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# The influx of Street Children on the streets of Uganda cities. What the Church can do?

**Citation**: Aisu J.P., 2022, *The influx of Street Children on the streets of Uganda cities. What the Church can do?*, Nurt SVD, Vol. 152, No. 2, p. 144-160

#### **Abstract**

In many African countries there is an alarming influx of minors on the streets, begging, stealing, and robbing. In big cities in Uganda such as Kampala, Mbale, Soroti and others, one cannot comfortably speak on a phone for fear of it being snatched by these young thieves. Some of these kids even open car doors and steal property when a car is trapped in the traffic jam. Years back, a majority of people used to feel pity for these children. However, since these children could receive a fortune from the streets several times more than a minimum day's wage, some thugs then started using them to make money, and the poor children would only receive a token from their "bosses", the so-called "owners of the streets". Is there nothing the Church can do to help clear the cities off these children? What future do these children hold if they continue with this kind of life? This is a case study of Soroti, a fast-growing city in Eastern Uganda.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Street children, begging, stealing, drugs, abuse, the Church, Soroti Diocese, Uganda.

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#### Streszczenie

wielu afrykańskich obserwuje się niepokojący krajach napływ nieletnich na ulice, żebrzących i kradnących. W dużych miastach Ugandy, takich jak Kampala, Mbale, Soroti i innych, nie można swobodnie rozmawiać przez telefon w obawie, że zostanie on wyrwany przez młodych złodziei. Niektóre z tych dzieci otwierają nawet drzwi samochodów i kradną mienie, gdy samochód stoi w korku. Przed laty większość ludzi współczuła tym dzieciom. Ponieważ jednak mogły one zdobyć na ulicy pieniądze kilkakrotnie przewyższające minimalną dniówkę, niektórzy bandyci zaczęli wykorzystywać je do zarabiania pieniędzy, a dzieci otrzymywały tylko symboliczną część łupu od swoich "szefów", tzw. właścicieli ulic. Czy Kościół nie może nic zrobić, aby pomóc w oczyszczeniu miast z tych dzieci? Jaką przyszłość mają te dzieci, jeśli nadal będą prowadzić takie życie? To jest studium przypadku Soroti, szybko rozwijającego się miasta we wschodniej Ugandzie.

**Keywords:** dzieci ulicy, żebractwo, kradzieże, narkotyki, nadużycia, Kościół, diecezja Soroti, Uganda.

#### Introduction

This work addresses a special concern about the influx of street children on the streets of Ugandan cities and towns. According to the paper produced by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, A street child is defined as "any person below 18 years of age but to whom the street or unoccupied dwelling has become his/her habitual place of abode during the day or night or both, with no care and protection". It goes on to state that, street children are not homogeneous and they are categorized as full-time and part-time street children (Ministry of Gender, 2018, p. 1). This phenomenon is a great social concern and is as a result of several factors which will be addressed here. This work addresses; street children in general but taking Soroti city and Soroti Catholic diocese as a case study; the street life of these children, the causes of the influx, what the Catholic Church Magisterium teaches about this issue, what the authorities have done to try the issue; and finally, what the local Church can do.

#### 1. The life of the street children

The streets for these children are but many things, to name a few; it is a place to earn a living from, a place to get fed, it is also a battlefield where the strongest and the most resilient survive, a place of exploitation and a school for learning bad character. To talk of street children, Mr. Joseph Asutai an agriculturalist and resident of Soroti city laments, "It's a life so hard and painful to explain. It's a life of hustle, survival of the fittest. It is a very hopeless life where you are not sure of tomorrow as you're not guaranteed food and housing". These children have to do all kinds of things including dangerous jobs in order to survive as observed by the Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social development: "Children on the streets across the four towns are involved in a variety of income generating activities. For those who live on the streets the most common activity is scavenging (42%), while those who work on the streets are mostly involved in selling goods or preparing goods to sell (56%). Other children reported being involved in begging and carrying loads. All of these activities are determined to be hazardous and even more so, as most of these children are working without adult supervision but instead engage in these activities with other children" (Ministry of Gender, 2018, p. 61).

#### Accommodation and food

As for their accommodation; the part timers, that is, those who commute from their homes, are somewhat catered for when it comes to accommodation, as in the evening they are able to go back home. The worry is with the full-timers, that is, those who do not return home either because they have no home or relatives; or because the homes are even more hostile, or that the homes are so far away in the village, or because they simply do not want to go back home, these have to reside in abandoned buildings, under bridges, in markets, bus stations, hazardous waste landfills and under the verandas of people's houses once the owners have gone in to sleep. These latter also have no choice but to sleep in the open, on boxes, and it's not imaginable how they pass the cold and rainy nights.

For food; some street children especially boys, work as carwashers or parking attendants to get money, a majority have to survive on begging, stealing, eating from garbage sites, and simply on Divine Providence. Some do others' businesses and get a small commission which sometimes turns out to be abuse of child labour; for example,

I once met a child in Soroti city town selling eggs, but he looked so hungry, so I decided to buy two eggs from him and gave them back to him to eat. He was so surprised and ate them like someone indeed very hungry. When I engaged in a conversation with him, he revealed that someone gives him to sell eggs daily and at the end of the day he gets an egg. This is just an example of exploitation suffered by these vulnerable children.

