

**DRAFT MASTER BACKGROUND
DOCUMENT TO EXPLAIN THE -
MAKENI STREET CHILD PROJECT
'STREET CHILD MAKENI'**

Project Location:

**Makeni, Northern Province, Sierra
Leone**

Project Duration:

**25 months - commenced 1st Dec
2008**

Implementing agency:

**Help A Needy Child in Sierra
Leone
(HANCi-SL)**

Funding agency:

Street Child of Sierra Leone (SCoSL)

Introduction

This document is a collection of 4 draft project papers edited in such a way as to hopefully explain our project in a clear, accessible way to those who haven't been involved in its planning and conceptualisation but are interested to understand the project in a fairly high level of detail. Each of the papers contained have a different focus, but are certainly over-lapping – essentially they amount to four perspectives on the same. If you can live with the repetition they hopefully enable some grasping of the fundamentals of what we are trying to achieve, how and why.

Either way, we are extremely grateful for your interest and thank you for talking the time to explore this.

The central initial point to grasp is that there are two key parties to this project, which has been designed in close partnership between both organisations:

1. **Street Child of Sierra Leone (SCoSL)** – who fund, direct and provide rigorous over-sight of HANCI's delivery.
 - SCoSL is our newly formed UK charity - highly professional, yet entirely volunteer-lead. We are dedicated to helping relieve the tragedy of children living their lives on the street in Sierra Leone.
2. **Help a Needy Child in Sierra Leone (HANCI-SL)** – who are entirely responsible for the operational delivery of the project.
 - HANCI-SL is a purely national organisation with an inspirational record of caring for children ever since its foundation in the midst of Sierra Leone's civil war in 1994. They presently run 2 hugely successful street-child projects in Freetown and Bo which have provided the template for this project in Makeni

4 Documents:

1. **Project background – The Street Child situation in Makeni town**
(written by HANCI, minor edits by Tom / SCoSL) – contains:

2. **Project over-view – concept & details** (*jointly written by Tom / SCoSL & HANCI*)
 - Detailed project explanatory document, step by step
3. **Questions and answers** (*written by HANCI, minor edits by Tom / SCoSL*)
 - Some further colour on the project by question & answer
4. **Simple budget for running costs of the project's first 13 months (Dec 2008 & all 2009)** (*written by Tom / SCoSL; based on agreed HANCI/SCoSL full budget*).

DOCUMENT (1)

Project Background – The Street Child situation in Makeni town

I INTRODUCTION

(A) Background – Makeni town

Makeni is the capital and largest city in the Northern Province, the poorest of Sierra Leone's four provinces.

The City lacks electricity and pipe-borne water. The region has the lowest literacy rates in the country and high rates of school drop-outs. The City was known for its market until the civil war, when it became a base for the main rebel group, the RUF (Revolutionary United Front). Some of the people of Makeni were also very successful farmers before the rebel invasion.

Makeni lies about 110 [miles](#) (177 km) north-east of the nation's capital, [Freetown](#) and is the hometown of Sierra Leone's current president [Ernest Bai Koroma](#). It is the 5th largest city in Sierra Leone, with a population of c.100,000.

Like in virtually all parts of Sierra Leone, the Krio language is the most widely spoken language in the city. The population of Makeni is ethnically diverse, although the Limba and Temne make up the largest ethnic groups.

(B) Basic statement of the street child problem

Like other parts of the country, the city of Makeni as well as its environs is still recovering from a devastating civil conflict which lasted for eleven (11) years (1991 - 2002). The conflict left in its wake massive destruction of lives and

properties in the nation as a whole. Tens of thousands of people were killed, and more than two million (2,000,000) were displaced. More than fifteen thousand (15,000) children were forcefully conscripted to fight as soldiers and as many as ten thousand (10,000) children were separated from their families¹. Girls as young as ten (10) years were abducted to serve as sex slaves or 'bush wives' to the fighting forces. Makeni suffered untold loses during those years of carnage.

Makeni served as headquarters for the RUF rebels during the last phase of the war, until the war ended in 2002. During the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) programme, many girls and boys associated with the fighting forces were bypassed in the disarmament process and ostracized from their families and communities. For many of those children, the streets were the only places that readily welcomed them.

The Makeni Township suffered massive economic devastation during the RUF occupation in the last phase of the civil war. During that occupation, businesses and homes were comprehensively looted. Many families lost their livelihoods, thereby rendering them destitute and poor. Basically, all economic activities came to a halt. As a result of these economic loses, families became increasingly incapable of providing the basic needs for their children. Many or most of these children took to the streets to fend for themselves.

Moreover, because of the poverty level of some families, the children are used as source of income for the family. They usually hawk petty goods and/or are engaged in child labor in the streets. These children can also become victims of trafficking, and are reduced to domestic slaves. Very young girls are forced by poverty to offer their bodies for sale in order to seek their survival. Sometimes, these girls are the bread winners of their families. They are prone to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Some become pregnant and often abandon their babies.

