

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE



**MINISTER IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE
IN CHARGE OF FAMILY PROMOTION AND GENDER**

**STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET
CHILDREN**

**KIGALI-RWANDA
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Executive Summary

This paper is a draft strategic plan for street children in Rwanda in line with the National Policy for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (OVC). It has been drafted after a consultation within various institutions involved in street children's sector.

The strategic plan for street children does not advocate a long-term institutional care approach because of its several disadvantages on children and on the community. It is based on two operational axes closely related to the rights of the child set forth in the 1989 International Convention ratified by Rwanda, and that make up its specific objectives, namely the street children's protection, reintegration into their family and/or community and prevention of other children's arrival in the streets. Basing on these specific objectives, this paper proposes appropriate strategies and actions from which it identifies performance indicators and stakeholders. This plan represents an integrated approach whose success chances increase through the concurrent implementation of its specific objectives.

This paper does not propose a plan of action. Rather, it should be taken as a comprehensive guide, a framework with which actions for street children will be aligned. Each involved institution should integrate it into its own plan of action, under the coordination of the Minister in charge of family promotion and gender.

Chapter One: General Context

Introduction

The problem of street children seems to affect most of developing countries. While there seems to be some differences here and there from a general perspective, their situation as a whole is almost the same. Those children usually come from poor classes or they are orphans for whom the street seems to be a better alternative compared to their living environment. They used to live in the poorest and disreputable slums, ferreting around in dustbins in search of some food. Their rights were also violated by their parents in a form of corporal punishment and other forms of abuse, as a result of poverty stress. On the streets, they are subject to police violence, rape and sometimes to prostitution¹, only to find some food and survive. They are also subject to several health problems ranging from malnutrition to lack of sleep, including lack of health care and exposition to natural dangers, especially cold or rain. On top of that, there are unwanted pregnancies for street girls. Their schooling is often stopped, or even, not undertaken at all².

The situation on the African Continent does not seem to be different. Reports from various countries such as Egypt³, Botswana⁴, Uganda⁵, Tanzania⁶, Burundi⁷, and Congo⁸ earmark similar situations. Immediate reasons for their life on the streets are not however economic reasons only. Several studies all over the world have revealed psychological factors, including polygamy, remarriage of the father or mother, abuse within foster families, to name but a few.

While their situation on the streets can be the same, and the push causes can greatly be compared, care services and resolution attempts should however consider, in each country, specific elements taking into account historic, political and socio-economic realities.

Rwanda Demographic and Historic Data

According to the last statistical data of 2002, Rwanda has an estimated population of eight million, of whom more than half (52%) are children. Within this population under 18 years,

¹ In Philippines for instance, an estimated 100,000 of street children are victims of prostitution (Jubilee Action (2005), Children in the street,

[http://www.jubileeaction.co.uk/reports/STREET%20CHILDREN%20IN%20THE%20PHILIPPINES.pdf#search=street%20children%20in%20the%20philippines'](http://www.jubileeaction.co.uk/reports/STREET%20CHILDREN%20IN%20THE%20PHILIPPINES.pdf#search=street%20children%20in%20the%20philippines))

² United Methodist projects in Brazil (2005), Street children in Brazil,

<http://gbgm-umc.org/missionstudies/globalhealth-yth/streetchildren.htm>

³ Mass Arrests of Street Children in Egypt, *Beatings, Sexual Abuse Common in Police Custody* (2003)

<http://www.hrw.org/press/2003/02/egypt021903.htm>

⁴ Street Children in Gaborone, Botswana : Causes and Policy Implications

⁵ Caritas Australia in Uganda (2005) http://www.caritas.org.au/ourwork/where_uganda_story.htm

⁶ Dogo Dogo Street Children Project (2005) http://www.following-the-sun.de/Tanzania_06b/index_e.html

⁷ Street children (1998), <http://www2.rnw.nl/rnw/en/features/humanrights/streetburundi.html>

⁸ Children of Promise (2005), <http://www.promise.org/congo.html>

there are 15,502 child-headed households and 28,479 woman-headed households. Among married adolescents (5016), 533 are divorced or separated and 802 girls are widows. About 80% of children have attended school, but dropout rate remains rather high and increases sharply with age.

Rwanda is a mainly agricultural country, but demographic pressure (26,338 sq. Km) makes difficult large-scale agriculture. As a result, there is a poverty situation affecting more than half of the population. The main export products are coffee and tea. The Rwandan history has been marred with many civil wars sometimes leading to massacres and a genocide in 1994, which has much more worsened the economic situation of the population and children being thereby seriously affected. The number of unaccompanied children because of being orphans or separated from their parents has greatly increased. This has led to an increase in number of children in orphanages, childcare centres and of street children. Since 1994, however, significant efforts have been made to rebuild the Rwandan society. Nevertheless, there are still a big number of vulnerable children, distinguished as follows according to 2002 census:

- Orphan children: a third of child population lost one parent, sometimes both parents.
- Children fostered in families: they are 22,525. According to most of the outreach institutions, a certain percentage of street children come from those foster families where the child is not always well treated.
- Children suffering from physical impairment: they are 15,052, and were left alone either because of death of or separation from their parents after the war. Some are even responsible for their siblings and other younger family members. Many of them work, but some live on beggary.
- Street children: who, as the case may be, work or live in the streets and their estimated number is 7,000.

