this woman who I later realized was a prostitute. She had many men friends. One day she took us to some bushy area with some men. Fortunately some police came and rescued us, arrested that woman and took us to Streets Ahead”

Sekai's story supports my assumption that the home environment can cause some girls to run away from home to the street where they are exposed to even more security risks

³⁹ Not her real name

For Mercy 13*⁴⁰ being a double orphan exposed her to early marriage which included rape. The impunity with which the farm hand acted in abducting her and forcefully making her his “wife” reveals the some of the cultural issues about marriage.

“My father died in 2003, my mother in 2004. We had a farm. I was now staying with my grandmother. After my parents died we had a farmhand. He used to tell me he wanted to marry me. I refused. One day I was going to school with my eight year old cousin. ..He had hired a car. He kidnapped me put me in the car. He raped me...”

Her relatives would not at first believe that she was not a party to the marriage exposing her to further sexual abuse.

“When my cousin reported the kidnap they did not believe her. They said that I must have wanted to get married.”

After the ordeal, Mercy was not taken back home. She was instead brought to the remand home by her uncle. It was not clear why yet she had been told that her assailant had been jailed for 25 years. And was no longer a threat to her.

The death of both her parents meant that Kate 16*⁴¹ could no longer go to school. Neither her brother nor her maternal uncle was interested in her education.

“Both my parents died mum in 2005, dad in 2005. We were six in our family. By the time my parents died only I and my younger brother were minors. We were left with my Grandmother. She too died. We were left with my maternal uncle. He was not taking care of us or paying school fees. My elder brother took my younger brother and took him to school...”

The issue of discrimination is evident in the preference for her brother. It is also possible that in the current harsh economic times pushed her brother to make the choice.

For Feri 14* it was the death of her father and the resulting dysfunctional family.

“My father passed away when I was in grade 1. My mother remarried but she is now divorced. This man moved into our house. He had been our lodger. They were always fighting, quarrelling, throwing each other’s things out of the house. This really bothered me. People telling me that my parents were fighting. I ran away from home to my maternal grandmother. I had bad friends who would even steal, do bad things. I did not steal.”

She was exposed to domestic violence as her mother and step father fought every day. Her escape was rebellion and to bad company thus exposing her to committing crime. She even tried marriage. All these options did not work and she ended up in the remand home.

⁴⁰ Not her real name

⁴¹ Not her real name

Fadzi , 14*⁴² became an outcast when her single mother died. She was forcefully taken to the streets where her mother allegedly got her from.

“My mother was not married. She died when I was in grade 6. She used to say “when I die put my child on the street because you will not be able to take care of her”. So when she died my grandfather took me to Mbare and left me there telling me that that is where my mother had got me from. He told me not to go back home. Lucky enough an officer found me. He took me back home... after he left; my grandfather took me back to the street...”

4.5 Conclusion

Kadoma did not have girl street children the week I conducted my research but the evidence is that it has a reservoir from which they may emerge. Interviewing the girl inmates in Kadoma Remand Home gave the basis for some of my findings presented in this chapter and a glimpse of the profile of a potential girl street child.

⁴² Not her real name

CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusion and recommendations

5.0 Introduction

This was a challenging research not having found my research subjects. Searching for them left me with many questions. Was there a police “swoop” just before we arrived?. My assumptions that street children are part and parcel of every urban society, especially in Kadoma with all its social economic challenges were challenged. Be that as it may this chapter looks at my conclusion and recommendations.

5.1 Conclusion

My search was not in vain.

The Child Protection Committees that are still active and Tsungirirai are working to keep children from Rimuka and Ngezi off the streets. Identifying, keeping records of, and tabs on each potential street child is quite innovative. The supporting policy and laws as they are now provide a certain degree of protection, but their implementation leaves gaps through which some girls have ended up on the streets, however briefly for example Tendai’s⁴³ case.