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In addition, many of these vulnerable children had lost one or both of their parents, during the war. Most of these children lack adequate family care. Some are being cared for by poor and very old grandparents, unemployed older siblings or by aunts and uncles who are known to abuse these children. These children do not attend school because their care-givers are too poor to pay their school fees. They go hungry, half-naked and lack basic healthcare. As a result of the abuse and deprivation they suffer in their homes, most of these children also end up in the streets of Makeni.

The number of street children in Makeni has continued to rise because there has not been any appropriate response to the plight of these unfortunate children. **There is no organization at the moment that is working for and with street children in Makeni.** In fact, no one knows the exact number of street children in the town because there has not been any comprehensive survey to determine their numbers. It is, however, believed that the number of street children in Makeni runs into several hundreds.

These children undergo untold sufferings whilst on the streets every minute of their lives. They are physically abused by their peers and their surrogate parents (Sissies and Bras). The street children of Makeni suffer psychologically as they witness horrific crime schemes and violent acts on the streets. Sometimes they can be forced into committing crimes that brings them in contact with the law. These children suffer physical, psychological and emotional abuse in the hands of the law enforcement agencies for crimes they may not have committed themselves. They do not attend school and they do not have access to healthcare services.

They have been ostracized by their families and communities. The children are frequently exploited by the communities in which they live. Above all, they lack the opportunity to grow as normal children and to achieve their potentials in life and to live happily. And in the process, they also cause no little harm to the communities they dwell amongst, pestering and thieving to survive; and potentially could be a fresh source of apocalyptic harm, as the recent war

showed, where both rebels and government played on the street-boys helplessness to arm them as their foot-soldiers.

At the end of the war, the government and NGOs helped some separated children to reunify with their families. However, a good number of these children have still not been reunified with parents/families or other extended relations. Moreover, there has not been any comprehensive program to address the needs of orphans and vulnerable children living and working in the street after the war. The Government established the National Commission for War Affected (NaCWAC) Children in 2001 to address the problems of vulnerable children after the war, but it did not make much impact in Makeni because of paucity in resources.

In addition, there are very few NGOs operating in this part of the country and there is none working with and for street children to date. Even though the Child Rights Bill has been passed in parliament, its effects are yet to be felt. Meanwhile, these vulnerable children continue to endure untold sufferings and deprivation in the streets of Makeni and are crying for helping hands to be extended to them.

II HANCI'S SURVEY OF THE STREETCHILD SITUATION IN MAKENI

(A) Stakeholder Analysis

In October 2008 HANCI/SL carried out a social assessment of stakeholders, which includes Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), community leaders, religious leaders and the street children themselves. The purpose of the exercise was to sound the opinion of the above-mentioned stakeholders on issues surrounding street children in Makeni and how an organisation can better intervene in the plight of these children.

(B) Community

The community people such as religious leaders, political leaders, NGO staff and traditional rulers interviewed are of the view that children are pushed to streets by poverty, parental neglect, poor parental monitoring; peer group

influence, effects of modernization, adventure, inadequate child protection policy on the part of government, abandonment, domestic violence, internal child trafficking, migration and death of parent(s) .

(C) Street Children

The children themselves revealed that they are on the streets because of the following reasons: poverty, abuse at home, adventure, peer group pressure, parental neglect, death of parent(s), abandonment after the war and pregnancy (for girls).

(D) Community Attitudes towards Street Children

The survey reveals the following community attitudes towards street children:

1. Street children are completely ignored by the community especially in the area of development. For example, the development plan of the Makeni City Council did not cater for street children.
2. Street children are ostracized by their community because the lifestyle of street children is considered as being anti-social and a nuisance to society.
3. All street children are branded as thieves; therefore most community people have intense hatred for street children.
4. Street children are meant to be exploited and they are to be used as tools that could be expense with after serving the master.

(E) Street Children's Perception about Themselves

The children have the following perception about themselves:

1. They are not on the streets because they want to be there, rather, they find themselves on the streets because of unfortunate circumstances such as those mentioned above.
2. They are not thieves as people consider them to be, they are just unfortunate children striving to survive under very difficult conditions.
3. Street children see themselves as having lofty ambitions, which they would like to pursue if given the opportunity.

