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The American University in Cairo

School of Global Affairs and Public Policy

THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN

ADDRESSING STREET CHILDREN IN EGYPT

A Thesis Submitted to the Public Policy and Administration Department in partial

fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Public Administration

By

Reem Ezzat ElMenshawy

Supervised by

Dr. Ghada Barsoum

Assistant Professor, Public Policy and Administration, AUC

Fall 2015

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my precious family who always taught me to think of how to help others, who always understood, inspired and encouraged me during my graduate studies.

This thesis is dedicated to all children at risk; hopefully this study will support to let them have a better future.

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To all the participants who were very kind, passionate and supportive, I am very grateful to your time and valuable insights. I hope this work can add value to your continuous efforts to support street children in Egypt.

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ABSTRACT

Both governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have initiated programs to support street children. Despite the fact that the number of NGOs working with this group of children is not large; estimated between 25-35 NGOs, they have existed in Egypt for more than twenty five years and have developed many interventions for street children. There is very limited literature that documents this role so far. This study addresses this gap in literature through studying the role of NGOs in Egypt in developing effective interventions for street children. It discusses the current practices of the NGOs, the obstacles they face in their work and their views on how they can have a more tangible impact on these children's lives. Data was gathered using qualitative research methodology; mainly in-depth interviews from a sample of local and international NGOs' practitioners as well as key governmental officials/staff. The findings of the study show that local NGOs provide a sequential set of services for street children, starting with family support programs and ending with shelters while international NGOs focus more on capacity development, funding and outreach programs. NGOs are facing many obstacles in their work including: the difficulty to maintain financial sustainability, the limited competence of the NGO staff, their low salaries, the lack of sufficient focus on a preventive policy approaches to having street children, the limited support from the private sector, as well as the limited social awareness about the problem and social stigma associated with street children. NGO practitioners have some recommendations to enhance their interventions such as having improvements in the operations of the NGOs themselves, more coordination among the stakeholders involved in working with street children, more funding provision to NGOs and fighting social stigma. Other recommendations pertain to having an agreement among practitioners about the concept of reception center and more participation of children in devising programs.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

NGO: Non-governmental organization

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

NCCM: National Council for Childhood and Motherhood

SPAAC: Social Planning Analysis and Administration Consultants

ODCCP: Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UN)

WFP: World Food Program

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

KPIs: Key Performance Indicators

CHAPTER ONE

I. Introduction

There are considerable numbers of street children in Egypt which vary according to the different sources available from thousands to hundreds of thousands. Many stakeholders such as the government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have started to engage in some work and programs to support these children. Despite the fact that the number of NGOs working with this group of children is not large, they have existed in Egypt for more than twenty five years and have developed many interventions for street children. There is very limited literature which documents this role so far. Very few researchers have tackled this issue, as a result, we do not know a lot about the kinds of programs undertaken by these NGOs, their degrees of success and possible areas of improvement. In my research, I address this gap in literature through studying the role of NGOs in Egypt in developing effective interventions for street children. I focus on the current practices of the NGOs, the obstacles they face in their work, their views on how they can have a more tangible impact on these children's lives and their collaboration with the government on this front. The set of recommendations presented at the end of the study can guide the next steps of NGOs and enable them to take better decisions to put in place programs that are of more benefit to the children. I use qualitative research methodology mainly semi-structured in-depth interviews. Data was gathered from a sample of local and international NGOs' practitioners from different levels in the organizations as well as key governmental officials/staff. Using semi-structured in-depth interviews enabled me to collect more data from the participants through providing them with the opportunity to elaborate more on issues that they may find more critical and relevant to the objectives of the study.

This study consists of six chapters. Chapter one includes the introduction, background about the context of the problem of street children in Egypt, statement of the problem and the study's conceptual framework. Chapter two includes a review of the literature by portraying the different themes that exist in the literature about street children. In chapter three, I discuss the methodology that I used in conducting the research for my paper. Chapter four explains and analyses the data collected about the definition and number of street children in Egypt, the programs provided to street children by NGOs, the obstacles they face, their recommendations to improve their services and their collaboration with the government. Chapter five discusses the conclusions of my study and provides a set of recommendations to NGOs to consider while developing interventions for street children in Egypt.

A. Definition of Street Children in Egypt

In the Egyptian context, the different stakeholders working with street children including the government and NGOs define these children in different ways for instance; children on the street, children of the street, children at risk, children without shelter and working children. According to a study conducted by the National Center for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM), UNICEF and SPAAC, published in 2005, titled "Children beyond Boundaries of Protection", four different groups of street children were identified namely; 1) those who work in the street but sleep the night with their families representing 19.9% of a total sample of 191 children, 2) those who work and sleep with the family in the street equivalent to 2.2% of the sample, 3) those who work with the family in the street and sleep at their houses equal to 8.9% of the sample and 4) those who work alone and sleep in the streets representing the majority of the sample with 67.5%. This variation among street children makes it more difficult for the different stakeholders

involved in working with street children to develop effective interventions for them. They need to develop many tailored programs to satisfy the needs of the multiple groups.

B. Number of Street Children in Egypt

In Egypt, the assessment of the size of this problem also varies. The NCCM, UNICEF and SPAAC study (2005) assumed that there are 250,000 street children in Greater Cairo. The most recent count announced by the Ministry of Social Solidarity in Egypt in early 2015 is 16,000 children in Egypt (Aman, 2015). These figures are influenced by the definition of street children taken into consideration when conducting these counts. Egypt has a high level of visibility of street children according to "the indicator of the visibility of street children in a country" relying on UNICEF's State of the World's Children (SWOC) 2007 alphabetical ranking of countries, derived from data gathered in 2006 about street children from the sixty nine country reports custom-built for the WHO 1993 report. High visibility means that children have been found on the streets in adequate figures and for a sufficient duration to grab the continued attention of NGOs, government, media and research community (Benitez, 2007). Of course, still the difficulty to define street children and count them makes it even more difficult to identify the needed interventions for these children because there is no sufficient knowledge about their specific needs. Despite of these variances, it is clear that there are a lot of efforts conducted by the various stakeholders in order to support these children and attempt to provide them with their basic needs and rights. However, before being able to develop effective programs for these children, the government and NGOs in Egypt need to understand the reasons that drove these children to go out to the streets.

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C. Reasons for Children Going to Streets

There are many factors that cause the children to leave their families and go to the street. The first factor is related to the family of the child (NCCM, UNICEF & SPAAC, 2005). This includes the absence of the father and the fragmentation of the family, the violence suffered by the child from the family members and the fear of getting punished due to any behavior like if the child lost something or did not do a certain task required from him/her by a family member. Sometimes, the child's relationship with the street starts through his family because he is forced to help his parents in working on the street to earn the family's living or since one of his elder brothers or sisters is already on the street (NCCM, UNICEF & SPAAC, 2005). The second main reason is the role played by the school (NCCM, UNICEF & SPAAC, 2005). Many street children have left schools because of repetitive failures in exams, they hated their studies or because they were forced to leave the school to help their families in working to earn a living. The third factor is working in workshops (NCCM, UNICEF & SPAAC, 2005). When children work as blue collars in workshops, they get abused by the workshops' owners, and sometimes their parents just take all their earnings so they feel that this job is not important or attractive enough in comparison to the amount of earnings they can get from working on the street in other things. The last reason is the influence of neighbors and friends (NCCM, UNICEF & SPAAC, 2005). Many children got to the streets because of the leisure they can have on the street and because of the money they can earn. Many neighbors encourage them to try this in the first place (NCCM, UNICEF & SPAAC, 2005).

According to the Rapid Situation Assessment Report written by the ODCCP, UNICEF and WFP in 2001, there are direct and indirect causes for children leaving their homes to the streets. Among the indirect causes are the level of income and education of a family. Out of a

sample of 50 interviewed street children, 98% of them come from families with poor income levels and 66% come from families with poor education levels (ODCCP, UNICEF & WFP, 2001). With the gradual removal of subsidies, poor income levels of the families are expected to remain as a possible cause for more children to go to the streets. Family breakdown was suffered by 62% of the children sample because of divorce, separation, death of one or two parents…etc. Dropping out of school was mentioned by 70% of the children sample and 30% did not enroll in school in the first place (ODCCP, UNICEF & WFP, 2001). The relatively high average family size of 5.94 members was another indirect cause. The indirect causes also included the sudden rural-urban migration and the decreasing role of the extended families which was cited by 46% of the children's sample (ODCCP, UNICEF & WFP, 2001). Direct reasons include abuse of children by the family members or at work, this reason was mentioned by the majority of the sample; 82%. The second most frequent reason is neglect (stated by 62%), followed by peer pressure (mentioned by 36% of the sample) then seeking affection (highlighted by 16%) and finally the presence of other brothers or sisters on the street (stated by 8%) (ODCCP, UNICEF & WFP, 2001).

D. Areas and Activities of Street Children

When living in the streets, children select specific areas with certain characteristics. They are usually clustered in popular areas where their presence does not irritate the residents of the areas and does not attract the attention of the residents to the children. Children also reside in areas with many outlets and workshops in which they can work and earn some income, districts where children can find cheap food and shelter, markets, commercial places, free public gardens, districts that enjoy unique socio-cultural attributes such as in the areas of El Sayeda Zeinab or El Hussein where they can easily beg for money from people and areas with cheap coffee shops and

cinemas where children can easily entertain themselves. Children prefer to stay under bridges as well in order to be able to sleep and hide from people, same for waste lands and in train stations and in bus terminals where they can travel and beg (ODCCP, UNICEF & WFP, 2001).

The famous activities for children on the streets include: begging, washing cars or shops windows, selling paper tissues, working in shops or workshops, collecting waste from recycling factories, fishing, shining shoes, carrying heavy things for people in return for money, selling newspapers and prostitution (ODCCP, UNICEF & WFP, 2001).

E. Problems Faced by Street Children

Children suffer from many problems when they are on the streets. Violence is the mostly frequented problem by street children followed by community resentment (ODCCP, UNICEF & WFP, 2001). The same report by ODCCP, UNICEF & WFP in 2001 added that the other problems included arrests by the police, stealing of their savings, health problems, the inability to cope with life on the street and the lack of attachments. Substance abuse is very common among street children; cigarettes and sniffing glue are the most common substances (ODCCP, UNICEF & WFP, 2001).

F. Needs of Street Children

As stated previously, understanding the needs and hopes of street children can support the government and NGOs in designing the most suitable interventions for such an inhomogeneous target group with different needs and experiences. Out of the 50 children interviewed by the ODCCP, UNICEF and WFP in 2001, 30% wanted to learn a basic profession, 28% said that they need a job to be able to provide themselves with their basic needs, 12% wanted to return back to their families, 4% wanted to remain as is and 26% could not identify their needs or hopes for the

future. When the children were asked about how they can achieve these needs, 42% mentioned that they need permanent jobs, 36% stated that NGOs can help them to satisfy their needs, 24% highlighted vocational training, 22% stated that returning back to their families can solve their problems, 20% highlighted the impact of literacy education, 28% were not able to identify the ways to satisfy their needs and 12% mentioned that offering them shelter or permanent residence in an institution can support them (ODCCP, UNICEF & WFP, 2001). The children' needs from the whole society included protection and care, support when they need it, good treatment and understanding of their situation and advice (ODCCP, UNICEF & WFP, 2001).

II. Statement of the Problem

There is very limited literature available in Egypt about the role of NGOs in working with street children. Similar to other countries, it is difficult to define the scope of the problem of street children in Egypt because they represent a very heterogeneous and mobile group (Harris, Johnson, Young & Edwards, 2011). Despite of this apparent difficulty in defining the exact scope of this issue in Egypt, NGOs have realized this as a critical issue for more than twenty five years now. Since then, they have been working with these children, however, very little is known about their work in literature. Since 2011, more attention has been paid to these children especially by the media after January 25th revolution because street children have participated in the demonstrations; sit-ins and sometimes in clashes between the protestors and security forces. However, this increased focus was only in newspaper articles. Limited academic research on the other hand discusses the role of NGOs so far. Studying the role of street children NGOs is the focus of my study.

