

Report on the Situation of Street Children in Garowe, Puntland, Somalia



Assessment Report For Funding Action

October 2023

Contents

- 1. INTRODUCTION 3
 - 1.1 Context and Background 3
 - 1.2 Purpose of the Report..... 3
- 2. KEY HIGHLIGHTS..... 3
 - 2.1 Summary of Critical Needs..... 3
 - 2.2 Urgency of the Situation 4
- 3. SITUATION OVERVIEW..... 4
- 4. ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES 4
- 5. METHODOLOGY OF THE ASSESSMENT 5
- 6. COVERED AREAS..... 5
- 7. ASSESSMENT FINDINGS 5
- 8. RECOMMENDATIONS 6
- 9. ANNEX 7

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context and Background

The city of Garowe, the capital of Puntland state in Somalia, is facing an alarming and escalating issue – the proliferation of street children. These children, predominantly aged between 8 and 13 years old, are confronted with dire economic and social challenges, including the peril of inhalant abuse, particularly glue sniffing. This report is meticulously crafted to serve as an assessment, aimed at securing funding for comprehensive intervention programs.

1.2 Purpose of the Report

The primary objective of this report is to offer a comprehensive assessment of the precarious situation concerning street children in Garowe, Puntland. It seeks to underpin resource mobilization endeavors by elucidating critical needs, emphasizing the urgency of the situation, and outlining proposed interventions to redress this pressing issue.

2. KEY HIGHLIGHTS

2.1 Summary of Critical Needs

The critical needs, drawn from the assessment, are multifaceted and encompass:

- **Education:** The imperative to ensure unfettered access to education for the street children.
- **Nutrition:** The pressing requirement to provide daily meals, addressing the immediate nutritional exigencies of these marginalized children.
- **Recreational Activities:** The need to engage these children in constructive and positive activities, fostering their physical and emotional well-being.
- **Inhalant Abuse Prevention and Rehabilitation:** Combatting the pervasive issue of substance abuse, primarily glue sniffing, by implementing preventive measures and providing rehabilitation avenues for those already ensnared in this perilous cycle.

2.2 Urgency of the Situation

The exigency of the situation cannot be overstated. The growing numbers of street children, coupled with their profound vulnerability and the looming long-term consequences of inaction, necessitate immediate intervention. The safety, welfare, and future of these children hang in the balance, demanding swift and decisive measures.

3. SITUATION OVERVIEW

Garowe is grappling with a burgeoning crisis. The number of street children is steadily rising, exacerbating the strain on the community and local authorities. Statistics indicate that the majority of these children originate from impoverished backgrounds, leaving them bereft of basic necessities and social support structures. This has led to their engagement in informal economic activities, including car washing and shoe shining, and, alarmingly, inhalant abuse, with glue sniffing being the substance of choice for some.

The consequences of this situation extend beyond the children themselves, with concerns about potential criminality and the broader impact on community safety and stability if intervention does not occur promptly.

4. ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives underpinning this assessment are as follows:

- To clearly highlight the magnitude of the street children issue in Garowe, Puntland.
- To discern and comprehend the specific challenges confronting these children, ranging from economic hardships to the scourge of inhalant abuse.
- To discern the root causes of inhalant abuse and document the consequences it bears on the lives of street children.
- To assess the existing resources and identify the gaps impeding the effective resolution of this issue.

5. METHODOLOGY OF THE ASSESSMENT

The assessment was conducted through a rigorous and multi-pronged approach, incorporating the following two methodologies:

- **On-Site Interviews:** Extensive interviews with street children, local authorities, and community members were conducted to gain firsthand insights.
- **Site Visits:** Visits to areas frequented by street children were undertaken to observe living conditions and daily activities.

6. COVERED AREAS

The assessment encompassed various areas in Garowe, including the city center, neighborhoods, shelters, and recognized hotspots where street children congregate. This comprehensive approach allowed for a holistic understanding of the issue's scope and depth.

7. ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

The assessment revealed a distressing panorama:

- **Prevalence:** A high prevalence of street children, primarily hailing from impoverished backgrounds, seeking sustenance through informal economic activities.
- **Inhalant Abuse:** A disconcerting number of children, as a coping mechanism, have fallen into the perilous trap of inhalant abuse, notably glue sniffing.
- **Resource Constraints:** The Ministry of Women and Family Affairs in Puntland acknowledges the issue but grapples with resource limitations, hindering effective intervention.
- **Community Safety Concerns:** There is a mounting concern that without intervention, street children may turn to criminal activities to fund their substance abuse, jeopardizing community safety and stability.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the assessment findings, the following recommendations are proffered:

- **Immediate Financial Support:** Urgently mobilize funds to address the critical needs of street children, encompassing education, nutrition, and rehabilitation programs.
- **Collaboration with Local Authorities:** Forge robust partnerships with local authorities to ensure the safety and protection of street children.
- **Awareness and Advocacy:** Initiate and sustain awareness campaigns to illuminate the predicament of street children and advocate for long-term systemic solutions.
- **Inhalant Abuse Prevention Programs:** Develop and execute comprehensive programs aimed at both preventing inhalant abuse and providing effective rehabilitation for those ensnared in its clutches.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to systematically track the progress and impact of interventions, ensuring accountability and transparency.

9. ANNEX

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