(F) Recommendations from the stakeholders in Makeni

Various stakeholders recommended the following components for the street children's project in Makeni (nb these were their recommendations for careful consideration but necessarily action):

1. Baseline survey to know the number of street children in Makeni
 2. Advocacy targeting communities on the rights of street children.
 3. Establishment of a residential centre for beneficiaries as a short term stay
 4. Provision of food on a daily basis at centre
 5. Provision of recreational facilities at a point for the benefit of beneficiaries
 6. Advocate for child friendly policies to the government
 7. Project should have a well managed and clearly defined micro-credit scheme
 8. Education or skills training must be a priority for every street child for a brighter future
 9. Advocate for improvement in the school system
 10. HANCI/SL should network with other organizations in order to share experiences
 11. There should family tracing and reunification
 12. Families should benefit from post reunion support
 13. Establish community structures such as Peace Clubs and Community Peer Volunteers in Makeni to promote the successful reintegration of children.
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DOCUMENT (2)

Project over-view – concept & detail: **Street Child Makeni**

(A) Aims:

1. To facilitate the reunification and reintegration of these children with their families and communities.
2. To empower the children and /or their caregivers for independent living.
3. To facilitate the establishment of community structures to advocate for the rights of street children.
4. To work to prevent the flow of further children to the street.

(B) Specific objectives:

- 2 chief, interlocking components / objectives:
 1. **Street-child component (objective 1)**. To assist a *minimum* of 120 children living on the streets of Makeni to recover their human dignity and potential by:
 - Assisting the children to meet their basic human needs ('access their basic rights'), *by the immediate provision of food, clothing and healthcare especially.*
 - Facilitating enduring reconciliation with their families and communities.
 - Affording the children the opportunity to pursue their dreams, *by the provision of a period of direct educational and vocational support, alongside measures to ensure the family' long-term ability to meet the needs of its children .*
 2. **Child rights component (objective 2)**. To increase the comprehension and acceptance of child rights across Makeni and the wider region.
- & 2 smaller, secondary components / objectives:

1. **Police component (objective 3)**. To improve the relationship between street-children and the police in Makeni.
2. **HANCI-SL capacity component (objective 4)**. To increase the wider capacity of HANCI as an organisation.

(C) Objectives in detail

THE 2 CORE COMPONENTS (Street children; Child rights)

(1) Objective one – the core Street-Children component: over-view

- This is naturally the crux of the overall programme – caring for the Street-Child population of Makeni, with capacity for 120 children to benefit from the full scope of the programme, and any number, from the basic services (such as food etc).
- A critical preliminary stage is the finding / selection of children to offer entry to the programme to. The key is ensuring that we are assisting 100-120 of the *most needy* children. There is no one measure to determine exactly who should be helped, however the key method used is the ‘night time registration process’. At the dead of night (c.2am), staff go to the places where children are known to sleep such as the lorry parks and market stalls and start engaging with the children. When the same child is encountered on the street in the middle of the night on more than one occasion, a strong assumption can be made that this is a true street child in need of real help. Other children will find the Centre, often with friends. Staff are trained to identify the most vulnerable.
- Capacity is for 100 children initially. And for a further 20 to be added as the project evolves and especially desperate situations are encountered.
- The project can be thought of as having 3 rough, often over-lapping phases, described here as first-stage, second stage & exist strategy.
- These move from:
 1. First stage (Survival)
 - The starting position whereby HANCI encounters the child on the street and invites the child to receive services at the centre
 2. Second stage (Life planning)
 - From the point where HANCI places the child back in the family (or other appropriate environment) and educational or vocational earning support commences
 3. Exit strategy (Towards sustainability)
 - To the point where the child is fully reconciled with his/her family and community and is either able to support

him/her-self (vocational); or the family is able to properly care for him/her (including the payment of school fees)

(1/3) First-stage (or 'Survival stage') – anticipated duration; 3 months

- The objective of this stage are that the child (or young adult):
 - Feels safe where he/she lives
 - Is assured of 2 meals a day
 - Has access to medical care
 - Feels confident to discuss his/her ordeals

- The key elements of the this stage are:
 1. **Feeding:** 2 very good meals a day to be served; one late morning, one late afternoon.
 2. **Activities:** 'Between meals' the Centre will be open and activities facilitated towards 2 core ends:
 - Enjoyment - Children to simply be able to just enjoy 'being children' by playing games and relaxing.
 - Recovery - Children to gradually start to regain trust in adults by being shown love and care by the project staff; to begin to tackle deep lying, complex psychological needs and scars arising from both the circumstances that forced the child to the street and the trauma of living on the street; and ultimately to open up about his/her aspirations and family to enable the project team to begin the process of tracing and facilitating reconciliation the child's family and community (or make other arrangements for the child's long-term care if there appear to be no viable family options).
 - *It is anticipated that children will arrive in the centre around the time of the first meal and then will not leave until the second meal. The intervening time, as explained, above, will be the opportunity for the SWs to work with the children.*
 3. **Clothing:** distribution to be made asap.
 4. **Healthcare:** the Centre clinic will be available to the children. It is likely that the girls in particular may be in need of substantial care.
 5. **Emergency accommodation.** This facility will be available for up to six children at any one time, for a maximum of six weeks. It is not intended for general use but for situations where project staff consider a child's 'human security' to be significantly endangered in their present circumstance.