My research concludes with a set of recommendations for potential efforts that NGOs can engage in so that they help integrate these children back into the society. Since there is limited literature documenting the role of NGOs so far, this study is intended to act like a self-image or a mirror to support NGOs to improve their performance when developing future interventions for street children in Egypt. It is important for NGOs working with street children to continuously enhance the kinds of interventions they develop for their target beneficiaries especially that this group is a very complex group. For NGOs to be able to do this, they need to assess their current practices, analyze the problems they are facing and be able to understand the potential that they have to enhance their work.

Defining the scope of the problem of street children is the initial step in attempting to understand the practices of NGOs working in this field. This entails understanding who constitutes street children and the magnitude of the problem. There are many variations that exist among street children for example children who work and stay in the streets during the day but return back to their homes at the end of the day, children who work and live on the streets…etc. All of these children can be considered street children by different entities or sources so there is no homogeneity across street children. A very dominant theme in the existing literature about street children revolves around the definition of street children (WHO, 1993, ODCCP, UNICEF, & WFP, 2001; Brick, 2002; Volpi, 2002; Ferguson, 2002; UNICEF, 2006; Owoaje, Adebiyi & Asuzu, 2009; Harris, Johnson, Young & Edwards, 2011; NSCR, 2011; Pincent et al., 2012). This is mainly because there is no universal agreed definition for street children. However, one of the most frequently cited definitions for street children is the one drafted by the United Nations in 1985 as "any girl or boy, for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland…etc.) has become her or his habitual abode and/or sources of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults" (Harris, et al, 2011). This definition has been also criticized by scholars because it entails that all children found in or on the street would be categorized into this segment. These children should have been observed to expend a considerable fraction of their time on the street. They are typically classified depending on the activities they are engaged in on the street. Nevertheless, gathering information about street children is tricky. Street children are very mobile as shown by a study about them in Ibadan, thus their population is difficult to identify (Owoaje et al, 2009).

One of the very common variations in defining street children is to distinguish between "children of the street" and "children on the street" (Harris et al., 2011). Children on the street

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embody the huge bulk of children who are identified as street children. In some instances, they are also named "market children" because they work in markets, like selling gums and candy on the street or acting as singers or dancers or they engage in other strange jobs such as cleaning shoes and providing help to tourists. These children often live with their families, while providing their families with food or money that they earn from working on the streets. Moreover, the majority of these children do not afford to be enrolled in school since numerous countries do not have obligatory complimentary public education, and even many of those enrolled in school do not attend as they are obliged to work to survive. On the other hand, children of the street have left their families to reside all the time in the streets. Normally, they come from a family in which clash, death of a parent, war, and alcohol and drug abuse are ordinary (Harris et al, 2011).

The World Health Organization (WHO, 1993) further classified street children into four groups: 1) children living on the streets, whose instant problems are living and protection, 2) children who are separated from their families and staying in momentary shelters, for example discarded houses and other buildings, hostels/refuges/shelters, or moving among friends, 3) children who are still connected to their families, however due to poverty, congestion, or sexual or physical abuse inside the family tend to expend several nights, or the majority of days on the streets and 4) children who are institutionalized, who were originally homeless and are in danger of returning to this state again. Volpi (2002) in the World Bank's report titled "Street Children Promising Practices and Approaches" differentiated among youth in primary, secondary and tertiary risks. He placed street children at the tertiary level, which is where risk has turned into tangible truth and tailored particular protection interventions are needed.

Not only there is no agreed upon definition for street children, in addition, there are no concrete official numbers for those children around the world. Three main reasons contribute to this. First, it is difficult to identify these children. In addition, there are very incompatible definitions and classifications of these children. Last but not least, the high degree of mobility of these children leads to their anonymity because they do not remain in one place (Harris, et al, 2011). Different sources have mentioned various numbers for street children around the world. The latest estimates from the UNICEF reported in 2006 mention that there are tens of millions and in some other instances more than hundred million street children globally (Harris, et al, 2011).

III. Conceptual Framework

Through qualitative research methodology depending on semi-structured in-depth interviews, I study the role of NGOs in Egypt in developing effective interventions for street children. In order to understand this, I address four important questions:

- What are the current practices of NGOs towards street children in Egypt?

- What are the key obstacles that NGOs face that deter them from providing more support to these children?

- What are the views of NGOs on having a more tangible impact on the lives of street children?

- How do the government and NGOs collaborate together to support street children?

In this study, I use a holistic definition to identify who constitute street children. This definition includes the one drafted in 1985 by the UN. I also include both "children of the street" and "children on the street" (Harris, et al, 2011) and the classification of WHO in 1993. For the purpose of this study, I include children who are in NGOs' permanent shelters and in the corrective institutions established by the Ministry of Social Solidarity.

The common criteria across these definitions are that these children are traumatized by the street life experience and have minimal or no relationship with their families if they exist. Identifying these criteria is important because there is a blurred line in Egypt and probably in other countries between street children and other groups of children at a disadvantage such as orphans. However, the main differentiator is the suffer resulting from the street life experience

which in turn requires different types of interventions than those provided to orphans, who whether they have families or not, were not exposed to the street life suffer.

I focus on understanding the role of NGOs in developing effective interventions for street children. The NGO is referred to as an organization that is "not only non-governmental, but also non-for-profit" (Thomas, Carr, & Humphreys, 2001). Unlike the government which normally has a specific mandate that guides its efforts and actions towards street children, NGOs by default of their organizational setup have more flexibility in their programs' types. The comprehensive nature of the definition of their target beneficiaries definitely reflects on identifying these NGOs working with street children. I study the NGOs who are working with one or more of the various groups of street children referred to in my comprehensive definition who have experienced street life. Since these children represent such a heterogeneous group, the NGOs also tend to have some variances in their models of services provision. In this study, I also attempt to understand the collaboration between the government and the NGOs in working with street children, including the government's support and partnership approach to the NGOs.

CHAPTER TWO

I. Literature Review

Within the existing limited literature available about street children, several dominant themes emerge. These are the types and amount of suffering they are exposed to, the group dynamics and sub culture of these children and the factors that lead to this phenomenon. In addition, there are other themes such as the relationship that children have with the justice and legal system in the country, the stigmatizing view towards street children as trouble makers, the NGOs' efforts towards these children and recommendations for improving their lives. However, most of the literature lies in the area of the reasons behind having children leaving their homes to the streets and the amount of suffering they are exposed to. Very limited literature, on the contrary, is available about the role of NGOs in this field and about the empirical evidence of their programs.

In this section, I review the many dominant themes that emerge from the literature available about street children globally and in Egypt.

A. Literature on the Role of NGOs Working with Street Children and Recommendations for Improving their Lives

With the rise of more NGOs working to serve street children and to provide specific interventions for them, some scholars have started documenting this role in different countries. Some of these studies discuss the role of NGOs in Brazil and Peru (Kent, 1993; Moran & Castro, 1997; Harris, et al, 2011). A comprehensive report is from Brazil (Moran and Castro, 1997) that drafted some lessons and recommendations for the Inter-American Development Bank's involvement with street-children. The authors highlighted that at minimum some of these lessons and recommendations could be suitable for other international development agencies as well. It

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initiated debate guiding policy decisions within the IDB on the best ways to help street children in the client countries of the bank. A lot has been learned during the successful conclusion of the first group of projects which can be included into future projects. Kent (1993) documented a project aimed to support street children in Brazil called "Child Hope's PROJICA". The principle objective of Child Hope's PROJICA project was to decrease acts of violence against children by working within the system to make sure of the enactment of the "Statute of the Child and Adolescent". PROJICA was founded on the thought that both direct actions of violence and abandon and rejection stop huge numbers of children and adolescents from exercising their full rights as presented out in the Statute. The project aimed to deal with the available incidents of violence against children while trying to tackle some of the causes of this violence, foreseeing and accordingly preventing some of the violations of the Rights of Children. The report had three main objectives, one of which tackled the role of street children NGOs.

Harris et al (2011) discuss re-integrating street children back in to the society through two successful programs in Brazil and Peru. These are: the Associãcao Promocional Oracão e Trabalho (APOT) in Brazil, which is the "Association for the Promotion of Spirituality and Work" in English; that aims to assist in healing from substance use and to endorse successful reintegration into the society via educational and vocational training and the Instituto Mundo Libre (IML) in Peru, which is "Free World Institute" in English; this is a foster home for street children and works in 11 states in Peru. The authors also segmented the programs and government policies provided to street children into three categories: corrective, rehabilitative and outreach. The corrective programs employ punitive or custody ways to deject criminal behavior of street children. Rehabilitative interventions use models to alter the street children's behavior by teaching substitute principles, developing vocational and life capacities, or

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employing behavior adjustment mechanisms. Outreach efforts work to spot street children and provide multiple services to them. Some interventions provide food, beds, and showers temporarily, while others necessitate residential living with obligation to change behavior. This classification is based on the type of approach undertaken to work with street children.

Demartoto (2012) and Saripudin (2012) discuss the role of NGOs working with street children in Indonesia. Saripudin (2012) studies the "open house" concept in Indonesia for re-socialization of street children. The broad objective of establishing the open house is to support the street children in dealing with their problems and selecting the options of their needs' realization. Demartoto (2012) classifies the programs provided to street children by the government, NGOs and society into three groups: street-based approach, center-based approach and community-based approach. Street-based approach is the model of street children management in the location where the street children survive or come from, and then the street educators go to them: talking with them, joining them while working, understanding and accepting the situation, and positioning themselves as friends. In a number of hours, the children are provided with education material and skill also, the street children receive warmth which can develop into joint trust which is valuable for the attainment of the program's objectives. The center-based approach is the street children management in an institution or a shelter. The street children who are still on and off the street are included in drop-in center, while those who have left the street lie in a residential center. The community-based approach is the management model including all stakeholders of the society, especially the street children's family or parent. This approach is a preventive one, which aims to prevent the children from being trapped in street life. The family is offered education about growing up the children and there are efforts to enhance its living standard. At the same time, the children are offered the chance to receive

formal and informal education, spending vacation time, and other functional activities. The objective of this approach is to advance the ability of the family as well as the community to protect, develop, and satisfy the children's wants autonomously.

Niewwenhuys (2001) explores what NGOs did wrong in the programs they devised to street children in Ethiopia. Young and Barrett (2001) discuss the use of visual methods for collecting information from street children in Uganda. Turnbull, Herandez & Reyez (2009) analyze the relationships between street children and those who help them in Mexico. Hussain and Khan (2013) administered the Human Figure Drawing and Draw-a Person Intellectual Ability tests[1] to study the emotional and intellectual functioning and accomplishment of street children in Pakistan. Paired- Samples *t*-test analyses showed important upgrading in emotional functioning, intellectual capability and the success of street children following the provision of rehabilitation services in Pakistan. Sephard (2014) reviews the added value of providing non-formal education to street children across countries. Volpi's (2002) report is published by the World Bank and discusses promising practices of NGOs from different countries. Reyneke (2011) studies the problem of street children in South Africa to acquire indicators that are necessary for an intervention plan for street children. Zarezadeh (2013) discusses the steps that the different organizations in Iran have embarked on to support street children.

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[1] Human Figure Drawing (Koppitz, 1968) was employed to evaluate children's emotional functioning. Its manual instructions are "On this piece of paper I would like you to draw a whole person. It can be any kind of a person you want to draw just make sure that it is a whole person and not a stick figure or cartoon figure"
Draw a Person Intellectual Ability Test for Children, Adolescent and Adults (Reynolds & Hickman, 2004) was employed to evaluate street children's intelligence capacity. Its manual instructions are "I want you to draw a picture of yourself. Be sure to draw your whole body, not just your head, and draw how you look from the front, not from the side. Do not draw a cartoon or stick figure. Draw the very best picture of yourself that you can. Take your time and work carefully. Go ahead"

Only four studies discuss the programs drafted by NGOs in Egypt to serve street children. (ODCCP et al, 2001; Hosny, Moloukhia, Abd Elsalam & Abd Elatif, 2007; Friends-International, 2008; Al-Dien, 2009). Two of these studies are rapid assessment reports. The first report is the one written by the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Program (WFP) in 2001. This study had three main objectives. The first objective was to evaluate the general circumstances of street children in Cairo and Alexandria through identifying the areas where they are concentrated, their activities, desires and priorities, the size and patterns of drug abuse amongst them, and their health and nutritional conditions. The second objective was to classify the existing governmental and non-governmental activities and programs targeting street children, and review their needs and problems. The final objective was to come up with recommendations for suitable programs and interventions.