Street Children in Rwanda

a) Causes

The problem of street children in Rwanda is not new. The evidence is that already in 1984 and 1985, there were at least two organisations endeavouring to meet their needs: the Diocesan Caritas and Gatenga Salesians' centre. Both institutions met those children on the street and one worked for their schooling and reintegration into the family or community, the other for their vocational training as well as their reintegration into the community.

Conducted studies have identified the following factors:

1. Population movements

By 1990 and 1993, internal displacements caused by unceasing movements of population in the northern regions of the country further contributed to an increase in number of street children.

2.

1994 Genocide

The 1994 Genocide has with no doubt exacerbated the problem of street children through a great increase in their number. According to a study conducted in 1998, of 290 interviewed children, more than 80% declared to have taken to the streets after 1994⁹.

3. HIV/AIDS spread

Many a case of street children have also taken to the streets following the death of their parents by HIV/AIDS, and the population movements in the 97s.

4. Poverty

According a survey conducted in 2003 by A.E.P.E.S.D-TABARA and UNICEF Kigali, in Ruhengeri, 35% of children are found on the street due to poverty in their family.¹⁰

5. Domestic violence

According to the same paper, violence to which some children are subject in their natural or adoption families impacts their presence on the street. They try to escape from the situation by running away and they end up finding themselves out on the street. This situation seems to be usually encountered in families where one of the parents gets married again after the death or separation from another biological parent.

b) Description

The daily situation of street children in Kigali City or other towns in Rwanda is not at all different from other children in the same situation all over the world. It is characterized by absolute violation of all the rights of the child under the 1989 International Convention: right to education, health, protection, food, and the right to live with his/her parents. The same analysis of the situation of street children as mentioned above (9) shows that 37% of children admitted resorting to use of drugs and that 43% admitted knowing drugs and having seen their friends using them. Such substances that are generally cheap such as glue, petrol, gas fumes, sometimes tobacco and cannabis, are used to drown their worries, to help them cope with dire and rigid street conditions, and even sometimes to commit crimes falling therefore into the category of juvenile offenders.

The situation of street children in Rwanda shows however its own peculiar aspects. For instance, the same study reveals that about half of the children virtually sleep on the streets. The high percentage of orphans (a third of the population of street children) is also peculiar aspect of Rwanda. Indeed, this number should be attributed to the 1994 Genocide that claimed the lives of roughly one million people, but also to the spread of HIV/AIDS within the Rwandan community.

⁹ Ministry of Youth Culture and Professional Training (1998), *Situation Analysis of Street Children in Rwanda*

¹⁰ A.E.P.E.S.D.-TABARA et UNICEF, KIGALI, (2003) Rapport d'Analyse de la Situation des Enfants de la Rue dans la Province de Ruhengeri "Pourquoi Ces Enfants"

Context of the Strategic Plan

In response to this new challenge, Government officials have taken various steps to find appropriate solutions. In 2001, the Government through MINALOC developed a National Programme for Street Children. Then in 2003, the Ministry of Local Government, Information and Social Affairs developed a National Policy for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children, including street children. However, the practice mostly applied by the Government and the City has been to round up children across the street and commit them to childcare centres for reintegration or not.

The Government has therefore put in place several centres, including the most known centre of Gitagata. Some children were encouraged to seek admission in that centre. Subsequently, they could have access to education and vocational training pending their reintegration into their family or community. Most of these children were however arrested by police officers during their regular raids. It did not take long for this method to reveal its great limitations in Rwanda as elsewhere all over the world.

A good number of children forcibly committed to the centre attempted and managed to escape from it to take to the streets again. If rounded up again, they became recidivists, who could only think of escaping again. The centre of Gitagata, especially, was therefore considered by the children a place for forcible detention. Training provided to these children forcibly committed to the centre proved very difficult, coupled with budget problems faced by the institution. In addition, for being arrested by the police on repeated occasions, children developed an ability to escape from the patrols and suspicion not only towards police officers, but also towards all adults that can be taken for authorities. This situation has made them much more vulnerable by making them rather unapproachable towards street social workers. Those who stayed in the centre developed a dependence that gradually took them away from their family or community. For most times, they were rounded up far away from their home community, which made the visits by parents difficult or even sometimes impossible. Furthermore, some very poor parents began to consider the centre as a pension catering for children and tried through various ways to get their children committed there.