- The immediate goal of this first stage is to fundamentally stabilise the child.
 - From this point on, children will progress through the project at differing speeds, dependent on their personal situations.
 - *A core principle of the project is that each child should be treated as an individual case and thus the speed and nature of their*

- This phase is really the core (and longest) component of the project. Activities are geared towards consolidating the child's family and community reconciliation, and providing material and moral support to the child.
- Specifically, children will be encouraged to access the Centre's facilities and services as often as possible (and Saturdays are practically compulsory!). The process of returning to a normal life from the street – is again really that, a process – and one which needs a lot of support. Ex-street children face real stigma and challenges – and coming together frequently is really important in terms of 'mutual-support'; for our workers to monitor individual children's progress; and also because it eases the transitions and immediate burden (including financial) on the child's family.
- Services at the Centre will be as above for the initial stage (i.e. health, recreational, counselling, clothing) although with a slight reduction in the feeding component to: 1 very good meal at lunchtime; with a smaller meal late afternoon
 - *This reduction is part of the process of transferring responsibility to the parent / caregiver; and to defend against dependence. The other key difference is that the child is now no longer on the street. The parent is left only really needing to provide the child's breakfast (which is important for concentration at school, but it would be logistically counter-productive for the project to provide in addition to the above reasons).*
- It is hoped that most children will continue to access the Centre and thus fully benefit from the project. It is expected that the food will provide sufficient attraction! As for the first phase, it is hoped that the children will wait for the second meal giving our team maximum opportunity to work with the children, and the children maximum opportunity to benefit from the centre.

(3/3) Exit strategy (or Sustainability & follow up phase) anticipated duration 6+

months

Goals:

- The goals of this stage are that the child (or young adult):
 - Is comfortably settled in his/her family/community and is happy in what he/she is engaged in.
 - Feels confident to take responsibility for his/her livelihood
 - Is involved in decision making in the family and community
 - Feels respected and accepted in the family and community

 - And additionally for those on the educational track
 - *Are settled and progressing well in school.*
 - *And who are financially stable in school as regards the parents ability to find fees, charges etc*

 - And additionally for those on the vocational track, that the young adult
 - *Is gainfully employed.*
 - *Now has a steady source of income*
 - *Can produce finished products.*
 - *Can realize profits and re-invest profits realized*
 - *Can keep track of earnings and savings*

Activity:

- To ensure caregivers can meet the needs of children choosing the educational path :
 - They will be supplied with a grant to invest in a business, agricultural or other suitable economic activity of their choosing (in collaboration with their social worker who will also dispense business advice, monitor business progress and arrange for the caregiver to access appropriate training or workshops to support their endeavours).
 - This is planned to be made after 8-10 months on the programme (i.e. Autumn 2009).

- To assist with the long-term sustainability of vocational students:
 - A 'start-up kit' will be provided, appropriate to the chosen profession (e.g. for those pursuing tailoring, a sewing kit); normally at the end of the period of formal training (i.e. late 2009 / early 2010).

- The team will continue to monitor the progress of all children until they are happy that they are making very good progress and their days and

the scars of the street and the experiences that led them there are far behind them.

- At this point children will be gradually exited from the project, though it is hoped that they will remain in contact and especially if there are any sudden deteriorations, the team will be able to act.

(2) Objective two – the child rights advocacy component

- A major complementary strand to the programme - with 2 core aims:
 1. To specifically assist the street-child component in terms of:
 - Reintegration and reconciliation, and
 - Changing public attitudes towards street-children
 2. To act as a critical ‘upstream’, preventative measure – to persuade communities and parents to change and improve their attitudes to children, and thus cause fewer children to either flee or be driven from their homes.
 - Building on the insight that the trigger for the vast majority of children to flee the home is child abuse / denial of fundamental child rights
- Child rights advocacy is ongoing throughout the life of the project – and given the scale of the importance of its objectives, in the long-term is arguably even more important (or has the potential to be a source of even greater good) than the core street child element.
- Child rights promotion efforts will break into 2 elements:
 1. Those targeting the whole township
 - Mass events.
 - Radio broadcasts – jingles & discussion programmes
 - Billboards.
 2. Those targeting specific communities
 - It is planned that initially 3 communities will be identified as special targets for advocacy. These communities will be selected on the basis of which have the highest numbers of street children hailing from them (who are not already targeted under one of HANCI’s other existing projects in Makeni).