The second study is conducted by Friends International in 2008 as a rapid assessment of the existing services for street children in Egypt; requested by Face Children, a NGO working in Egypt with orphans and street children. The third study is written by Al-Dien (2009) to evaluate the role played by Hope Village Society (HVS), one of the leading NGOs in Egypt, in providing education to street children in an attempt to understand its pluses abd disadvantages for other providers of education to street children to learn from. The fourth study discusses an environmental behavioral modification program that was conducted in Alexandria, to support street children to change their behavior, discover their abilities and expand and gain new skills and knowledge. This program was the first to be applied in Egypt (Hosny et al, 2007).

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B. Literature on Street Children Abuse, Suffer and Health Status

Since street children are subject to huge abuse and discrimination in any society they live in, many articles have focused on the types and amount of suffer they are exposed to. The types of suffering include sexual abuse, drug abuse, violence and harassment by police or other parties. These are discussed by the different scholars in the Egyptian context (Bibars, 1998; Nada & El Daw, 2010; ElKoussi & Bakheet, 2011; El Feky, 2013).

They are also discussed in other countries. In Ghana, (Anarfi, 1997) discusses the higher vulnerability of street children to HIV. In India, many researchers (Bal, Mitra, Mallick, Chakraborti & Sarkar, 2010; Sharma & Lal, 2011, Praveen et al, 2012, Dhawan, Chopra, Ambekar & Ray, 2015) discuss substance misuse among street children. The same issue is addressed in Kenya by (Embleton, Ayuku, Atwoli, Vreeman & Braitstein, 2012). More studies relate to Sudan (Jemera, 1995), Burundi (Crombach & Elbert, 2014) and Siberia (Stojadinovic, Batrnekantonic, Perinovic & Roncevic, 2015).

In one of the few academic articles in which street children are approached directly in Egypt, Bibars (1998) in her article manages to talk to the street children themselves in Egypt highlighting their circumstances in three different locations. Of course, the article is very sad and negative because it mainly addresses the amount of suffering these children were exposed to. Still, it is considered to be one of the few articles that approached such an important topic in a different way at a time in which street children were not yet given enough attention by researchers. She interviewed children along with their mothers or aunts at their homes; other children were interviewed in the streets of downtown Cairo; and some of those interviewed were institutionalized at corrective institutions. However, unfortunately the author revealed the actual identities of the children which contradict with research ethics because they might be exposed to

harm as a result of these interviews. Still, this article remains to be one of the few articles that shows the ideas and feelings of the children themselves rather than talking about or on behalf of them most of the time.

Some scholars attempted to analyze the health status of street children especially given the huge suffer and oppression they are exposed to on a regular basis (Mohamed, Labib, El Hafnawy & Mohamed, 2011; ElKoussi & Bakheet, 2011, Anjali, 2012; Singh & Purohit, 2013; Khadijeh, Mohammad, Mohammad & Nayereh, 2013; Woan, Lin & Auerswald 2013; Berad, Kumar & Momula, 2015).

Some of these studies focus on a certain geographical area. Mohamed et al (2011) selected a sample of street children from Beni Suef City in Egypt to evaluate the health status of these children and define the most familiar risk factors affecting their physical, psychological, and social health. ElKoussi and Bakheet (2011) selected a wider geographical area focusing on Upper Egypt. Other studies focused on very specific signs of the children's health status. Berad et al (2015) focused on the nutritional deficiencies among street children in India. Khadijeh, et al (2013) focused on hair contamination among street children in Iran.

C. Literature on Group Dynamics and Sub culture of Street Children

Several writers have studied the details of the group dynamics and subcultures of street children. Street children usually suddenly find themselves together and they have to learn to live with each other. Factors that create common grounds among them may differ from one country to another. Hussain (2005) discusses the sub culture of street children in Egypt which is considered as one of the very rare sources about this aspect in the Egyptian context. D'Abreu, Mullis and Cook (1999) study the situation in Brazil. They examine the relationship between

social support and the ability of street children to adapt to life on the streets. They reveal that social support is not an important element.

Stephenson (2001) discusses how street children in Moscow get engaged in certain criminological and non criminological activities as a way to facilitate for them getting access to special resources and networks and how they use their social skills to develop alternative careers for themselves. The subculture of street children in Ukraine has also been examined in literature by Naterer (2015) who emphasizes the influence of globalization, modernization and transition which led to the appearance of street children. The research was based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative research conducted between 2000 and 2010 when a non-random sample of 68 street children was selected, observed and interviewed. Beazley (2003) contributes with a comprehensive study about street children in Indonesia. His paper studied in-depth a street boy community which exists within marginal spaces: the Tikyan subculture of Yogyakarta. It shows the Tikyan subculture as a technique for street children to oppose the negative stereotypes that are given to them by mainstream society. As these children become older and more refused by the society, the Tikyan actively resist their 'deviant' label, and start to beautify street life in order to be able to accept it. They do this by distancing from main dress styles and conformist behavior, and via the development of an explicit symbolic identity.

Relying on his expertise as a Sociology Professor in the McMurry University, Hollingsworth (2012) examines the subculture of street children in Peru and Mexico. Mizen and Kusi (2010) discuss friendship as a survival strategy among street children in Ghana (2010). Omiyinka (2010) studies the social networks among street children in Nigeria. Maria, Martinez and Jr. (2014) discuss the kinds of risk and protection in street children's lives in Philippines. Patel, Toral, Bansal and Thakar (2011) study the staying preferences of street children in India.

Ali (2001) discusses certain survival strategies used by street children such as group cohesion, self-sufficiency and control, and creative, effective problem-solving, as well as exploitation.

D. Literature on the Factors that Lead Children to Leave Home to the Street

A number of studies focused on studying the factors that lead children to leave their homes to the streets. A general distinction is made by many scholars between two groups of factors; "push" and "pull' factors. Push factors include abuse, neglect, food deficiency, and homelessness. Pull factors which attract children to the streets involve earning income, being with close friends, or the attraction of pleasant things in the city (Harris et al, 2011). Many authors have cited and discussed the different factors in more details in different contexts. In Pakistan (Iqbal, 2008) reveals that three main causes push children to the streets; family background, violence and poverty. In Sudan, (Ali, 2011) identified seven reasons: living in the city, risky behavior, economic factors, natural and environmental, family disturbance, observation, and family mistreatment. Other studies discuss the reasons in Iran (Khaniha, Shooshtari, Mohammadian, Bidaki & Boshrabadi, 2014; Iravani, Salimi, Soltani & Basity, 2014), India (Salivkar, 2015) and South Africa (Idemudia, Kgokong & Kolobe, 2013). These forces include poverty; break down of family ties, abuse by family members, huge shifts to urbanization without sufficient resources, dropping out of schools due to low quality of education…etc. In some more critical situations, huge crises and wars can also lead large numbers of children to the streets. Of course, the magnitude of these factors differs from one country to another with some reasons getting more weight at the expense of others. A dominant and apparent note is that most countries which experienced having larger numbers of street children experienced this phenomenon at the times when they suffered from low development levels and high degrees of poverty. For instance, street children existed in considerable numbers

in Latin American countries such as Brazil in the 1990s before the country embarked on prosperous developmental efforts. In Egypt, street children have been increasing tremendously in recent years in parallel to the difficult economic situation with the visibility of many girls on the streets and younger children revealing trends that are even against the common cultural norms and traditions in the Egyptian culture signaling more critical threats.

E. Literature on the Relationship between Street Children and the Legal System

Few research papers have approached the relationship between street children and the legal or justice system in the country where they live (Filho & Neder, 1998; Ribeiro, 2008, Ammar, 2009; Rosenblatt, 2012; Ewelukwa, 2014, Nagaseshamma, 2010). One important study about the situation in Egypt is the article written by Ammar (2009). The article examines if the justice system increases the problem of street children and if we should reconsider its potential to contribute positively to solve this problem. The author also discusses the negative perception of the role of the justice system and the steps needed to enhance its role in alleviating the problem. She ends with a road map that could be followed by the Egyptian justice system to successfully handle the problem of street children in Egypt. These steps are: the establishment of an inclusive juvenile justice system across the nations, developing a juvenile justice strategy that aims to decreasing the custody of juveniles and having moral legal and social sensitivity toward the interpersonal violence that street children are exposed to in their families and in schools.

F. Literature on Social Stigma towards Street Children

The stigmatizing view towards street children as trouble makers is another very common theme in the literature existing about street children. In most of the countries where there are large numbers of street children, they are exposed to some sort of stigmatization by the society especially labeling and discrimination against. In Egypt, this topic was more addressed through

newspaper articles but less via researchers or scholars (Morayef 2012; Haddon, 2013; El Feky, 2013). Haddon (2013) interviews in his article some of the NGOs' practitioners who highlight the negative perceptions of the Egyptian people towards street children. This was more common in the media especially after January 25th revolution where there was more spotlight on these children especially after their participation in the demonstrations and sit-ins. Kidd (2007) addresses this issue in the USA mainly in the cities of New York and Toronto. Karani (2014) talks about the effect of stigma on the rehabilitation of street children; drawing on experience from Kenya. Olsson (2013) recounts the experiences of former street children with stigma in Uganda while Annet (2014) attempts to understand the influence of social stigma on street children's survival in the same country. Annet (2014) demonstrates that stigmatization, labeling, discrimination and injustice experienced by street children will hold back the success of interventions when the stakeholders did not evaluate seriously the influence it has on the children that they are seeking to support. Deacon and Stephney (2007) concentrate on the South African experience. Ogunkan & Adeboyejo (2014) discuss the perceptions of the public towards street children in Nigeria.

CHAPTER THREE

I. Research Methodology

In this section, I discuss the research methodology that I used for my thesis by reviewing three main elements:

A. Research Design

B. Sample Selection

C. Study Limitations

A. Research Design

In this study, I used qualitative research methodology to gather the needed primary data for answering my research questions. Employing qualitative research methodology while focusing on an interpretive approach in the data analysis and drawn conclusions enabled me to obtain subjective knowledge and understanding while deep diving into the complexities of the management and practices of street children NGOs in Egypt. The study is an academic study that has value for practice. My main focus audience is NGOs, however other audiences can include the government which is a key stakeholder in dealing with the problem of street children in Egypt and that acts mainly as a regulator and facilitator for much of the work of the NGOs.

This study is an explanatory not a descriptive study. It seeks depth and not breadth, in order to discover not to verify. It aims to understand how and why people behave, think and provide meaning to what they do instead of concentrating on what people do or believe in on a huge scale (Ambert, Adler, Adler & Detzner 1995). An explanatory study is one that aims to explain and account for the descriptive information. It attempts to find the causes for things, displaying why and how they are what they are (Punch, 2007). Rather than aiming to draw out

conclusions from a huge probability sample of a whole population under study typically in a quantitative positivist methodology to quantify observations and identify certain patterns, this study aims to come up with in-depth and intimate knowledge about a smaller group of people (Ambert, et al, 1995). This is because the population of the study is not large, so zooming on a diverse and comprehensive sample of participants allowed me to collect insightful data rather than just generalizing less data to a very large population like in quantitative methods. In addition, the study employs grounded-theory methods to build an understanding of the current practices of street children NGOs in Egypt and the challenges they face in their work. Grounded-theory focuses more on the surface of theory from data (Ambert, et al, 1995). Accordingly, there is no specific structured set of questions that are designed at the beginning of the data collection phase but rather the study unfolds as the data gathering continues.