Other community sectors (civil society, religious community), well aware of their duties regarding the violation of the rights of the street children, have also tried various approaches designed to ensure either their protection, but mainly their reintegration. For most times, however, their efforts were limited to financial resources that they could afford. Besides, there was a lack of coordination between different institutions working on the problem.

With a view to better taking up the challenge of an increasing number of street children and addressing the increasingly worsening violation of their rights, the Government, through MIGEPROF, requested the technical support from UNICEF to assist in developing a Strategic Plan for Street Children that would be submitted to higher levels to get legal value for its implementation.

Impact and Expected Results

This Strategic Plan that is in line with Government programmes informed by goals set forth in Vision 2020 Paper. Working directly with communities for children's reintegration, the Government recognises that they have better experience and awareness of their realities and the capacity to find most appropriate solutions to children's presence on the street. Prevention aspect entirely based on community development and poverty alleviation is also in line with the Government efforts, through MIGEPROF, to implement the National Policy for Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (OVC)¹¹. The expected impact is at several levels:

- It will ensure to children better protection regarding persisting violation of their rights on the street.
- It will also impact their presence on the street by working at different yet complementary reintegration and prevention levels.
- It will contribute to Rwandan community mobilisation for poverty alleviation.
- It will foster community awareness about the resolution of social problems.

Furthermore, this Strategic Plan will foster institutional changes at various levels by:

- 1- prompting the establishment of a strong network between various stakeholders involved in the area.
- 2- encouraging and strengthening the coordination of the Government and civil society institutions in an integrated action for street children and vulnerable children.
- 3- building the capacity of national institutions involved in a way or another in the implementation of the rights of the child.
- 4- changing attitudes and customs that foster or lead to abuse against children, and bringing the stakeholders and authorities to take their responsibilities for children's protection.

¹¹ Vision of the National Policy; "Orphans and other vulnerable children will be assisted to reach their full potential and have the same opportunities as all other children to active and valued participation in home and community life."

Mission of the Government with regard to this policy; "The Government of Rwanda is committed to implement policies and programmes to ensure that children in difficult circumstances are integrated in a socially, economically sustainable community."

Chapter II: Methodology

The first phase of this work has been devoted to reviewing literature related to the situation of street children in Rwanda. Research conducted in 1998 jointly with the Ministry of Youth, Culture, and Professional Training, the University of Cork, Ireland / Trocaire, Italian Cooperation and UNICEF has been a baseline element for understanding the situation of street children in Rwanda. Other important documents include the survey conducted by Save the Children (2002), another conducted by Association Tabara in Ruhengeri and the last one conducted by RIFFER in Butare.

The second phase has been the preparation of interview guides intended for the authorities of institutions, street social workers and for children themselves in line with the respect of their to participation. The guides were pre-tested and adapted.

The third phase was based on a series of interviews conducted throughout the country, during the meetings with people responsible for the centres, educators and children. The latter expressed very genuine ideas on the reintegration process and functioning of centres. The series of meetings addressed three major reasons:

- a) the belief in the need to better adapt the strategic plan to be developed to the Rwandan realities and structures;
- b) the assurance that the community had already put in place valid programmes that should be considered and integrated into the national strategic plan;
- c) the need to involve all community sectors as soon as possible to ensure the following phase of the strategic plan implementation.

Chapter III: Presentation and Analysis of Various Care Approaches Existing in Rwanda

Rwanda has responded to the situation of an increasing number of street children in the cities without delay. In many regions, programmes have been initiated in an attempt to help them. While those programmes seem to have been initiated with the action of faith-based communities (CARITAS, the Salesians), the civil society immediately followed suit, thereby creating positive responses for street children's protection or their reintegration in their setting.

This chapter accounts for the findings of a series of visits to centres and institutions working with street children in Rwanda. Visited regions were Butare, Bugesera, Kibungo, Gisenyi, Nyamyumba, Ruhengeri and Kigali. Hereinafter will be presented various approaches used in Rwanda with an analysis of advantages and disadvantages of each of them. This analysis helps understand the orientations of the draft strategic plan and the need for an integrated and coordinated approach.

Care practices observed in Rwanda can be divided into three categories:

- Long -term institutional care approach
- Reintegration approach
- Prevention approach

The foregoing approaches will be separately presented.

A- Long-term Institutional Care Approach

This approach is based on keeping a child in a childcare centre for a long period that may reach 10 years. The criterion for the child discharge is his capability to take care of himself, given that he will have completed secondary education or received vocational training. Some centres have been hosting children for many years on and work only with them. Others take in children that were rounded up across the streets and forcibly committed there.