- The centre piece of these increased efforts in these 3 communities will be the formation of ‘CCRMGs’ – Community Child Right Monitoring Groups.
- CCRMGs have 2 core purposes:
 1. To assist child rights enforcement by monitoring their communities for suspected child abuses, to be reported to HANCI or potentially other relevant authority (Police Family Support Unit - FSU, Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender & Children Affairs – MSW)
 2. To promote child rights and conduct child rights advocacy in the community.
- CCRMGs will consist of dynamic, respected community figures who show a genuine interest in helping children (as opposed to just the traditional authorities / village elders etc). They will be balanced in gender.
- HANCI will assist by
 - (i) Training CCRMG members;
 - (ii) Providing equipments to enable them to carry out their duties
such as a bike, megaphone (for advocacy events) etc
&
 - (iii) Supporting at events themselves – at least initially.
- The objective is that over time (as with the street children & their families/care-givers under objective 1) the CCRMGs mature beyond dependency on support from HANCI and become self-sustaining, independent defenders & promoters of child rights (who might use HANCI only for occasional support) – in line with the government’s plans for each village to possess it’s own Child Welfare Committee (CWC), as outlined in the 2007 Child Rights Act (CRA). This will also free HANCI to then establish further CCRMGs elsewhere in Makeni.

THE 2 SUBSIDIARY COMPONENTS (Police; HANCI capacity)

(3) Objective three – Police

- This component consists of a number events (workshops, consultations, gatherings) aiming at improving the relationship and mutual understanding between the police and street children.
- It has been designed due to the importance of the police to street children as a body they regularly encounter and have mutual problems with.

- Street children presently view the police as enemies not as friends or protectors; and many police view street children only as villains and thieves not as victims who need sympathising with.
- It is agreed that as children encounter not only the FSU (Family Support Unit – the element of the police force designed for dealing with all situations where a child is either the alleged perpetrator or victim) but also regular police when they are on the street, that advocacy should not only be focussed on the FSU but on the entire force – or certainly all who regularly encounter street children.

(4) Objective four – HANCI’s capacity

- The quality of HANCI’s existing projects and achievements to date is testament to the fact that HANCI already is a very high calibre organisation in the field of child rights and child protection.
- However, like any organisation there is a constant need to be striving for updating, upskilling and progression of organisational and individual staff capacity. Moreover a number of areas have been identified which would directly assist HANCI’s ability to deliver the Makeni street child project to the highest level, these include monitoring and evaluation methods; street child specific learning modules etc.
- Consequently (quite small) provision is made in the budget for HANCI to conduct internal training and workshops, drawing on external expertise where appropriate to assist the development of their skills to execute this and future such work – an end which is clearly to the benefit of the children of Sierra Leone.

(D) An additional note on logistics & details:

- Formal commencement of project was 1 December 2008.
- The project is led on a day- to-day basis by the Project Co-ordinator (PC).
- The PC leads a full-time team of:
 - 3 Social Workers (SWs) who work as a team but each with a separate specialism:
 - 1 advocacy focussed
 - 1 family tracing & reunification focussed
 - 1 psycho-social focussed
 - (the PC also doubles up as a 4th SW)
 - 1 Nurse
 - 1 Cook
 - 1 Cleaner
- *The PC receives direction and support from 3 core sources:*
 1. *The Northern Regional Coordinator (RC) who oversees all HANCI's work in Makeni and the Northern District (a total of 5 projects, including Street Child Makeni)*
 2. *Executive Director & Operations team in HQ @ Freetown*
 3. *HANCI's senior 'street child specialist': Currently head of v. successful street-child project in Bo (the second City of Sierra Leone – in fact this project is quite heavily modelled on that Bo project); coming to Freetown to head Kissy street-child (Kissy is an especially deprived area of Freetown).*
- Transport - The project owns 2 motorbikes which are their continuous disposal and has access to other HANCI vehicles as necessary, including the Centre's existing Helux 4x4.
- Location – the project will be based at HANCI's existing spacious site in Makeni. Provision is made in the budget for several improvements to the centre: a new 'light' generator, improvement of recreational facilities (including construction of a volleyball court – volleyball is very popular in Sierra Leone!), improvement of the medical centre (in due course) and renovation of a disused building to act as the Project's office space.
- Monitoring, Evaluation & Accountability – occurs on six core levels:
 1. Weekly updates and Monthly monitoring - by operations team from Freetown HQ.
 2. Quarterly meeting - by the 'project management' committee meeting – a critical group consisting of community stakeholders (chief or rep; mayor or rep; local Ministry of Social

Welfare rep; local Police Family Support Unit rep etc); key HANCI staff; representatives from 'beneficiaries' – the street children.

3. Weekly news-reports; monthly reviews and quarterly comprehensive reviews from HANCI to SCoSL
4. Periodic monitoring – by SCoSL visits from UK
5. Mid-term internal HANCI evaluation – planned July 2009
6. External project evaluation – pencilled in for Q1 2010 to evaluate first year.