I conducted a set of semi-structured in-depth interviews with participants working in street children NGOs in Egypt and with key governmental officials/staff working in the Ministry of Social Solidarity. Especially for the local NGOs' practitioners, I attempted to meet with some of them in the NGOs' premises. This enabled me to use participant observation as another research tool to enrich the findings of my study. Observing the places where the children live and play complemented my understanding of the current services and programs offered to the children. Watching how the children deal with each other and with the NGOs' staff also provided me with a glimpse of the profile of these children as they are not a part of the respondents' sample due to reasons that will be explained further in the section highlighting the limitations of the study. There was a preliminary set of questions that were asked but other questions naturally developed as the interviews continued in order to enable the participants to fully share their

experiences. Interviewing different stakeholders in NGOs and the Ministry of Social Solidarity helped me to verify and validate the solicited data.

Participants were fully informed about the nature and purpose of the research study. The Institutional Review Board at AUC (IRB) has granted approval for the research study before data collection started. The confidentiality of their data is ensured and explained to them. The questions were asked in Arabic and the data was transcribed in English. I used some of the quotes from the participants' words to enrich the data while sometimes combining English with Arabic in Franco – Arab version to avoid changing the real essence of the meaning of the statements told by the participants.

B. Sample Selection

The sample consists of six practitioners working in NGOs working with street children and two government officials/staff working in the Ministry of Social Solidarity in Egypt. The sample ensured a representative inclusion of the different views through covering:

- Two international NGOs: these include NGOs which have vast experience in working with children, including street children as well as other children's issues on a global level and which have been working for a long time in Egypt as well.

- Two local NGOs: these NGOs include those specialized in working with street children for a relatively long time since the inception of these NGOs in the 1980s with demonstrated ample experience. Also, both of them are registered in the Ministry of Social Solidarity.

- Top management including founders of the NGOs and board members.

- Middle/low management and staff working directly with the children with grass roots on hand experience and insights including field coordinators, project managers and project officers.

- Government officials/staff working in the Ministry of Social Solidarity in Egypt.

My sampling strategy revolved around intense and opportunistic sampling typology. In other words, I attempted to learn from participants who have very relevant and information-rich experiences that reflect the parameters of the research topic in an intense but not an extreme manner. Furthermore, I followed new leads that related me to more sources on unexpected knowledge areas (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Using multiple interviewees enabled me to cross check and triangulate the data to ensure higher degrees of validity in the eyes of the readers. It also provided more strength to the outcomes of the study that can later entice potential research in this field and guide decision makers in NGOs on how to better service their target beneficiaries.

The anonymity of the NGOs and of all the participants is maintained in this study. International NGOs are referred to as international NGO 1 and 2. Local NGOs are referred to as local NGO 1 and 2. Governmental officials/staff are referred to as government official 1 and government staff 2. The complete anonymity of the names of the entities and the participants allowed me to freely display their views without causing them any negative feelings. After all, as a researcher, I am very grateful for all the participants who provided me with some of their precious time just to enable me to understand the dynamics of how they work and the challenges that they face without any direct benefit to themselves.

On a personal level, I can describe myself as an outsider to the field but with a huge passion about this problem for many years. This facilitated my engagement with the discussions with the people involved in the study. It also eliminated any form of bias by being far from the field thus not judging any participant's experiences or views.

C. Limitations of the Study

One limitation of this study is the limited literature available about street children NGOs in Egypt. However; this was a major reason that influenced me to decide to conduct this study. I aimed to write a paper which deep dives into some constructive work that has been taking place in Egypt for over twenty five years now by NGOs to support street children. This complements and balances the literature available about the negative experiences of street children's suffer.

Another important decision that I took is not interviewing the beneficiaries of these NGOs who are the children themselves. I decided not to include them in the study first of all, because I wanted to focus on the management of the NGOs themselves and their practices. The second reason is that I am following the "no harm principle" especially with the amount of suffering that these children have normally experienced and can recall if they are interviewed.

CHAPTER FOUR: The Role of NGOs Working with Street Children in Egypt

In this chapter, I discuss and analyze the data collected through my semi-structured in-depth interviews with the participants. The different themes that were derived from the data are explained in this chapter. The interviews provided me with rich data which I also linked to the existing literature about street children NGOs in Egypt.

I. How NGOs Define their Target Group: Street Children

Since it is evident from literature that there are numerous definitions for street children and in the absence of one global definition, I started my questions with all the respondents with asking them about their own definition of street children. This was very important in the beginning of each discussion as it reflects on the subsequent questions and answers in the interview. Respondents from the NGOs referred to street children with other names such as "children at risk". It is worth mentioning here that most participants did not prefer the term "street children" because of the negative connotations associated with it. Instead, they used more relevant names that describe the situation of these children. When the respondents were asked to mention their own conceptualization of who constitutes street children, their definitions matched with the most common classification in literature that differentiates between "children of the street" and "children on the street". It also matched with the UN definition drafted in 1985 and the WHO definition devised in 1993.

> This is a term that is very difficult to define. The term I prefer to use is children at risk. It encompasses many different children; those who are living all the time on the streets, those who spend some time on the streets but go home at the end of the day and those who are on and off on the streets so they are currently living in their homes but they visit the streets a lot and can get easily attracted by the freedom on the streets to turn to be all the time on the streets. These children actually constitute a large percentage of those we work with (Projects Manager, Local NGO 1, September, 2015)

This definition includes many groups of children, those who are already 24 hours on the street, and those who spend some time on the street but go home at night. In addition for the interviewee, the third group which represents the majority of the children they work with are those who are still living with their families but go to the street a lot. These can turn to be 24 hours on the street. This definition reflects the high degree of heterogeneity of street children and the difficulty to identify them.

> Those who work directly with street children on the ground like myself base their definition on two important factors; if the child spends all or most of his time in the street and if he is completely separated from his family or almost separated then he is a street child. International organizations like the one I work in always link this definition as well to rights, so street children are those who are also deprived of their main basic rights like sleep, food...etc. These are the key factors to define a street child, you cannot judge by the child's appearance only (Field Coordinator, International NGO 1, October, 2015)

This definition is similar to the earlier definition but it uses some criteria for identifying who are street children.

> The classical definition for street children is any child below 18 years who lives and cares for himself completely on the street excluding street vendors and families living in streets. But I propose another definition which is any child whose lifestyle forces him/her to be responsible for his/her own safety which results in the psychological makeup of a street child (Board Member, Local NGO 1, December, 2015)

Recognizing the huge variances among street children led some respondents to highlight the need for setting criteria for the children they work with and then for devising different ways to work with children's groups with different needs.

We as NGOs should have criteria for which children we will work with. Many NGOs take the easy route. They mix between orphans and street children; they prefer to work with young children; who are orphans than working with street children cases; who have very difficult conditions (Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

This term has many classifications and each group of children have their own needs and their own way to work with (Shelter Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

It is obvious from the data collected that the huge discrepancy available in defining street children in literature is also reflected in practice in Egypt. The NGOs mainly included different versions of "children on the street" and "children of the street" in their definitions. As for the government, it differentiates between many segments of children like "children of the street", "children on the street", "children at risk" and "working children" (Government Official 1, October, 2015). In its strategy and provision of services, it focuses on a specific segment of these children who are "the children without shelter". This group resembles more "children of the street". They are a group within street children but they are the most critical group because they don't have an option other than sleeping in the street (Government Staff 2, October, 2015). This focus helps the government to have a clear scope of the profile of children they are working with.

II. How NGOs Estimate the Number of Street Children in Egypt

The definition question was usually followed by a question about the number of street children in Egypt because these two questions together normally identified the exact problem definition of each participant which supposedly guided the types of programs he/she is involved in to support street children. When the NGOs' practitioners were asked about the number of street children, they all agreed that this is a very difficult question to answer because it is difficult to count street children due to many reasons: the absence of a clear unified definition of street

children, their mobility, and the presence of many hidden places that not everyone can reach. These reasons resemble the ones highlighted in existing literature about street children that discusses the difficulty to have clear statistics about street children globally. On the other hand, the government had a clear count, by announcing that "children without shelter" in Egypt are 16,000 (Government Official 1, October, 2015). Some of the interviewed respondents from NGOs believed that the number is higher than this figure; some were not able to indicate whether it is a right or wrong figure and some actually recognized the criteria used to conduct this count.

Overall, the participants from the government were confident about the number of "children without shelter" and believed that it is a very reasonable count taking into account the exact definition they are including in the count and the other studies that were conducted in previous years. This count is compared to previous studies conducted by the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) in 2007 and 2009 which resulted in close figures. The 2007 study was conducted in four major cities which are Cairo, Alexandria, Giza and Qaliobeya and resulted in a number around 8,000 children. The 2009 study resulted in a number around 4,000 children (Government Official 1, October, 2015).

It is clear then that we cannot assess the magnitude of the problem of street children in Egypt without agreeing on a definition and number of this group of children. It is important for all the stakeholders involved in working with street children in Egypt to have at least some common ground on whom they are working with by establishing criteria for classifying these children. This is not a theoretical requirement but it needed for real-life practice. The programs drafted to support these children need to be based on a clear identification of their target beneficiaries and their exact needs.

In addition, announcing an official number by the government helps to prevent other inaccurate statistics from being used without evidence. For example, there is a number that has been cited by many sources as a count announced by the UNICEF which is two million children, which is not supported by interviewees. As explained by Government Official 1, this number was once mentioned in a workshop conducted by the UNICEF and started to be used in many citations while it is not true. According to Government Official 1, the Ministry of Social Solidarity has asked the UNICEF to announce that this number is not true. The Population Council in 2008 highlighted in its report that based on their rapid assessment section of their study, the figures that are informally mentioned among practitioners in this area; placing the number of street children some place between 1 to 2 millions, are unconfirmed and possibly overstated. Volpi (2002) also highlighted that the UNICEF has announced that there were 100 million street children worldwide, with half of them in Latin America and then they later discarded this figure.

Apart from the fact that it seemed difficult for NGOs' practitioners to estimate the numbers of street children, they were able to witness some indicators that signal that that there are some core changes happening to their composition.

> I cannot say if numbers are increasing or decreasing but there are many points to consider. Every day, when we go to streets, we find new children whom we did not see before, also we find more 3-4 years old children. Someone "opened the door for them and told them to go to the street" unlike the 12 years children. They cannot take a decision like this on their own. In addition, we see more "2ⁿᵈ generation" and "3ʳᵈ generation children" and more girls. When I first started working in this field, girls represented may be 5%; nowadays they reached 40-50%. This tells us something about the families' status because usually the last family member who goes to the street is the girl (Board Member, Local NGO 1, December, 2015)

The above quote reflects that the participant believes that some changes occurred to the families' makeup that affected the profile of children who go to streets.

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The following quote shows a connection between the number of children and the political turmoil in the last few years.

> After the revolution in 2011, many changes happened. These changes include the observation that many of the places that were known as clusters for street children are not crowded as before, fewer children are grouped in these places, and also fewer girls are on the streets, so I think they may be shifted to other jobs. Also, many children are on the streets but with their parents (these are not street children because they accompany their parents), and others returned to their homes. In addition, more males of older age/leaders are on the streets (Project Officer, International NGO 2, July, 2015)

NGOs' practitioners are aware of many changes that are taking place to street children. However, none of them mentioned that they conducted any studies to analyze these changes. This is the main reason behind having different views about these changes like whether there are increasing or decreasing numbers of girls on the streets.

III. Programs provided to Street Children

A. Local NGOs: The "Sequential Support Services Model"

The types of programs drafted for street children by the NGOs in Egypt differed among local and international ones. Mainly, the interviewed local NGOs have developed a model with a certain sequence that they believe as very important when working with street children. For the use of this study, I will refer to this model as the "Sequential Support Services" model. This model is divided into three main parts, one in which the NGOs work with the families using a preventive approach, one in which the NGOs work with the children in the street in the early detection phase and one conducted by the NGOs in shelters to rehabilitate children. This model starts with working with the families to increase their awareness and economic abilities to help in preventing the children from going to the streets in the first place, then moves to the mobile unit

or outreach teams to engage with the children on the streets, to get to know them and start building a relationship of trust with them then includes the reception center for the daily visits of children. The mobile unit, outreach activities and the reception center are considered the early detection phase. The next service is the temporary shelter and finally the permanent shelter. Shelters are focused more on providing rehabilitative services such as different workshops for children to express their views and to learn income-generating activities that can support them in their future. Each of the interviewed local NGOs has four out of the five steps of this model. The model combines the three approaches highlighted by Demartoto (2012); the street-based approach, the center-based approach and the community-based approach. The model also matches with the rehabilitative and outreach approaches identified by Harris et al (2011).