The advantages of this approach are of course moving immediately the children from the streets and stopping at least a part of their vulnerability. Their rights to food, housing, and protection against abuse and, to some extent, to health are respected. Its disadvantages are first associated with the dependence of the child as well as of the family and community on the centre. When children are forcibly committed to an institution, the latter is considered by them as a prison and education intended for them suffers from this perception. Moreover, children who want to escape from round-ups become more suspicious of adults, increasing thereby their vulnerability on the street.

B- Reintegration Approach

This approach is based on returning the child to his family or a substitute family when it proves impossible to trace his natural family. This reintegration approach comprises two distinct and complementary phases:

- B.1. Child education aimed at knowing him and preparing the return to his family or home community.
- B.2. Return to his family or community.

The child education in the course of which psychosocial investigation is conducted is a relevant moment for exploring his individual and family situation to adapt the reintegration plan. During this process, the educator explores with the child the immediate and root causes of his presence on the street, his will as well as his capacity to return home. Through the child views and visits to the family identified within the child home community, s/he makes an assessment of the family capacity and will to take in the child. The following step of reintegration will depend on it. This education is provided either in the open or in a transit centre.

The education in the open describes that situation where the street is the place for meeting and work between the educator and the child. It has the following advantages:

- The educator goes and meets the child, therefore when the latter participates; it is already a sign of motivation.
- There are less chances of dependence on an institution.
- The child learns to count on himself and on his home or foster community.
- The costs are reduced, allowing to invest in other aspects of reintegration.

However, this approach has also some disadvantages that are worth pointing out:

- During the period of education and preparation for reintegration, the child remains vulnerable on the street.
- Street children are very mobile in search of survival means and work undertaken with an individual can be stopped.
- The children who work on the streets are always on the lookout for opportunities to earn some money, hence the frequent difficulty in staying with the child long enough to make a better assessment or gather psychosocial information needed for better reintegration.
- The children who remain on the streets are the most likely to be victims of police round-ups leading to a loss of contact with educators and of already undertaken reintegration work.

Education within a transit centre is slightly different. A transit centre is an institution where the child stays for a fairly short period – ideally not long enough to not develop a dependence on it. There, the child is provided with food, bed and rudimentary school education, for most of the time in a form of a rapid catch-up of his education level. However, the main activity remains to collect and analyze information for reintegration basing on both the child and the family.

Advantages of education within a transit centre:

- The child is immediately taken from the street dangers and vulnerability.
- There is increasingly enough time to gather information and prepare for reintegration.

Disadvantages of education within a transit centre:

- The child can be fond of the centre and delay as long as possible his reintegration process.
- The costs are generally higher, reducing available resources for reintegration socio-economic aspect.
- In some cases, the transit period lingers on, thus developing into a long-term institutionalisation.

The return to the family or community is the achievement of the reintegration process. It normally depends on data collected during the first phase for harmonisation between the child and the community, as well as the retention in his family. In Rwanda, reintegration is conducted in different ways.

1. The family receives support in a form or another or even in a combination of the following forms:

- donation of money,
- gifts of breeding animal such goats or pigs,
- payment of school equipment,
- training in entrepreneurship.

Advantages of reintegration with support:

- The entire family benefits from some financial improvement.
- The child is more likely to continue his studies.
- The child does not go back exactly in the same conditions as when he left at least in terms of financial resources.
- The support is generally accompanied by training and follow-up activities that, if ever well carried out, seem to strengthen the family structures and responsibilities.

Disadvantages of reintegration with support:

- The financial support given to the family is not benefited by the community and does not teach it to face its responsibilities.
- It does not prevent at all other children from taking to the streets.
- It is barely enough to address the problems of the family that ends up being without any resources.
- It can lead to the habit of expecting everything from external assistance among the families that did not learn to meet by themselves their responsibilities.

2. The family is provided with no financial support and the educators merely return the child to the identified family

Advantages of reintegration without support:

- The family can learn that it can only lean on itself and the community rather than on external support to address its problems.
- If the reason behind the child decision to take to the street was not an economic one, the educator can play the role of a mediator between the family and the child to address psychosocial problems.

Disadvantages of this type of reintegration are as follows:

- The child returns to the same economic situation that was possibly prevailing when he left.
- The parents are not always ready to receive him because he increases the number of people to be fed or rather he financially supported his family through his work on the street.

3. Reintegration is done with the full community support, involving the following local structures.

Within the framework of reintegration, the involved grassroots level stakeholders are:

- Village and Cell authorities
- Sector authorities
- Parents' associations
- District Council
- The police

The foregoing stakeholders provide their support for:

- Identifying and tracing the children close or distant relatives;
- Raising their awareness and empowering them to play the role of negotiators in case of psychosocial conflicts;
- Ensuring reintegration follow-up;
- Providing sometimes some support to help the family fulfil its responsibilities towards the children.

Advantages of this reintegration type

- The community learns to stand by itself to address the problems of its members;
- The community learns to rely on its own resources.