A key feature of HANCI's strategy is co-operation & co-ordination with other NGOs and government arms, the below table outlines the organisations HANCI expect to will possibly collaborate with during the implementation of the street children's project in Makeni :

NGO	POSSIBLE AREA OF COLLABORATION
1. Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children's Affairs (MSWGCA).	Coordination of project on child protection and other child related activities, joint sensitization on rights.
2. Defense for Children International (DCI).	Assistance on legal matters to beneficiaries in contact with the law for free.
3. TIMAP for Justice	Assistance on legal matters to beneficiaries in contact with the law for free.
4. Forum for African Women Educationist (FAWE).	Assistance in formal and skills training for girls.
5. Christian Learning Services.	Child protection through sensitization and promotion of rights through the Community Peer Volunteers (CPVs).
6. Right to Play (RTP)	Assistance with games, sport and education.
7. Makeni City Council	Joint sensitization on child protection, inclusion of street children's activities into the strategic plan of council as put of the devolution exercise.
8. Family Support Unit (FSU) of the Sierra Leone Police Force (SLP)	Referral of vulnerable children to appropriate agencies for support and follow up on cases of abuse.

DOCUMENT (3)

Questions and request for more information – Street Child Makeni.

This piece is essentially complimentary to the above core document – it clarifies certain points and brings out other details more sharply. It can be either read through for a full picture, or dipped into if any particular question grabs you (or skipped if you are in a hurry . . .).

- **Please describe how you envisage the first six-months of the project unfolding. What would be the sequence of initial events etc?**

The first quarter will be based more on organizational work, whilst the second quarter will be geared toward community participation in the protection of vulnerable children.

Then vulnerable children will be recruited on a case by case basis. Initial contact with some of the children and their masters in the street has already been established and they have been coming to the centre to follow up.

The first intake will be 100 children with provision for an extra 20 who might show up during the course of the project.

Then the children will be assessed and support plans prepared.

The first three months will be concentrated on building relationship with the children, getting to know more about their life, their families and re-orientating, and preparing their minds for schooling or skills training.

The team will undertake outreach visits to their dwelling places, their families, caregivers and communities.

At the end of the first three months, a sufficient amount of trust would have been established and then they would start schooling in the second quarter. We will continue outreach visits to strengthen link while also working with school authorities to ensure that the boys are settled in school.

We will start work with the communities in the second quarter. In the communities, we will identify community bodies to help promote the CRA as well as monitor child rights violations. At this level it will be more of identifying structures and capacitating them. By then we would have determined which communities we will be working with.

- **Please outline how you see the remainder of the project's life-cycle and activities unfolding.**

After our organizational work with the children and the establishment of the above-mentioned community structures, we would proceed to ensure that the three stakeholders (community people, street children and HANCI) work with one purpose. We would ensure that we consolidate the gains made in working with these children.

Later, we would transmit these experiences to the general community so that they could eventually under take the protection of street children through their own initiatives.

Similarly, our services will be limited to the children and their families during the first phase of the project. Later, we would extend our services to the entire community.

Targeting the entire community is in line with the thinking that certain fundamental causes for the increase in street children lies within the community. Therefore, any intervention that fails to take into consideration a community context of the causal factors of street children will fail to come up with sustainable solutions to the problems faced by these children. In that light, besides the follow up of children in schools and communities by way of promoting reconciliation, we will also continue strengthening community partners as well as planning with partner agencies on how we can work together to protect children. It could be through advocacy, workshops etc.

- **How flexible / fluid do you envisage the project being in terms of capacity to absorb new entrants at certain stages (depending on their situation); and in terms of the length of time they are on the project?**

Some flexibility will be given in the flow of children and it is for this reason that an allowance of 20 extra spaces is being made to accommodate children who will come later.

No child will be discriminated against and adequate facilities will be put in place to ensure that as many children as possible are received in the centre.

However 100 children who are willing to go back to school and live with their parents /caregivers will receive full support offered by the project.

Their duration in the project will depend on the progress they make which will be reflected in the support plan, a document that will be reviewed form time to time. The maximum period is 2yrs 3 months as shown in sustainability graph.

- **What plans are there for elements with a wider, immediate community benefit (clinic, school, recreation-facility?) as well as just for the beneficiaries?**

In order for community projects to be sustained, a thorough assessment of felt needs and level of community participation should be established.

In this regard it is anticipated that the first year would concentrate on rehabilitating children socially, psychologically and physically, reconciling them with their families where applicable.

Community capacities will be identified and built so they can be more efficient in advocacy and monitoring child rights violations.

The second year will then focus on providing community services that will target as many vulnerable children as possible.

Meanwhile, a recreational facility will be established in the centre to get children engaged. We are thinking of a sporting facility especially because children and adolescents are very interested in sports.

- **Please explain in a paragraph why you have selected this project over other possibilities.**

It has been part of the strategic plan of HANCI-SL. It is a felt need expressed by the community. The problem of street children in Makeni had a major cause of concern it was the last major strong of the rebels during the war, resulting in a very high number of children on the streets for various reasons. The last NGO that worked in this domain in Makeni was Action for Children in conflict who folded operations since 2004 owing to funding problems with their over sea's partners. Since no NGO or government institution has ever done anything towards addressing the plight of these children.