Corrective

Rehabilitative

Outreach

Figure 1: Based on Harris et al (2011), Classification of Street Children Programs

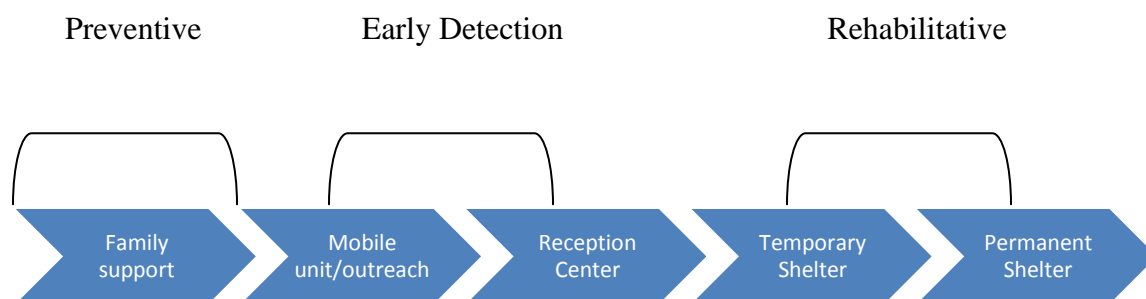Figure 2: Based on Demartoto (2012), Classification of Street Children Programs

Figure 3: Local NGOs' "Sequential Support Services" Model to Street Children

Step 1

The first step in the model is a preventive step that aims to support the family to prevent children from going streets in the first place. One kind of support is the financial support.

The Shelter Manager in local NGO 2 explained the first step in the model:

> We have 10 offices providing small loans for mothers responsible for families in poor areas. We work in coordination with the ministry in slums areas' development. We want to "close the tap" so we should work with the families themselves (November, 2015)

Another kind of support is the psychological support because the NGOs practitioners realize that families and especially mothers who are the core of families do not only need financial help.

Family support does not only revolve about the economic aspect:

> These mothers don't have anyone to care about them or to listen to them. We provide to them psychological rehabilitation, we take them in trips, they just need someone to listen to. Rather than giving them money directly or food, we think more long-term. We teach them clever techniques on how to cook food that can create more portions for example mixing eggs with flour to create a bigger portion…etc. (Field Coordinator, International NGO 1, October, 2015)

Step 2

The Projects Manager in local NGO 1 further explained the second step in this ladder of activities in detail: the second program is the mobile unit or in other words, the psycho mobile unit. This unit goes to the children on the street providing them with a very unique service which is a social specialist and a psychologist.

Another format of this program is the outreach program which also involves a team of social and psychological specialists going to the children on the streets. The Shelter Manager in local NGO 2 mentioned the outreach program in which the NGO's team goes to the children in the streets to get to know them and offer to them some basic services in an attempt to build a relationship of trust with them.

Step 3

The third program in the model is the reception center. This component of the model is the one that has the most controversial views among practitioners about its importance.

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We have the reception center which provides basic rehabilitation services to the street child to be able to later leave the street and live in a shelter. I believe that every child as a human has the right to be offered the basic services like food, drinks…etc. and then he has the right to decide where he/she wants to live (Projects Manager, Local NGO 1, September, 2015)

Although this concept is being criticized by many practitioners for not being effective because the child goes back to the street, I still believe that it is a very crucial service. We have around 570 children visiting the reception center and almost 40% of them have moved to the shelter which is a very good percent (Projects Manager, Local NGO 1, September, 2015)

The reception center is very important from a research perspective because it gives us the opportunity to know the children (how would we know them otherwise?). It is also very important from a practical perspective because children visit the centers from 9am-4pm (sometimes with their mothers) and get the chance to learn some basic principles and values. Of course, still there is a potential to improve this model, though (Projects Manager, Local NGO 1, September, 2015)

Some NGOs' practitioners believe that the reception center is an important intermediary

step for children who cannot move directly from completely free life to a closed life in a shelter.

Some people working in the field tell me that I make these children's lives easier when I enable them to visit the reception center, eat and play and then let them go to the street again. Those who say this do not understand the psychological makeup of these children. After staying for many years in the streets, these children cannot conform easily to anything even to the fact that they need to live surrounded by walls, they become "freedom addicts". Based on studies, the reception center enables us to develop the personalities of the children; they become less aggressive (Board Member, Local NGO 1, December, 2015)

Other practitioners believed that the reception center is a waste of time and effort because

it leads to the same results of the outreach program.

We had an experience of working on a funded project with an international NGO which involved having a reception center in 2015 and we ended up with being able to transfer 20 children from this reception center to the shelter. We learnt a lot from this experience

because we discovered that we can have the same number of children from the outreach program so we should not put a lot of efforts in a reception center. We also discovered that the children who visit frequently the youth centers are a lot, that's why now we have reception centers inside the youth centers (Shelter Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

Some practitioners believed that reception centers provide the children with "a treat time"

that they take but still go to the street for more freedom.

I used to defend the concept of reception centers in earlier years but nowadays I think that reception centers are a negative idea. Do you know why these children don't want to leave streets? Because they go and enjoy the services offered by these centers and they return to the streets for more freedom. It is better to convert these centers into consulting offices to listen from children and offer them advice. These children need someone to listen to them and provide them with help. They all think that they are either going to be arrested or will die (Project Officer, International NGO 2, July, 2015)

Step 4

The fourth program in the model is the temporary shelter.

The temporary shelter is a rehabilitation period for both parties. In this shelter, the child decides whether he wants to move to a shelter or not and the NGO decides which intervention is suitable for the child's needs (Projects Manager, Local NGO 1, September, 2015)

Step 5

The last step is the permanent shelter. The permanent shelter provides two sets of

services; the basic services such as food and shelter and the more advanced services such as

psychological help, vocational training…etc.

The permanent shelter has 2 main groups of services. First, we have the basic services such as: food, drinks, and sleep and replacement moms. Second, we have the additional services like the psychological unit in which each child has his psychologist who conducts sessions with him and attempts to use some creative ways in therapy as well (Projects Manager, Local NGO 1, September, 2015)

In the shelter, we also have different workshops: pottery, storytelling, arts, sports, photography, crochet, origami, jewelry teaching as well as vocational training. In general, these workshops are divided by age group. For older children, they are used for

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income-generating purpose. This is to help the children to have jobs. For younger children, the workshops are purely used for rehabilitation services. We don't need to think now about what these children will do when they get older (Projects Manager, Local NGO 1, September, 2015)

In the shelter, we provide the basic services including shelter, food, education (formal education, community school and Montessori education). We also have more advanced services such as psychological and social programs, vocational training for 12-15 years old children including workshops for handmade carpets, bamboo, sewing, carpentry and recycling of soap in coordination with a big company. We involve the children in some activities as well like: football, choral, theater, folklore…etc. (Shelter Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

B. International NGOs' Practices

Besides the cooperation between international NGOs and local NGOs in the provision of this model of services to street children through the premises of local NGOs and their grass roots experience, international NGOs have other programs. These programs mainly revolve around: funding provision to local NGOs, capacity development and training, outreach programs and working with the government.

In some cases, local NGOs participate with international NGOs in writing a project's proposal and then the international NGO supports the local NGO to try to get funds from other entities which finance many programs related to street children (Project Officer, International NGO 2, July, 2015). In other cases, the local NGOs take funds from international NGOs but only in the form of small amounts of money and tangible items. The international NGOs spend their funds on core items such as the salaries of the psychologists, sports and the database of children's data. They also supervise the local NGOs' work and financials very strictly, this is both to supervise and help them at the same time. They allow them to use a certain percent of the

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total funds in miscellaneous administrative things (Field Coordinator, International NGO 1, October, 2015).

Training provision and capacity building is another area of expertise for international NGOs. They train social workers working in the government. One NGO has trained five governmental staff from each of ten governorates (a total of 50 staff) on whom to include when counting street children (Field Coordinator, International NGO 1, October, 2015). It also trained staff working in other NGOs (Field Coordinator, International NGO 1, October, 2015). There is a new trend as well to hire and train new staff for local NGOs rather than just training current staff (Project Officer, International NGO 2, July, 2015).

International NGOs also have outreach teams to reach to children on the streets. They interact directly with children on the streets from 5 am to 12 pm everyday offering to them food, drinks, psychological help…etc. (Field Coordinator, International NGO 1, October, 2015).

Last but not least, international NGOs tend to cooperate with the government in some projects.

> We work with the government to get some services to the families such as schools' subsidies, services from the government's supervision offices, pensions…etc. The government has the families' consulting offices which support the families and the supervision offices which should write the reports for prosecutors before he judges on a child if he/she is condemned. We also work with the governmental health centers because many children for example suffer from Anemia due to malnutrition. We finalized an agreement with the consulting offices recently as we want to make use of them. They are currently associated with the local NGOs. They are very good buildings in very good locations but underutilized (Field Coordinator, International NGO 1, October, 2015)

C. The Government's Programs

The Ministry of Social Solidarity as well has multiple core activities that they work on in order to support "children without shelter". As a basis, they rely on three main pillars when approaching these children. These pillars include: partnership with NGOs since NGOs have cumulative experience and knowledge, flexibility in reaching out to and dealing with these children, and the ability to come up with creative ideas to work with the children. Another pillar is using the scientific method through reviewing the international standards/methods and best practices. The last pillar is ensuring sustainability through having a strategy or a long term vision (Government Official 1, October, 2015). The ministry has five main activities for working with "children without shelter". The first activity is providing funding for the NGOs. There are twenty five NGOs working in this field. The government managed to collect 48 Million L.E. and is about to announce who will receive the funds. They also asked the NGOs to do clustering for their services: both thematic and geographic. The second activity is the renovation of corrective institutions. There are thirty seven institutions, they have a capacity to take 4,000 children but now they include only 3,000 children because these institutions are not attractive to children currently. The ministry managed to collect 100 Million L.E. from "Sandouk Tahya Misr" for the renovation of these institutions. They need to be renovated to become attractive to children. The third activity is services renovation of the families' consulting offices and supervision offices. The fourth activity is establishing a "Marsad" for monitoring and evaluation. The fifth activity is providing activities for children such as the initiative of "Our country's football players" that they did with Hassan Shehata (Government Official 1, October, 2015). Besides football, the ministry also has children from the corrective institutions participating in Selim Sehab's Choral group which includes street children and are also planning soon to have some children in the

"Theatre Misr" group (Government Staff 2, October, 2015). Other activities of the ministry include the outreach team which provides health services and basic education services to all street children not only the "children without shelter" (Government Staff 2, October, 2015). The ministry also has some social marketing activities (Government Staff 2, October, 2015). Overall, the ministry has a clear strategy for supporting "children without shelter" that focuses on funding, renovation of services, monitoring and evaluation and building the children's personalities through recreational activities such as sports, music and theatre. They realize the importance of partnering with other stakeholders like the NGOs in order to provide comprehensive services and programs to "children without shelter". Also, they are moving from a punitive to a rehabilitative approach when dealing with the children by renovating corrective institutions to make them more attractive, providing funds to NGOs and engaging in recreational activities for children.