Disadvantages of this approach

The only disadvantage of this approach is not to address the problem from more comprehensive perspective for deep resolution

C- Prevention Approach

This approach is designed to put an end to the stream of children taking to the streets. It attempts to address the problem at its root handling the deep causes rather than its sensitive manifestations. This approach is the least commonly known within care practices in Rwanda. Its advantages however are by far important:

- Protects other children who could have taken to the street;
- Finds solutions to other associated complications (for instance physical or sexual abuse of the youth);

Its disadvantages remain very few:

- Applied alone, it does not take into account the rights of street children that are daily violated;
- It is a long-term approach requiring sustained efforts without any immediate results.

In the light of this analysis, it can be seen that no approach is bad in itself. Furthermore, any approach is a result of the wish to help. Even more significantly, the multiplicity of interventions demonstrates the involvement of a great part of the social fabric, developing from a sensitisation on the problem of street children in Rwanda. Some approaches may have shown a lack of efficiency, but this does not remove positive outcomes going with them and even less the underlain stakeholders' will. The missing elements are:

- 1- Technical support based on in-depth multinational experience of the problem of street children
- 2- Existence of a national coordination and evaluation body establishing intervention guidelines from a strategic plan integrated in the government will through various existing programmes such poverty reduction and decentralisation.

Chapter IV: Strategic Plan for Street Children

This Strategic Plan represents an integrated approach based on various intervention approaches applied to date in Rwanda. This integration is justified on the one hand by several positive aspects encountered in action programmes, as demonstrated by the analysis above. The strengths are identified and highlighted, while the weaknesses are rejected or greatly improved. On the other hand, the integration is justified through the vivid reflection of Rwandan reality and culture that have proved to be of paramount importance for the success of the Strategic Plan. The last justification for the integration results from the need to retain the demonstrated involvement of different social sectors rather than excluding them and create a totally different programme.

International research and experience come in here to supplement Rwandan practices. The Strategic Plan is based on three main intertwined and inseparable axes that are its specific objectives: Protection, Reintegration and Prevention. It develops from the current situation to lead to the future without street children. It should therefore begin by ensuring the protection of current street children with their reintegration as its medium-term goal and with the ultimate vision of a situation where there is no street child through a well applied prevention action.

Guiding Principles

- 1- No child should be on the street
- 2- Parents should be sensitised on their responsibilities towards children
- 3- Parents who send or have children on the street do not fulfil their duty towards them and are liable to be subject to legal action by the government
- 4- Children with no natural family should be placed in substitute family and by default in orphanages
- 5- Families using children in domestic work should be sensitised and, if need be, reprimanded by law.

This strategic plan outlines a framework with which actions for street children are aligned. It proposes the establishment a National Commission for Children which will, as a part of its attributions, ensure that each relevant institution integrates the elements of the Strategic Plan in its sectorial plan, and that they are included in its budget and implemented.

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN				
Objective I : Protect street children against permanent dangers to which they are driven				
Strategy	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN				
Objective I : Protect street children against permanent dangers to which they are driven				
Strategy	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
1) Strengthen the legal framework for child protection, in connection with international laws and treaties, OVC NPA, Strategic objective 2, especially 2.1.	a- Assessment of laws existing in Rwanda for childhood protection compared to international laws	Establishment of an assessment paper	Assessment paper	UNICEF, MIGEPROF
	b- Adjustment and harmonisation of national laws as needed for better child protection	Rwandan laws updated for child protection in line with international laws and consolidated into a Children's Act	Children's Act adopted	Parliament
	c- Effective and strict implementation of legal provisions against people involved in sex, drug or alcohol activities with children	Number of arrests, trials and penalties against people involved in sex, drug or alcohol activities with children	Cases in the hands of the police and courts	Police, Courts
	d- Establish appropriate judicial and reform structures for children in conflict with the law. See OVC NPA Strat. Obj. 2 esp. 2.1	Establishment of Juvenile Court and rehabilitation centres for juvenile offenders	Existence of a court and rehabilitation	MINIJUST

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN				
Objective I : Protect street children against permanent dangers to which they are driven				
Strategy	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
	<p>e) Establish structures at legal, police and health structures level for easy identification, care services and follow-up of cases of abuse, violence, and exploitation towards the children. See OVC NPA, Strat.Obj. 3.2., esp. 3.2.3 and 3.2.4 and Strat. Obj. 5.3.</p> <p>f) Review the legal basis of vagrancy criminalisation vis-à-vis the children</p>	<p>Organisation of training sessions intended to the police members and health workers in the identification, care services and follow-up of cases of abuse, violence, and exploitation towards the children.</p>	<p>Training report</p> <p>Report of the review meeting</p>	<p>The Police, MINJUST</p> <p>Parliament</p>