The Community Services Officer at Rimuka alluded to internal smuggling of the girl child for labour and sexual exploitation. There exists the possibility of cross border trafficking of girls. There are suspicions that young girls are kept for purposes of sexual exploitation in Rimuka. An informant brought this to the attention of the police. The police never followed it up because the informant disappeared. That ought to have made them. Why did he/ she disappear? What had prompted the report? We also got information about a “Pink House” where it was alleged that young girls were kept for sexual exploitation. The person later became reluctant to give more information and cut off communication. No statistics of the number of young girls arrested on the streets in police raids or rescued from the streets was available. The police treat girls who are arrested for loitering for immoral purposes in the same manner as they treat the adults and the Victim Friendly Unit seems not to be equipped to deal with these issues. The Municipal Council merely allocates USD 8000 p.a. to issues of child protection.

Zimbabwe is a transit route and a destination for children trafficked by long distance truck drivers (ILO 2008:6). The children are used as sex slaves by the same drivers. That means therefore that there is a market for under age sex.

In addition, women from Zambia are also trafficked via Zimbabwe to South Africa for sexual exploitation having been lured through false promises for jobs and marriage partners.

In another report by Southern African Campaign against the Abuse and Trafficking of Children (SANTAC), cited in the ILO report,

“...the trafficking of women and children for exploitation purposes in Zimbabwe has not been adequately researched ... police and immigration officers revealed that no reports had been made concerning any victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. The police also indicate d that, at national level, they have no statistics that might relate to trafficking”.

⁴³ See chapter two

The police in Kadoma were of the view that when a young girl goes missing she has eloped with her boy friend, or has gotten into a *kuchayamapoto* relationship with a married man, or has moved out of Kadoma. That in any event a disappearance would have to be reported by a parent. In a situation for example, where in one ward there can be 48 child headed families, 550 orphans, where 180 out of 225 OVC are girls, where until June 2010, there were children on the streets this cannot be expected to work. The police would have to have a change of attitude towards young girls found in vulnerable situations.

This is more so in the light of the ILO report that rural Zimbabwean children are trafficked into cities for agricultural labour, domestic servitude and commercial sexual exploitation. Zimbabwean women and children are reportedly trafficked for sexual exploitation in border towns. Young women and girls are also lured to South Africa, the People's Republic of China, Egypt, the United Kingdom, Canada and Zambia by false employment offers that result in involuntary domestic servitude or commercial sexual exploitation (ILO,2008:13).

The apparent contradictions in the accounts by the different departments of government are indicative of the lack of any systematic manner of dealing with the problem of orphans and other vulnerable children and child protection. This is not just a case of child welfare. It is not just a case of food on the table and going to school. It is a case that calls for the state machinery to get up and look deeper to see exactly what is happening to its vulnerable children, and in particular, the girl child. It is a case that concerns the security of the person.

5.2 Recommendations

The Child Protection Committees are carrying out a very crucial role in child protection and need to be strengthened. They should not be wholly voluntary. Membership should include the local police, social welfare and the local authority. There is need for the relevant government Ministries to galvanize funds for running them and for the monitoring and evaluation of their activities.

The police require consciousness raising on the rights of the girls child and training to be able to be sensitive not just on the criminal aspects of children but also on the requisite aspects where children may be victims of violations and are not in a position to make those reports.

Without requisite statistics, it difficult to plan. The Police, Victim Friendly Unit, the District Social Welfare office, the courts all need to be trained on how to maintain data that can be even be shared among them and with researchers as well. They can borrow a leaf from the CPCs.

There are no government places of safety and rehabilitation for girl children in Kadoma. The Remand Home was intended for boys who had either committed offences or were delinquent. Thus it does little to cater for the needs of girls.

Being committed to a place of safety should not become a violation of one's rights. The right to secondary school education should not be denied to children held in the institutions. Staying in an institution for three years then coming out with merely a letter of recommendations makes the girl more vulnerable as a young woman without prospects.

With the new Constitution now in place, all the laws that have the effect of causing discrimination against the girl child ought to be amended or repealed especially with regard to marriage and sexual offences.

There is an urgent need to carry out further research to rule out cases of sexual exploitation and internal or cross border trafficking of girls. The police in Rimuka ought to revive the case of the report on child prostitution and carry out their own investigations.

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Customary Marriage Act Chapter 5:06

Education Act Chapter 25:04

Marriage Act Chapter 5:11

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

African Charter On The Rights And Welfare of The Child

Convention On The Rights Of The Child