IV. Measuring the Success of the Programs

Drafting suitable programs for street children is very important; however it has to be complemented with setting key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the effectiveness of these interventions. The NGOs cited many key performance indicators that they use to measure the success of their programs. The influence of the work style of international NGOs is evident in this context. According to Projects Manager in local NGO 1:

> Working with international donors is a very good experience because they require very detailed proposals and monitoring reports. That's why we have to develop many surveys for children and even for training providers to understand and measure the effectiveness of these programs. For example, we have a survey for illiteracy to measure the performance of the children every 3 months. This is mainly to track our school project (September, 2015)

Other KPIs highlighted by the NGOs included the number of children who stay in the shelter until they return to their homes, the number of children who return back to their families and remain in their homes, the number of children who get educated, the number of children who get jobs and the number of children whose legal court cases are closed. While these are mostly quantitative measures, the Field Coordinator in international NGO 1 referred to a qualitative measure which is assessing the relationship between the children and their families for example through going on trips together. She also added that impact measurement is necessary, by indicating that they have applications for children and their families; they analyze them regularly to track changes and analyze risks through thirty or forty consecutive visits to these families. Case management was also highlighted by NGOs given the high degree of variance prevalent across this group of target beneficiaries. Case management is the process of supporting a person (child or youth or adult), or a family, or a community/area/group based on their own needs (Friends International, 2008). *Success is measured through each child's timeline which refers to the amount of change that happened to each child,* according to Manager in Local NGO 2 (November, 2015). In addition, the good mix and match between the children's needs and the program's components was highlighted as key driver for the program's success (Project Officer, International NGO 2, July, 2015).

Measuring the success of the programs against the main objective of having programs to street children; which is reintegration back into the society was clear according to the Shelter Manager in local NGO 2:

> The main objective is that these children become normal people. Once a French journalist asked me about if success would be when these children got married from within the same group of children and I told him that this is the optimum failure. I said this because the main objective as I told you is for these children to be reintegrated into the society (November, 2015)

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The difficulty in measuring the success of programs offered to street children was reflected by some practitioners:

> Worldwide, the known success percentage of these kinds of programs is 30%, in the remaining 70%, there are many shades that should be considered as shades of success not failure. For example, when we teach a girl who still lives on the street to use contraceptive methods, aren't we preventing more street children from being born? This should be considered a success (Board Member, Local NGO 1, December, 2015)

> We have a big portfolio of success stories like these but we still do not know how to measure it. We should develop a questionnaire format for example that can measure success and standardize it among NGOs (Board Member, Local NGO 1, December, 2015)

V. Obstacles Preventing NGOs from Providing More Support to Street Children

Despite the fact that all interviewed NGOs proved to be exerting numerous efforts in order to develop effective interventions for street children, they still suffer from many obstacles that sometimes prevent them from providing more support to street children.

A. Financial Sustainability

One of the main obstacles cited by NGOs especially local NGOs is the lack of financial sustainability. This sounds logical as international NGOs usually have more channels to get funds. As the Projects Manager in local NGO 1 explained:

> We rely on 2 main sources: international donors and individuals. International donors mostly focus on awareness campaigns, training and capacity building initiatives. This is because their key performance indicators are mainly about reach so they are not very interested in a project that serves only 200 children for example that's why it is very difficult to convince them. Relying on individuals might help in projects that international NGOs are not interested in however, it is risky. Two years ago, one of our

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individual donors who used to fund our food item in the shelter decided not to renew the contract 1 week before its termination. This was very bad. We are not a business and we are not making money (July, 2015)

The costs of supporting the children are very high. Each child costs around 1200-1500 L.E. per month. A donor once asked me why this cost is very high, I told them because we work 3 shifts and for a normal child, you don't hire a mom and dad and pay to them salary that's why these children cost more than normal children. We have 150 children in the shelter, that's a lot of cost (Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

In addition, *the number of NGOs working in this field is considered very limited (a total of 32) and very few of them are active as many closed because they don't have funds*, according to a Field Coordinator in international NGO 1 (October, 2015).

Limited funds are not only a problem faced by NGOs in Egypt as demonstrated in literature. In Indonesia, in Bandung city, the street children re-socialization program in open houses also suffered from financial resources problems (Saripudin, 2012).

B. The Skills of NGOs Staff

Unlike financial sustainability, the low competence of social workers is an obstacle that hinders the work of both local and international NGOs. Capacity building was also highlighted as an obstacle by Government Staff 2 (October, 2015).

An important obstacle is the lack of experience of social workers, social workers should know when to say enough, they should recognize when they should stop working as social workers, the social worker needs to put efforts to improve his skills, it is not about training only (Project Officer, International NGO 2, July, 2015)

The low caliber of the social workers and employees is a major obstacle. We have 140 employees which is relatively a large number compared to other NGOs. But because we have to maintain certain salary scales, their skills are not very high; even basic writing skills (Projects Manager, Local NGO 1, September, 2015)

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Some social workers cannot work well in teams and some have a conservative mindset, for instance they hit their children at home so they don't understand why we are telling them not to do so in the shelter. They are not well experienced. Sometimes they are jealous because they do not afford to provide their own children with the food and clothes that the children in the shelter receive (Board Member, Local NGO 1, December, 2015)

Despite the increasing focus of international NGOs on capacity development and training, still NGOs including the international ones are complaining about the abilities and capacities of all the staff working in their institutions. This raises a question mark about the kinds of training programs conducted and their degrees of effectiveness. It also signals that both local and international NGOs need to communicate together more intensely about how they can tailor training programs that better fit their needs. There is a lot if investment made in these training programs which is expected to yield better results. After all, the nature of the work done by these NGOs is very special and depends mainly on the caliber they employ.

C. Salaries of the NGOs Staff

Complaining from the low competence of NGOs' staff did not prevent the participants from admitting the huge amount of work done by the staff and the difficulty of it. In their opinion, this does not match with the salaries of these staff or the kind of job stability or assurance that they receive.

The salaries of the staff are very low in return for the amount of work they do and the amount of difficulties they face, there is no "long-term assurance" for staff. We once had an incident in which a child said that one of the staff assaulted him sexually and we did a lot of investigations but we were not able to prove what actually happened, it is very difficult to prove anything in these kinds of incidents. We actually brought this employee another job outside the NGO and he was very sad and mentioned that we are ruining his reputation but we told him that we didn't tell the story to anyone (Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

We have a girl who usually wakes up at night and wants to commit suicide, so we have to call her social worker to come to her at 12 midnight to save her. After a while, this staff usually wants to leave (Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

D. Cultural Issues

NGOs also suffer from the cultural norms and traditions that are prevalent in the Egyptian society.

In Egypt, the parents are allowed to do anything to their kids and no one have the right to intervene that's why in most cases, the children come to us in a very late and deteriorated state (Projects Manager, Local NGO 1, September, 2015)

That's why children need to be more aware of their rights; which can help in avoiding reaching this stage.

Parents are an obstacle; we should give them money to work with them so that they respond. If the parent does not take money from you, he simply does not see you (Project Officer, International NGO 2, July, 2015)

E. Lack of Sufficient Focus on a Preventive Approach

Since most of the programs provided by NGOs to street children have a rehabilitative nature, the need for more work of a preventive nature was recognized by NGOs.

All the NGOs' programs are working only with children who are already in the streets. We need to have more programs of preventive nature in low income communities and we need to work on family re-integration. We started this in our NGO. However, no donors want to spend on this. International NGOs want good reports; they are not interested in this type of activity (Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

F. Deficiencies in the Operations of the NGOs themselves

It is worth noting that the NGOs criticized themselves as well in the course of explaining the problems they face in their work which reflect a transparent understanding of their positive

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endeavors and recognition of their deficiencies as well. The activities of the NGOs themselves are considered sometimes as an obstacle. For example, they cannot remain the same for three consecutive years. They have to be more adaptive and flexible to the children's needs to avoid that children exploit these NGOs (Project Officer, International NGO 2, July, 2015). In addition, the NGOs need to have a specific vision and plan (Project Officer, International NGO 2, July, 2015). Also, *all the local NGOs follow what the international NGOs say although sometimes local NGOs are more experienced*, according to Project Officer in International NGO 2 (July, 2015).

The Project Officer in international NGO 2 then added that:

> In my opinion, the main obstacle is that these children are more intelligent than the local NGOs i.e. "beyela3abo 3lehom". International and local NGOs need to specialize, they can't continue with the same format. For example, the child goes to "Local NGO X" reception center on Thursdays to get good food and "Local NGO Y" reception center on Tuesdays to play sports…etc. Dealing with children on a case by case basis or in other words, specialization is important

G. Limited Support from the Private Sector

Another obstacle highlighted by NGOs was the limited support that they get from the private sector (Field Coordinator, International NGO 1, October, 2015). NGOs believe that the CSR units of companies can provide them with more support and that they can have real partnerships with them that do not only involve receiving funds from them.

H. Limited Technical Support to Local NGOs

An additional problem mentioned by local NGOs is the lack of enough technical support. They need more technical support in areas like legal consulting from international NGOs (Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015).

I. Social Stigma & Limited Social Awareness

Another critical obstacle referred to by the NGOs' practitioners is the social stigma associated with street children in our society. Khan and Loewenson (2005) explained that the term stigma was first used in ancient Greece where slaves and criminals were labeled to illustrate that they were outcasts. Stigma can be internal, in this case called self stigma or external, which is discrimination. Thus, stigma represents negative beliefs or perceptions about individuals from specific groups or with particular traits.

> We are a contradictory society, we consider the child a good one as long as he visits the NGOs regularly and look clean, and otherwise we consider him as a criminal. I honestly think that some of the orphans towards which the society is very sympathetic are who we call the "third generation" of street children. The difference in how we treat orphans versus street children is huge; orphans for example receive huge amounts of donations (Project Officer, International NGO 2, July, 2015)

The children themselves also realize that there is social stigma associated with them.

> You know that we have a boy in the shelter called Karim who loves playing football very much but he did not want to travel to Street Child World Cup in Brazil last year because he told us he is a not street child anymore. We actually printed 1000 forms in cooperation with an International NGO as a petition to change the name. The problem is that the term "street children" in the West is not as bad as here; here it is stigmatizing (Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

> There is a stigma created by society and associated with these children. Once, I had a boy who had a scar and was coming to my house and the door man did not want to let him go up to my apartment until I told him to do so, after the boy left, he asked me who is this (Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

Social stigma can be practiced by the staff of the NGOs themselves.

> Social stigma is a problem. Sometimes I meet with people who ask me why I am working with these children. They tell me there is no hope from working with these children. This perception is also inside the NGOs themselves, social workers believe that these are "children of the organization" (Board Member, Local NGO 1, December, 2015)

The different perceptions towards orphans versus street children are also clear.

In the NGOs which work with orphans and street children, the children are perceived in three levels: the highest are orphans who have parents, then the orphans who do not have parents followed by street children (Board Member, Local NGO 1, December, 2015)

Social stigma associated with these children and limited social awareness about the problem was also highlighted by Government Staff 2 (October, 2015). According to Government Staff 2, *there is an initiative called "Bena" or "By us" in "English" that needs more volunteers to be enrolled in* (October, 2015). Limited awareness of the problem was also mentioned by the Field Coordinator in International NGO 1 (October, 2015).

This goes along with what has been mentioned in literature about the stigma associated with these children. When interviewed in a newspaper article by Haddon in 2013, a program director in a NGO in Cairo mentioned that "street children are often stigmatized by society. Sometimes we take in a child, and we rehabilitate them, but society doesn't accept them. We need to de-stigmatize street children. Society needs to change".

J. Difficulty in Issuing Birth Certificates

One NGO also mentioned that it faces some difficulties in issuing birth certificates for the children (Projects Manager, Local NGO 1, September, 2015). Birth certificates are very important to provide the children with legal identities and the ability to receive different services such as education and health.

VI. Study Participants' Recommendations to Improve Service to Street children

After asking the participants about the current programs they are engaged in to help street children and about the obstacles that hinder their work, the respondents were asked about their recommendations to improve the interventions provided to street children. The respondents mentioned many recommendations that can be grouped into six main themes: having some improvements in the operations of the NGOs themselves, having more coordination among the stakeholders involved in working with street children, providing more funds to NGOs, more facilitation to services provision to NGOs, focusing on additional kinds of approaches when working with street children and working with the community to increase awareness about street children and enhance the community's perceptions towards them. These recommendations reflect a good understanding of the problems they face and a keen passion to solve these issues.