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective I : Protect street children against permanent dangers to which they are driven					
Strategy	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders	
2) Involve children and families in all activities concerning them	Respect of the right of the children to participate in activities concerning them	<p>a- Involvement of children in the assessment process of service institutions. See OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 3.7 and Strat. Obj. 6.3 and 6.4.</p> <p>b- Involvement of children in community development meetings. Strat. Obj. 6.3 and 6.4.</p> <p>c- Development of ad hoc manuals on the protection and rights of the child in national language and easily accessible to children</p>	<p>Interviews basing on guides intended to children during the assessment of NGOs and transit centres conducted</p> <p>Presence and participation of children in the meetings on community development</p>	<p>Guides filled in during meetings with the children</p> <p>Meeting report</p> <p>Existence of the manual and report of</p>	<p>MIGEPROF</p> <p>MINALOC</p> <p>MIGEPROF</p>

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective I : Protect street children against permanent dangers to which they are driven					
Strategy	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders	
3) Sensitise and inform street children on the dangers likely to be related to their situation. See OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 1	Children still in the street waiting for their reintegration know how to protect themselves against the dangers threatening them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a- Identification of all street children. OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 1.1.1 and 1.1.2 b- Organisation of information campaigns through care institutions on dangers threatening street children (HIV/AIDS, drugs, Sex, Hygiene, and Health). OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 1.4.1. c- Organisation of meetings between former and newly identified street children 	<p>Quantitative survey on street children conducted</p> <p>Organisation of monthly information session within transit centres on HIV/AIDS, drugs, premature sexual relations, Hygiene, and Health</p>	<p>Preparation and outcome papers from the survey</p> <p>Session reports</p> <p>Meeting</p>	<p>MIGEPROF</p> <p>Transit centres, MINISANTE, the Police</p> <p>NGO, Transit centres</p>

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN				
Objective I : Protect street children against permanent dangers to which they are driven				
Strategy	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
	<p>d- Organisation of meetings on life skills adapted to street life (not to get on a car alone, especially in the evening, sleep in group rather than sleeping alone)</p> <p>e- Collaboration with heads of band for early identification of new street children</p>	<p>Organisation of at least one meeting on life skills once a week in the open or transit centres</p> <p>Organisation of fortnightly meeting with the heads of band</p>	<p>Meeting reports</p> <p>Meeting reports</p>	<p>Child reintegration centres</p> <p>Child reintegration centres</p>

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective I : Protect street children against permanent dangers to which they are driven					
Strategy	Actions		Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
4) Strengthen the structures of transit centres. OVC NPA. Strat. Obj. 2.1.2 Implementation of the ministerial order on OVC institutions	Reintegration or transit centres are well prepared to care for hosted children	<p>a- Establishment of memorandums of understanding between the Public Institutions and Organisations for in-service training of social workers. OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 2.1.4</p> <p>b- Facilitation of receipt in the health centres for children from reintegration or transit centres</p>	<p>Existence of memorandums of understanding and presence in the centres of intern social workers from public and private training institutions</p> <p>Health cards held by all children in the reintegration centre</p>	<p>Memorandum of understanding Paper</p> <p>Health cards of children</p>	<p>MINEDUC, MIGEPROF</p> <p>Reintegration centres, MINIJUST</p>

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Objective I : Protect street children against permanent dangers to which they are driven				
Strategy	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c- Limitation of the period that a child can spend in a transit centre to six months at most. d- Establishment of limitation criteria on the number of children that can be accommodated by each centre at a time e- Facilitation of access to basic psychological and assessment services for children within transit centres f- Compliance with international criteria for the functioning of 	<p>Children cannot spend over six months in a reintegration centre</p> <p>No centre admits children beyond its accommodation capacity</p> <p>Presence of at least one part-time child</p>	<p>Files of children</p> <p>Number of centres compared to the authorised number</p> <p>Files of children</p>	<p>MIGEPROF</p> <p>MIGEPROF</p> <p>MIGEPROF, Transit centres, MINISANTE</p> <p>MIGEPROF</p>

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
1) Coordinate the action of sectors working for street children. OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 6	Establishment of a collaboration and coordination structure for institutions working with street children	<p>a- Establishment of a National Commission for Children to ensure coordination of decentralised structures of all activities of the stakeholders working with street children.</p> <p>This coordination body shall be responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifying all organisations working with street children throughout the country - setting up an exchange network between those organisations - assessing on a periodical basis the work of those organisations - avoiding task duplication while some components of the policy may remain 	Existence of a coordination body	Paper on the establishment of a coordination body and the existence of the body	MIGEPROF

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
		<p>unimplemented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -coordinating funds from the international organisations for projects in favour of street children in terms of the requirements of the National Policy and the real impact of outreach organisations - receiving new requests for registration from organisations wishing to intervene in the area of street children - ensuring that all organisations working with street children are registered and follow the guidelines of the national policy - assessing the impact of the strategic plan and 			