In the development plan of the new district council the plight of the street kids was omitted leaving the children vulnerable in the hands of abusers.

Therefore, having worked in a similar project successfully in Bo together with a pilot project in Kissy, we saw it fit that our intervention will help raise the voices of these completely forgotten children for the attention of policy makers such that they will from now on form a core in any national development agenda for Makeni. It is our strong desire that this project will address the problem of abuse of children and generate community involvement in addressing street children issues in Makeni. Above all it is a felt need by community elders that the plight of these children should be brought to the attention of the corridors of power.

- **What are the main differences envisaged between this project and the existing street-child projects within HANCI in Bo & Freetown (both funded by other donors)? What are the reasons for these differences? What are the key 'lessons learned' from other projects to date that are reflected in this proposal? Are there any other factors which have influenced your project design / selection?**

Most of the children in this proposed project are forced into living and working on the street as a result of socio economic factors whilst those in Bo were as a result of the war. As the country moves further into post conflict situation, there is a shift in paradigm from addressing factors associated with the war to socio-economic factors as a result of post traumatic factors within families and the breakdown of the social structures within communities leading to rate of child abuse and exploitation.

The focus of this project is on addressing the push factors hence the need for intense advocacy at community level with a bigger picture of influence policy decisions affecting children in Sierra Leone.

In this project the community approach is geared towards stimulating local communities set up structures that will provide a safety net for children, such as the CCRMGs, kids clubs and community development approaches (renovations of schools and clinics) to benefit the greater good of vulnerable children within Makeni and its environs. In Bo addressing causes of war, but this project seeks to address more of socio-economic factors that lead children to the street

Lessons learnt shows that community approach is more effective than institutional care. Like in Kissy, the Makeni project will address socio-economic factors. Unlike Bo the focus has been on reintegration of street children affected by war.

Another lesson learnt is the provision of feeding programme within a project is a powerful attraction force in a street children's project. Our experience with residential programmers with regards cost and indefinite dependency has encouraged us to concentrate on community based projects.

- **I understand from the proposal that there are no organisations at the moment actually focusing on street-children in Makeni. Can you confirm this?**

Yes

- **Can you please give some more detail on the proposed emergency residential facility**

The idea of an emergency foster came as an alternative to residential care programme. With these foster families children whose lives are real danger and in need of an emergency shelter will be referred to these home for a period of not more than six weeks. A family shall have not more than two kids at a time expect otherwise where the need is absolute in the best interest of the child. We choose the 6 wks as a max be we do not want to create a situation of complete attachment with the child thereby posing a problem on reintegration of the child.

Within these wks a child's case in a foster care placement becomes an emergency to all social who should as hard as possible to resolve the issue and integrate the child. Remember everything should be done in the child's own best interest.

- **Why were the police selected above any other category? How was this decision reached?**

As street children are always in conflict with the law and considering how they are ill treated by the police, it would be worthwhile to bring the police on board and to provide them with appropriate training on child right issues and how they should relate with the children even when they come in contact with the law.

The idea of police training on child right issues came from the children who had suffered a lot in the hands of police during police night raids and also from former staffs of Action for children in conflict who had bitter experiences with them. The recommended that the Family Support Unit of the police should be our main focus and not the entire police force in Makeni.

- **What are plans/thoughts for the clinic?**

1. Employment of a State-Registered Senior Nurse (SRN) who would be the over-all head operative.
2. (Placing the present senior nurse on part-time employment)
3. Providing a shift system where by there would always be a nurse-on-duty throughout the night.
4. Improving the mother-and-child services and extending or opening them up to the community.
5. Improving the over-night services for emergencies – Beds, floors, bedside storage facilities.
6. Extension services- to remote communities
7. Improved medicines –both curative and preventive.

- **What age are the anticipated beneficiaries?**

The survey indicated that there are more boys than girls in the street

Majority of boys interviewed fall within again 10 - 13 though there was a boy as young as 5.

The girls were between 15 - 19.

It is much easier to work with children who have been in the street for shorter period of time. The longer they stay the more difficult it becomes to work with them. The problem is not with the age but how long they have lived in the street. The younger children will be enrolled in formal schooling and the older ones will be encouraged to learn a skill

- **To clarify, at what point in the process do you aim to try and encourage them away from sleeping/living on the street?**

As HANCI considers the home as the best place for the child, it is but relevant that we encourage them to go home from the first contact with them. We will work with them and their families to encourage this move after trust and confidence is restored. It is worth noting that the commencement of this activity will vary from beneficiary to beneficiary.