A. Improvements to NGOs Operations

The NGOs highlighted many recommendations for improving their current operations. These include: having a database system for all the children to avoid duplicate work, working with the children to have more discipline inside the shelters and centers, standardizing the documentation process to be able to share good practices among NGOs, dealing with children on a case by case basis or case management or specialization and involving children in the kind of activities provided to them. According to Turnbull et al (2009), project assessment and planning should involve the children in the research and decisions, from the start as much as possible.

Having more coordination among NGOs and less competition was another cited recommendation. According to the Projects Manager in local NGO 1, *the NGOs have a role.*

They should coordinate more together for example to create a database for the children rather than each NGO thinking only about itself.

Capacity building of NGOs' staff was another recommendation made by the NGOs and the government staff as well. This is because everyone working in this field acknowledges the difficulty of work being done by the staff in these NGOs. They admit that they need better training and capacity development programs.

B. Coordination among Stakeholders

One of the most important recommendations mentioned by most participants was the need to have a unified vision and regular coordination across all main stakeholders involved in working with street children; namely the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the local NGOs and the international NGOs. Some participants also recognized the efforts done especially recently by the Ministry of Social Solidarity on this front. According to Manager in local NGO 2, *NGOs, international NGOs (donors) and the ministry need to sit together, the Ministry of Social Solidarity already started doing this*.

Some participants highlighted a fourth key stakeholder group which are the business men or the CSR units in companies. According to Shelter Manager in Local NGO 2:

> We need to have more real partnerships with companies not just taking funds from them. We have a partnership with a big hotel in Cairo to train some of our children and now we have one boy working there (November, 2015)

Sufficient cooperation among the NGOs, government and the society was also mentioned in literature as a key recommendation for working with street children (Demartoto, 2012). According to Zarezadeh (2013), close coordination among the government and NGOs can reduce duplicate efforts and support in providing suitable services to street children. An enhanced

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distribution of roles and frameworks of institutional cooperation among NGOs and the government organizations is imperative to support the development of street children (Volpi, 2002).

C. Funding Provision to NGOs

Some NGOs especially the local NGOs stated that they need more funds to be able to sustain their interventions. They believe that the society has a role in this.

> The society is a key stakeholder. We should not rely on international donors. The society only criticizes the work of the NGOs but if every person pays 500 L.E. per month as "kafala" or "zakat", things will change (Projects Manager, Local NGO 1, September, 2015)

They also think that receiving funds from the ministry is a good idea.

> The Ministry's fund for supporting the NGOs is a very good idea, if it works, it will be very good, we submitted a project but probably the ministry is still working in the first stage. The ministry is funding NGOs with 48 Million L.E. plus 100 Million L.E. (Shelter Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

Thus, it seems that NGOs especially local NGOs are seeking a diverse pool for their funds in order to guarantee the sustainability of their operations and reduce their independence on any single donor channel.

D. More Facilitation to Services Provision to NGOs

One local NGO is also seeking to have more facilitation from the government in certain services provision such as having electricity (Shelter Manager, Local NGO 1, November, 2015).

E. Preventive Approach

NGOs believe that besides the rehabilitative services that are being conducted to street children, more preventive work is needed as well. According to a Manager in local NGO 2, *we*

need to work more on a preventive level, we should have a national strategy, we have few NGOs and they are just working on activities (November, 2015). According to Project Officer in International NGO 2, *we need to have preventive mechanisms by having NGOs in each town and they need to work more in the field and talk with the children and their families* (July, 2015). According to Board Member in local NGO 1: *the government needs to focus on development work so that no more children go to the streets, in the mean time, the civil society can work with the children currently on the streets* (December, 2015).

The importance of adopting a preventive approach was also highlighted in literature. Zarezadeh (2013) mentioned that a preventive approach can decrease the reproduction of street children. In some instances, working on prevention, is easier and cheaper (Friends International, 2008). Long-term strategies at the macro level, involving decreasing poverty, ensuring welfare and social justice, diminishing hierarchical inequity can decrease the effect of poverty in contributing towards the problem of street children. Working at the macro-level of the society and changing the economic, social and cultural makeup of the society is needed. In addition, working on public education, specifically of parents, to alter negative perceptions towards children and working on the cultural development of the community, to decrease drug addiction and crime, social problems involving population growth, immigration, and mental illness can help (Zarezadeh, 2013). In Egypt, working on poverty alleviation, school-based support to lagging and poor students, child labor mitigation programs…etc can contribute to decreasing the number of children going to the streets in the first place.

F. Increasing Community's Awareness and Fighting Social Stigma

A critical recommendation that was suggested by respondents from NGOs and the government involved increasing the community's awareness about street children in Egypt and

reducing the social stigma associated with these children. Social stigma is a key obstacle that many respondents perceive as a bottleneck hindering the progress of their programs.

NGOs' practitioners believe that they need to work with many stakeholders to fight social stigma. These stakeholders include schools, the private sector and the media.

> We need to work on the society's perceptions towards these children through forming partnerships with schools and companies. It is important to shed the light on successful models through media. Media still does not tackle this issue in depth. Right after the revolution, the portrayal in media of street children was very bad, now it is somehow better probably because of the work that the Ministry of Social Solidarity did with the media. We also need to work with the CSR units of companies like what we are doing now in our NGO with 2 big companies but we need more work of this kind (Shelter Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

> We need to work more on the community perception towards these children, they are viewed as criminals. People want them to die or at least they want to pay for them money in return for distancing them from themselves. We can work on community perception by forming partnerships with international schools in which we have competitions among the children for these schools' children to know that street children are equal to them. We did this in our NGO (Manager, Local NGO 2, November, 2015)

NGOs' practitioners think that the media is important and that it already played a role in the last few years; however this role can still be strengthened.

> The society's perception towards street children started to improve, there is more social awareness of the issue, and there is some sympathy with the children yet still not like that with orphans. The media, through newspapers articles, TV programs and movies helped but we still need more work. One NGO can lead a media campaign and others can join (Board Member, Local NGO 1, December, 2015)

CHAPTER SIX

I. Summary and Conclusions

This study is considered one of very few studies that discusses the programs and practices of NGOs towards street children in Egypt. It represents a significant contribution about this topic in Egypt. After all, despite the fact that the number of NGOs working with street children seems to be small in comparison to the number of NGOs working with other target beneficiaries in Egypt such as women, orphans…etc., still some of them have been operating for more than twenty five years with very limited knowledge about their practices. This study serves as a self reflection of the NGOs' practices to date and adds some valuable insights on how to develop the practice of these NGOs in the future.

Through rich data collected from in-depth interviews with multiple participants, this study deep dived into the different programs provided to street children by the NGOs, the obstacles that they face in their work, their recommendations for having programs with more tangible impact on children's lives and their collaboration with the government.

Since it is evident from literature that there are numerous definitions for street children and in the absence of one global definition, I started my questions with all the respondents with asking them about their own definition of street children. This was very important in the beginning of each discussion as it reflects on the subsequent questions and answers in the interview. Respondents from the NGOs referred to street children with other names such as "children at risk". It is worth mentioning here that most participants did not prefer the term "street children" because of the negative connotations associated with it. Instead, they used more relevant names that describe the situation of these children. When the respondents were asked to

mention their own conceptualization of who constitutes street children, their definitions matched with the most common classification in literature that differentiates between "children of the street" and "children on the street". It also matched with the UN definition drafted in 1985 and the WHO definition devised in 1993.

It is obvious from the data collected that the huge discrepancy available in defining street children in literature is also reflected in practice in Egypt. The NGOs mainly included different versions of "children on the street" and "children of the street" in their definitions. As for the Ministry of Social Solidarity, it differentiates between many segments of children like "children of the street", "children on the street", "children at risk" and "working children". In its strategy and provision of services, it focuses on a specific segment of these children who are "the children without shelter". This group resembles more "children of the street". They are a group within street children but they are the most critical group because they don't have an option other than sleeping in the street. This focus helps the Ministry of Social Solidarity to have a clear scope of the profile of children they are working with.

The definition question was usually followed by a question about the number of street children in Egypt because these two questions together normally identified the exact problem definition of each participant which supposedly guided the types of programs he/she is involved in to support street children. When the NGOs' practitioners were asked about the number of street children, they all agreed that this is a very difficult question to answer because it is difficult to count street children due to many reasons: the absence of a clear unified definition of street children, their mobility, and the presence of many hidden places that not everyone can reach. These reasons resemble the ones highlighted in existing literature about street children that discusses the difficulty to have clear statistics about street children globally. On the other hand,

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the government had a clear count, by announcing that "children without shelter" in Egypt are 16,000. Some of the interviewed respondents from NGOs believed that the number is higher than this figure; some were not able to indicate whether it is a right or wrong figure and some actually recognized the criteria used to conduct this count.

The data showed that local NGOs employed what I called for the purpose of this study the "Sequential Support Services" model in the programs they provide to street children. This model starts with working with the families to increase their awareness and economic abilities to help in preventing the children from going to the streets in the first place, then moves to the mobile unit or outreach teams to engage with the children on the streets, to get to know them and start building a relationship of trust with them then includes the reception center for the daily visits of children. The mobile unit, outreach activities and the reception center are considered the early detection phase. The next service is the temporary shelter and finally the permanent shelter. Shelters are focused more on providing rehabilitative services such as different workshops for children to express their views and to learn income-generating activities that can support them in their future. This model matches with the rehabilitative and outreach approaches mentioned by Harris et al (2011) and with the street-based, center-based and community-based approaches of Demartoto (2012). International NGOs focus more on training and capacity development, outreach programs, providing funding to local NGOs and working with the government on certain projects.

The Ministry of Social Solidarity has a clear strategy for supporting "children without shelter" that focuses on funding, renovation of services, monitoring and evaluation and building the children's personalities through recreational activities such as sports, music and theatre. They realize the importance of partnering with other stakeholders like the NGOs in order to provide

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comprehensive services and programs to "children without shelter". Also, they are moving from a punitive to a rehabilitative approach when dealing with the children by renovating corrective institutions to make them more attractive, providing funds to NGOs and engaging in recreational activities for children.

The key performance indicators used to measure the success of programs highlighted by the NGOs included the number of children who stay in the shelter until they return to their homes, the number of children who return back to their families and remain in their homes, the number of children who get educated, the number of children who get jobs and the number of children whose legal court cases are closed. While these are mostly quantitative measures, a qualitative measure which is assessing the relationship between the children and their families for example through going on trips together was also cited. Case management was also highlighted by NGOs given the high degree of variance prevalent across this group of target beneficiaries. Measuring the success of the programs against the main objective of having programs to street children which is reintegration back into the society was also clear.

The participants also highlighted the problems that sometimes prevent them from having more effective interventions for street children. These obstacles included: the difficulty to maintain financial sustainability, the limited competence of the NGOs staff, the low salaries of the staff, the cultural norms and traditions prevalent in the Egyptian society related to the relationship between parents and their children, the lack of sufficient focus on a preventive approach, the deficiencies in the operations of the NGOs themselves, the limited support from the private sector, the limited technical support, the difficulty in issuing birth certificates for children, as well as the limited social awareness of the problem and social stigma associated with street children.

Finally, the respondents highlighted many recommendations in order to improve their work that can be grouped into six main sets. These included having improvements in the operations of the NGOs themselves, having more coordination among the stakeholders involved in working with street children, providing more funds to NGOs, more facilitation to services provision to NGOs, focusing on additional approaches when working with street children and working with the community to increase awareness about street children and enhance the community's perceptions towards them.

II. Recommendations

Based on the findings collected from the participants interviewed in this research study, in this section, I draft some recommendations which I believe can support NGOs in further enhancing the programs they devise for street children and enable them to have more effective interventions.