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
		submitting related report with suggestions of appropriate changes to relevant institutions.			
2) Build the capacity of	Stakeholders working with	a- Review of the training programme for	Organisation of programme review	Documents from review meeting	MIGEPROF

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
stakeholders working with street children. OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 2.1.4 and 5.3.1.	street children are well prepared for implementing reintegration programmes	children's social workers and educators	meetings with the reintegration centres	Training reports	MIGEPROF
		b- Organisation of comprehensive training for all centres	Organisation of at least two comprehensive training workshops for centres each year		
		c- Organisation of specific training sessions for centres basing on specific needs	Organisation of at least one annual specific training session for each centre	Participation and training report	MIGEPROF
		d- Organisation of exchange programmes with sister countries in the region	Participation in three international meetings at least on innovative solutions and better practices for street children	Publication of training booklets and documents	MIGEPROF, UNICEF
		e- Education and training for the police on the Strategic Plan for Street Children	Production of an information booklet intended to the police officers and organisation of information and discussion sessions with	Files of children	MIGEPROF, the Police

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
		f- Entrust to the Police the duty to identify new street children and refer them to appropriate aid structures.	them Number of children referred to transit centres by the Police		MIGEPROF, the Police, Reintegration centres

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
3) Set up appropriate reintegration programmes OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 2.1.2 and 4.6	Establishment and implementation of reintegration guidelines	a- Organisation of workshops with reintegration centres on the guidelines to be adopted for street children's reintegration (see a proposal of guidelines in appendix)	At least one workshop with reintegration centres on guidelines organized	Workshop Report	MIGEPROF, Reintegration centres
		b- Preparation of final reintegration document	National document for reintegration (that can also be used for other categories of vulnerable children) available.	National reintegration document	MIGEPROF
		c- The document legal value acquired	A ministerial order conferring legal value to the document enacted	Ministerial order document	MIGEPROF, MINIJUST
		d- Official distribution of the document to the reintegration centres throughout the country	Acknowledgement of receipt of the document by all reintegration centres	Acknowledgements of receipt of the document	MIGEPROF
		e- Monitoring and	Regular field visits and	Documents of visit reports	MIGEPROF

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
		evaluation of the implementation of reintegration guidelines	reception of reports from the reintegration centres		

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
4) Increase self-care capacity through older children OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 3.1.	Children growing adult are ready to care for themselves	a- Undertake vocational training for older children (14-16 years) taking into account the market of apprenticeship positions, paid employment and self-employment	All children above 14 years are in vocational training	Files of children	MIGEPROF, Reintegration centres
		b- Support to older children in micro business activities	Children having completed vocational training are supported in setting up micro business activities	Files of children	MIGEPROF, Reintegration centres
Objective III : Prevent the presence of children working or living on the streets within the Convention on the Rights of the child					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
1) Sensitise and empower community and parents regarding their roles towards their children	Substantial increase of the level of empowerment of community and parents towards their children	a- Organisation of awareness-raising campaigns for parents laying emphasis on the children's need for love and affection and on the rights of the child in general	Organisation of monthly programmes through media	Records of TV and radio programmes, keeping articles in newspapers and magazines	MIGEPROF
		b- Encourage and facilitate parents' associations	Establishment of at least one parents' association in each District	Report of Districts	MIGEPROF, MINALOC
		c- Summon parents whose children are encountered on the street during class hours or in any other situation where the child should not be	Number of summoned parents	The Police Report	MIGEPROF, the Police
		d- Summon parents using children in domestic work	Organisation of at least one training session in each District each year	Training report	MIGEPROF, the Police and Districts
		e- Organisation of information sessions within the grassroots level community structures on the effects of physical and emotional abuse on children			

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
		f- Organisation at the level of the parents' associations and grassroots level community-based structures of training workshops on non-violent education and conflict resolution within the family	Organisation of at least one training session a year per District	Training workshop reports	MIGEPROF, NGOs, Districts, grassroots level community-based structures
2) Strengthen community structures by encouraging and enabling them to identify their challenges and opportunities available to them to cope with them OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 1.4.2, 2.2.3, 3.1 and 3.2.	Grassroots level community-based structures learn to cope with their own challenges	a- Organisation of awareness-raising sessions within the grassroots level communities during which they can sit and discuss their basic needs b- Technical and financial Support to grassroots level community structures in the implementation of their solutions	Organisation of at least one awareness-raising session a year per District Training and financial support to grassroots level community-based structures regarding their solutions to become independent	Meeting reports Training and financing Document	NGO, Development Organisations, Grassroots level Community-based Structures NGO, Development Organisations, Grassroots level Community Structures