- **For many, 'do no harm' is the first rule of development / humanitarianism. Are there any ways this projects risks aggravating situations? What are the dangers of 'doing harm' – either in design or the risk of faulty implementation. Where do we need to tread carefully?**

As a project we [HANCI] identified the following 2 risks that would aggravate situations in the long run:

1. Failing to create a very good balance between reintegration support packages and the motive for being reconciled with a child on the part of the family. This association is very important as we risk a total breakdown of the entire process if the motive in first place is wrong i.e. associating reconciliation with benefits. Since this aspect is more personal, identifying the motive might be very difficult but a careful planning of the entire process can serve as a mitigation strategy.
2. Dependency? From our previous project we noticed that dependency on the project by beneficiaries was a common problem because of the level of their participation in various decision making processes affecting their lives. Another reason was the perception of staff about how a particular project should run. This is very important for staff to buy into the ideals of the project so that they are in a better position to communicate them to the beneficiaries and the community. We will encourage beneficiaries/communities to be involved in all aspects of the project implementation. They should show some commitment as their contribution to the success of the project depends on it. They should not only be receiving but also making meaningful contributions so that the level of dependence will be reduced since they also understand the ideals of the project. If the ideals are not communicated properly there is a risk of ever growing dependence.

SCoSL note – the other critical balance we have discussed at some length strike is between helping the most disadvantaged (the street children); but not to the level whereby their situation or opportunity exceeds those commonly

available in society. Such a 'gold-plated' project, would not only fail a 'best use of resources test' but could potentially risk social aggravation or even the creation of perverse incentive structures. Because this project is designed with a strong streak of 'tough love' (i.e. support is not open-ended) and entrance is strictly to those children plainly in most need (coupled with a rigorous 'registration' and 'verification' process), this risk is rated low but awareness of all possible risks is important – and the first step to their minimization.

DOCUMENT (4)

**SIMPLE BUDGET FOR RUNNING COSTS OF
THE FIRST 13 MONTHS (DEC 2008 & ALL
2009) - STREET CHILD MAKENI**

(n.b. excluding capital purchases of items such as motorbikes, generator etc)

Pounds

(A) TOTAL 13-MONTH BUDGET **c.£105K**

(B) DIRECT EXPENDITURE - PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

- Street child expenses*:
 - *Emergency accommodation –*
£2,167
 - *Clothing & footwear –* *£5,333*
 - *Feeding –* *£22,222*
 - *Medical –* *£2,333*
 - *Recreational –* *£2,667*
 - *Vocational training –* *£3,389*
 - *Educational –* *£5,333*
 - *Income generating grants –*
£8,889
 - *Family awareness & reconciliation –* *£1689*

 - STREET CHILD SUB-TOTAL **c.£54K**

- Child rights advocacy expenses:
 - *Main component -* *£12,000*
 - *Police component -* *£3,000*

 - CHILD RIGHTS SUB-TOTAL **c.£15K**

- STAFF EXPENSES (7 salaries + taxes etc): **c.£13K**

- **TOTAL DIRECT PROJECT SPEND** _____ **c.£82K**

**to clarify, the direct expense costs listed, are the pure expenses only on these items, no layer of admin cost is built in – e.g. the £22,222 is entirely available to the cook for spend on foodstuffs*

(C) SUPPORT EXPENSES

- In Sierra Leone
 - Head Office staff salary contributions (incl tax etc) c.£3
 - Head Office rent contribution c.£0.5
 - Monitoring & Evaluation costs c.£4.5
 - Utilities, admin, stationary, repairs etc c.£4
 - Generator running costs (fuel & repairs) c.£2.5
 - Vehicles, fuel, repairs etc c.£4
 - HANCI capacity – internal development & training c.£4

 - IN SIERRA LEONE SUB-TOTAL **£22.5**

- In UK
 - Max allowance for banking costs, etc **£0.5**

- **TOTAL PROJECT SUPPORT SPEND** **c.£23K**

(D) COST ANALYSIS & NOTES

- Total 13- month budget: **100%**
(£105k/£105k)

- Direct project expenditure **78%**
(£82k//£105k)

- Project support expenditure **22%**
(£23k//£105k)

- *Only note worth making re spend envisaged in addition to the above is what may be spent from a UK marketing perspective. The goal here is to be as frugal as possible and a simple allowance has been made for the construction of a website and distribution of printed materials to interested parties. That said we don't want to commit to any figure as a cap as were an amazing opportunity in terms of value to be offered (e.g. for some advertising space), then of course we would jump at it, however the plan at this stage is to focus entirely on personal relationships, word of mouth and building support networks. **We are acutely aware that when people give money to charity they want it to go to that cause and as far as humanly possible, this is the end we are passionately striving to achieve.***

- *This same principle is at work in the balance between direct project spend and support cost – we have worked as hard as possible to achieve the highest % of direct spend (78% as demonstrated above), without undermining the infrastructure and level of technical support and governance essential to project success.*
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***Congratulations, you have lasted to the end!
Once again, many thanks - & of course I would love to hear your thoughts, so please make contact whenever works for you,***

Best wishes,

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