Despite the fact that there are many stakeholders involved in working with street children in Egypt, due to the complexity of this issue, I focus my recommendations on four main groups since based on the participants' views and available international best practices, these stakeholders are the core groups. These include local NGOs, international NGOs, the government and the CSR departments in companies or business men. In my opinion, these four stakeholders groups when coordinating together can influence the fifth key stakeholder which is the whole society where these children live. I strongly believe based on the insights gathered from the participants that at this stage the society, although has an important role in tacking the issue of street children in Egypt, it is more of a recipient role. The NGOs, government and companies need to collaborate together in order to grab the attention of the society and let them acknowledge that they have a role, this is the role of advocacy that needs to be conducted by the four stakeholders.
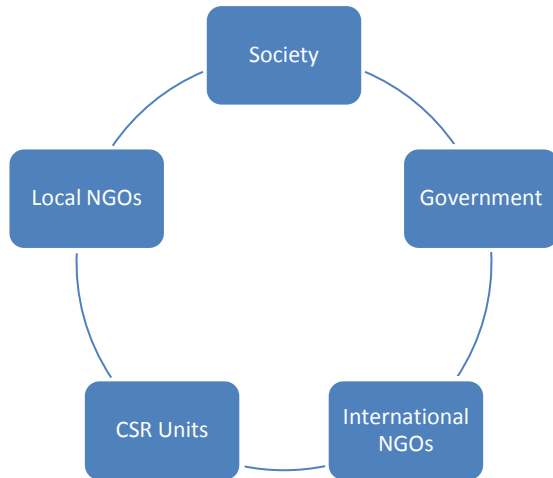
Figure 5: Stakeholders

The recommendations that can support NGOs in developing interventions that are more effective for street children include:

A. Enhancing the Expertise of NGOs Staff

Almost all participants acknowledged that they suffer from the low expertise of their staff who needs more training. This is despite that the results of this study show that international NGOs already invest a lot of funds in trainings. I totally agree with this recommendation. Local and international NGOs can work closely together in order to have more effective training programs that better meet the needs of local NGOs. Goodwill is not sufficient to guarantee a positive, long-term effect on children. Modest support can be achieved without the assistance of experts (Volpi, 2002). NGOs staff includes the social workers, psychologists, and administrative staff responsible for writing reports…etc. After all, the end service received by street children is a result of a comprehensive effort done by all the staff involved. Enhancing the expertise of staff needs to be thought of on many dimensions such as the technical dimension as well as the

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cultural dimension. The staff needs to be trained in issues like: child rights, communication and behaviors with children (Friends International, 2008).

B. More Funding Provision to NGOs

Local NGOs are not able to maintain their financial sustainability. They seek to rely on more than one source for funds to ensure some stability such as international NGOs, individual donors and businesses. Fortunately, the Ministry of Social Solidarity is also turning to be one such source which can enhance the financial stability of these NGOs. The Ministry of Social Solidarity has already started fruitful steps in this process which is acknowledged by the NGOs. Providing funds to NGOs is one aspect that local NGOs are looking forward to and it is in progress. The Minister of Social Solidarity has signed in last November a protocol with the Executive Manager of "Sandouk Tahya Misr" with a value of 114 Million Egyptian Pounds for the renovation of organizations supporting "children without shelter" and for training their calibers. This value is part of the total funds intended to implement the strategy for solving the problem of "children without shelter" which is 164 Million Egyptian Pounds. This protocol aims to rehabilitate and protect 80% from the "children without shelter". The protocol also includes the renovation of 83 family consulting offices and 82 supervision offices, outreach teams with mobile units offering health services to children on the streets like treatment from Virus C, development of vocational training workshops, while NGOs act as a key partner in the implementation of this strategy (Hassan, 2015).

International NGOs need to have more flexibility in the projects they approve to finance for local NGOs. Local NGOs have a lot of grass roots experience that enables them to recommend certain projects that might not match with the best practices acknowledged by international donors but are very relevant to the Egyptian context.

Another important source that local NGOs can tap more on is individual donors. While some NGOs' practitioners understand the importance of this role, they did not yet fully benefit from. Collecting funds from individuals is not expected to be an easy task especially with the social stigma associated with these children. It needs to be handled as a part of a more comprehensive effort aimed at increasing the social awareness of the problem and fighting social stigma which will be discussed in more detail in a later section. Another important point to consider is the making the individual donation experience more convenient. This can be achieved through collecting donations online, through automatic machines like "Fawry" which is already used by other popular NGOs such as "Misr El Kher" and "Hospital 57357".

An additional potential source of funding cited by the NGOs is the business men. Some of them have successful partnerships with some companies but still they need to have a more scientific approach for reaching out to this group. The foremost objective of any private business is the return on investment so even when considering their CSR activities, businesses need to understand the benefits that they will receive from their investments. The findings of this study have shown that some local NGOs have experienced good practices on this front that they can further document and share as case studies to be replicated in other programs.

C. Children Participation in Programs Design

Most of the available literature about children's programs mentions that children need to contribute to the design of these programs to guarantee positive and ongoing effects. The unusual life experience of street children turns them into future leaders for their communities' progress. In the 1980s, street children who took part in NGO programs in Brazil participated in the national fight for political, economic, and legal changes that benefited them. Their contribution helped in the movement's positive accomplishments at the end of that decade (Volpi, 2002). Children's participation was also highlighted as a key element by the participants specifically because children are very intelligent and in order to avoid that local NGOs become exploited by these children. Street children need to be included in determining the services they need and the delivery mechanisms of these services to them (Population Council, 2008).

D. Case Management/Tailor Made Services

With the huge variations across the different groups of children and with even the vast differences among individual children, case management or specialization was highlighted by NGOs as an important step in their programs provision. This point is also supported by international practice. Each street child has his/her own needs, medical and family history, competences, and aspirations (Volpi, 2002). The multifaceted mixture of causes which have led him or her into the street is very special as well; the same applies for the situation that he or she might encounter if he or she returns back into his or her family. Capable programs spend time and multidisciplinary know-how in evaluating the personal status of each participant and in scheming custom-made life plans (Volpi, 2002). The same applies on not only devising programs but also on measuring the success of these programs.

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E. Preventive Approach

NGOs believe that besides the rehabilitative services that are being conducted to street children, more preventive work is needed as well. This preventive work has two main facets as explained by the NGOs practitioners. The first facet relates to development work on the macro level. NGOs practitioners highlighted that this role is mainly a government role. However, I strongly believe that still NGOs can support in this role. This does not have to be the role of the same NGOs working with street children since they have limited human and financial resources. Instead other larger NGOs such as "Misr El Kheir" contribute to this. The second facet is the community-based work that NGOs engage in mainly when they work with families. This can act as a preventive approach to stop more children from going to the streets. NGOs have indicated that their efforts on this front though, are limited till this moment because donors are not interested in this type of work. Here comes the role of local NGOs again in documenting their success stories and sharing good practices in order to convince donors with these kinds of activities. Working with families is almost certainly as significant as working with the children themselves. Sometimes even if children want to return to their families, their families' status can push the children to the streets again. Small NGOs working in poor communities have a huge opportunity to work with families in their areas to help them to assume better responsibilities for their children (Friends International, 2008). Family re-union interventions can support street children to have a new life and rescue them from the traumatizing life on the street. Couples counseling programs can also help to maintain the families make up (Population Council, 2008).

F. Reaching an Agreement about the Concept of "Reception Center"

NGOs working with street children are already facing many difficulties related to defining the scope of their services because of the difficulty to define street children and to

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determine their numbers. They need not to add further complexity to their work by having mixed views about an integral component of their services which is the reception center. In order for NGOs to be able to replicate and share good practices, they need to reach an agreement on whether they need to have reception centers or not. This can only be validated through having analytical studies to understand the advantages and disadvantages of this service till date. With the limited funds these NGOs have, they need to ensure that they are using them in the most efficient way by focusing on the most important services.

G. Increasing Community's Awareness and Fighting Social Stigma

It is clear from Egypt's experience and from the experiences of other countries having considerable numbers of street children that labeling and discrimination against hinders much of the work that can be done by NGOs to support this segment. This problem needs to be addressed as a priority by NGOs. They can be at the core of the process in order to attempt to change the perception of the community towards these children. Two important factors are important which are the inclusion of the mass media and the value of information that they get (Volpi, 2002). Egyptian NGOs have succeeded to use mass media in big TV campaigns to influence public opinion such as in the cases of "Orphans Day", "Magdi Yaqob's Heart Surgery Hospital" and "53753 Children Cancer Hospital". NGOs working with street children can learn from these experiences. Social media tools can also help. It is worth mentioning here though that groups of children like orphans or patients by default get more sympathy from the society. That's why, the first point that NGOs need to take into account is the term "street children". Almost all participants in this study refused this term and referred to these children with other names such as "children at risk". NGOs together with the government need to agree on one term to use that do not automatically associate these children with negative connotations like the term "street

children". It is important to have a unified name even if it still includes different groups of children. Branding is important to be able to communicate with the public in a concrete way. The society needs to receive a strong unified message from NGOs; communicating who are these children and why they need their support. Sharing successful studies is important because it shows the real potential of these children and why they need help. NGOs by now already have many successful studies to show such as the children who participated in Brazil Street Child World Cup and children who are in the Choral Group of "Selim Sehab".

I. Increasing the Children's Awareness

It was mentioned by the practitioners that in most of the cases the children reach them in a much deteriorated stage because parents in our society are allowed to do anything to their kids. Besides the application of child laws, children need to understand more their rights on this front. The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) already has a hot line (16000) which can be further communicated in the mass media campaigns about street children.

J. More Facilitation in Issuing Birth Certificates

Birth certificates are imperative for the children to be able to lead a normal legal life and get access to the different services such as education, health…etc. Related ministries can devise a way through which street children can get identification documents. This solution on its own can provide opportunity to some street children to leave their life on the street (Population Council, 2008).

III. Future Research

Based on the findings of this study, potential areas of research can include studies to tackle the impact evaluation of the NGOs' programs to street children. Researchers can zoom in on specific experiences of certain programs led by NGOs especially local ones and aim to analyze their degrees of success. These studies can benefit future research in this area and help enhance the practices of NGOs. In addition, researchers can attempt to understand the role of reception centers so far and whether it is an important service to retain in the NGOs' interventions or not in the future.

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Appendix I

Interview Guide

The NGOs interview questions cover the following areas:

- What is their definition of street children and how do they perceive the magnitude of this problem in Egypt?

- What are the programs their NGOs have set to support street children?

- How do they manage these programs?

- How do they collect funds for their programs?

- To what extent these programs are successful and how do they measure their success?

- What are the obstacles that they face while doing their work?

- Who are the stakeholders whom they believe can help them in drafting effective interventions for street children?

- What are their recommendations for developing more effective programs for street children that can have a more tangible effect on their lives?

The government interview questions cover the following areas:

- What is their definition of street children and how do they perceive the magnitude of this problem in Egypt?

- What are the efforts done so far to support street children?

- To what extent they believe that these efforts are successful and how do they measure their success?

- What are the challenges that they face while doing their work?

- Who are the stakeholders whom they believe can help them in supporting street children?

- What are their recommendations for having a more tangible effect on street children's lives through their practices?

Appendix 2

Informed Consent Form

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Documentation of Informed Consent for Participation in Research Study

Project Title: [*What is the Role of NGOs in Egypt in Developing*

Effective Interventions for Street Children?]

Principal Investigator: [*Reem ElMenshawy, MPA student at AUC r_ezzat@aucegypt.edu, 01222662375*]

*You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of the research is to study the role of NGOs in Egypt in developing effective interventions for street children. In order to understand this, I will address three important questions:

- What are the current practices of NGOs towards street children in Egypt?

- What are the key obstacles that NGOs face that deter them from providing more support to these children?

- What are the views of NGOs on having a more tangible impact on the lives of street children?

, and the findings may be *published, presented, or both*. The expected duration of your participation is *2 hours*.

- The procedures of the research will be as follows: qualitative research methodology depending on semi-structured in depth interviews. The questions will cover some areas including: your definition of street children, how do you perceive the magnitude of this problem in Egypt, what are the programs you have set to support street children, what are the obstacles that you face while doing your work and what are your recommendations for developing more effective programs for street children that can have a more tangible effect on their lives

*There *will not be* certain risks or discomforts associated with this research.

*There *will not be* benefits to you from this research.

*The information you provide for purposes of this research *is confidential*

* *"Questions about the research, your rights, or research-related injuries should be directed to (Reem ElMenshawy) at (01222662375).*

*Participation in this study is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or the loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Signature

Printed Name

Date