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
3) Strengthen poverty alleviation programmes OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 6	Alleviate poverty as a driving factor behind the presence of children on the streets	<p>a- Coordination of actions and support of Development NGOs for their integration in the global poverty alleviation programme</p> <p>b- Channelling aid received from development organisations and sister countries to long-term development of grassroots level communities rather than fostering dependence on external aid</p>	<p>Organisation of regular meetings with Development NGOs basing on the global poverty alleviation programme</p> <p>Establishment of long-term development programmes in Districts</p>	<p>Meeting documents</p> <p>Project documents</p>	<p>MINAFFET</p> <p>Government</p>

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN					
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community					
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders
4) Sensitise children who though in danger still attend the school or have good relationships with their family, on the street dangers OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 4.2	Children in danger are sensitised regarding the dangers of street life	a- Organisation of awareness-raising meetings in the schools by former street children and the police on the dangers of street life b- Organisation of awareness-raising activities for schools within the transit centres c- Organisation of awareness-raising campaigns during grassroots level communities' meeting on street dangers d- Show awareness-raising movies in schools and local communities	Organisation of at least one meeting once a term in the schools in each District Organisation of two visits a year per each school to the transit centres Introduction of the issue of sensitising children in danger in campaigns for local community-based organisations At least two films a year shown in schools and local communities	Meeting report Visit report Sensitisation document Show report	NGO, Transit centres, MINEDUC NGO, Transit centres, MINEDUC NGOs, Transit centres, Districts, local community-based structures NGO, Transit centres, Districts, local community-based structures , MINISANTE

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR STREET CHILDREN						
Objective II : Reintegrate street children into their family or community						
Strategy	Expected Results	Actions	Performance Indicators	Verification Source	Stakeholders	
5) Strengthen school structures OVC NPA, Strat. Obj. 4.2.	Enable school structures to be more able to retain the children and prevent their presence on the streets	a- Establishment of feeding programmes in the schools in disadvantaged areas	One hot meal a day provided in the schools attended by children from disadvantaged households	Report schools	of	MINALOC, MINEDUC
		b- Strengthen the education fund in the Districts	Education funds intended to poor households increased	Report Districts	of	MINALOC, MINEDUC
		c- Enforcement of laws on policy and school institutions regarding free primary education	Parents pay effectively nothing for primary school	Report schools	of	MINEDUC

Conclusion

This paper is the outcome of the work of the entire Rwandan community both at the level of sectorial meetings and national workshop organised for the first draft review. It has been a comprehensive assignment, addressing all aspects of the problem of children's presence on the streets, and their need for protection as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, up to the prevention of the problem. The need for concurrent implementation of axes (specific objectives) should be once more stressed. A situation where protection and reintegration would have priority over prevention could result in driving much more children to the streets in search of advantages and services available there. This situation will in turn impede the work of stakeholders who would end up concluding that it is impossible to cope with the challenge of the increasing number of street children. Likewise, emphasis on prevention to the detriment of both the other axes would leave thousands of street children in a situation of extreme vulnerability in conflict with the respect of rights. So as to avoid one or the other of both situations, there is therefore a need for integrated and coordinated action at the highest level. Decentralised structures in Rwanda provide an unexpected opportunity, absent in many countries, of awareness-raising and integrating Sectors that are very far away from Kigali. It is needed to involve and use them as best it can be. It is however needed to better consider that any decentralised programme could not be implemented without a strong leadership, a control organisation that ensures that all the decentralised structures play their roles to the best of their capacity. This attribution is for a National Commission for Children under the aegis of MIGEPROF within its mission towards children and families.

It will also be noticed that, despite the magnitude and urgency of the situation of street children, it cannot be solved alone, given that it is unceasingly fuelled by the streams of children from other categories of vulnerable children. Therefore, programmes for street children should be included in an emergency plan to meet the community responsibility regarding the rights of the child, but they should be integrated into a more comprehensive plan not only for vulnerable children, but also for children population as a whole in the establishment of a protective environment for each child, as a responsibility of the entire community. Thus, we will be able to find an effective and sustainable solution to the challenge of street children, the violation of their rights and fully meet our responsibility as the community.

Appendix: Proposal for Reintegration Guidelines

- a- Identify street children and establish (or restore) a trust relationship with them. To this end, use the band leaders and former street children.
- b- Involve local community-based structures throughout the reintegration process.
- c- Trace members of the distant family in default of the close family.
- d- Explore the emotional mindset of the child to return to his family.
- e- Explore and resolve possible psychosocial conflicts.
- f- Provide support to the family in the most appropriate way (income-generation activity, training).
- g- Follow up reintegrated children through local community-based structures.
- h- Trace substitute family for the child in default of the extended family members.
- i- Undertake reintegration in another way (rent rooms for a group of children for instance) if it is not possible to find a natural or substitute family for the child.