"Through the qualitative interviews children identified hunger, a lack of shelter and clothing as key challenges facing all children on the streets" (Ministry of Gender, 2018, p. 61). These children are not even able to have access to a healthy and sufficient diet as they eat whatever life offers them to fill up their bellies. Some days are so bad for others that they even fail to get any crumps for food, because the streets do not guarantee anything for free. With this, how could one cannot even start to think of a balanced diet for these kids? They have no choice for food and most times have to consume unhealthy or even contaminated foods from restaurant leftovers to that in bins, and so run the risk of sickness or malnutrition, and growth problems cannot be ruled out.

#### Health

The life in the streets for these children is a great compromise to their health. Street children live on filthy and torn clothes. They are unable to bathe regularly, and even when they get a chance to wash up, it is usually without soap and even haphazardly, and then immediately while even still wet put back on the same dirty clothes. This makes them exude such a pungent smell that most people whom they approach to beg immediately drive them away. This kind of hygiene leads to infestation with fleas and lice, and even skin rashes such as ringworm. They walk the whole day from place to place barefooted, under scotching sunshine and even in rain.

It is even worse for the girl children especially for the fact that they have no access to sanitary facilities. Unable to keep themselves clean apart from being unhealthy, makes them lose self-esteem. Health wise still, some kids fall sick and die in the streets, because without a family to take care of them, they must fend for themselves.

## Drug abuse

The police in Soroti have often rounded up groups of street children smoking dangerous drugs. These are held for a few hours in police cells and released since there is no place to rehabilitate them. They succumb to drug abuse in an attempt to escape their reality. They often use cannabis, alcohol, paspalum grass or inhale natural gas. There is even a time these kids were rumoured to be smoking "grey hair" accessed by shaving old people. According to Fr. Wazi Wazi Gonzaga, they offer to cut hair of old people for free but they keep their grey hair to smoke it later (Wazi Wazi, 2022). Unfortunately, these bad habits have a very negative impact not only on their physical and psychosocial development, but also on their general growth as a responsible person. It has also been observed that some of these children are used by gangs to traffic drugs.

#### Sexual abuse and prostitution

It is so heartrending to see young girls too roaming the streets as they are more vulnerable than the boys. Most of them get sexually abused and some get forced into prostitution to get little money to sustain themselves. They get sexually abused or raped either by other men or fellow street boys. Sometimes they have to give in sexually to the boys in order to get protection and some provision. As a result of this, they get exposed to STDs like HIV, gonorrhoea, syphilis, Hepatis B and other types; most of them end up pregnant and thus forced to survive in the streets with the pregnancy and later a baby. However according to the observation of some, "having a child on the streets does present a burden, but at the same time pregnancy and motherhood can be a strategic resource as well. The child gets integrated into the daily round of his mother and most street girls report assistance from other street girls when they are pregnant or have children. Thus, children can actually be a resource in begging strategies" (Kilbride, 2000, p. 117).

## Bullying, physical and psychological abuse

According to Mr. Joseph Asutai, the life in the streets is in reality harsh! No one would voluntarily run for that kind of life if there were better options. It is "survival of the fittest" at its best. The toughest stage for a street child is finding a belonging in the streets. This child has to immerse himself or herself in the street life, and the faster the adaptation, the better. Sometimes not knowing how to steal or to talk in street slang, can result in being isolated, being bullied and even sexually abused. Lieten while writing about the street children in Peru makes an observation which is common in every street in the world and the

Ugandan streets are not an exception; "Being accepted on the street, and becoming affiliated with a certain street group, is about knowing the rules and habits that characterize street life" (Lieten & Strehl, 2015, p. 27). Many street children get recruited into street gangs that act as "surrogate families" which can protect them from outsider violence or harassment. Much as this criminal adoption offer some kind of support, it however draws children into violent criminal activities and drug use. These Children end up becoming addicted to drugs as a means of coping with the realities of living on the streets, the trauma of escaping abuse, and eventually this substance abuse is likely to cause long term problems in adulthood and the risk of suicide. Most times the young ones get beaten by older children to an extent of grabbing all they got from begging, petty jobs or gambling. These children most times end up in gambling as a way of "doubling" what they have got, and during gambling, they sometimes get beaten up especially after winning and the money grabbed and taken. These children in the streets find themselves in such a vulnerable situation that they are exposed to all forms of violence as observes the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development: "In addition, girls highlighted that they face sexual abuse and lack of sanitary towels on the streets, whilst boys were more likely to report experiencing physical violence from other children, the police or the general public, as well as engaging in substance abuse" (Ministry of Gender, 2018, p. 62).

To sum up this life, it would be summarized as life of misery, uncertainty, suffering, hopelessness, sadness, poor health among others.

#### 2. Cause of the influx of Street Children in the cities and towns

In the enumeration of Street Children in 2018 by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, it was found out that in Kampala and other cities, the majority of homeless children on the streets are boys aged between 7 and 17 (Ministry of Gender, 2018, p. 61). A few years back, the girls were also present but less visible and in smaller numbers. However, of late, the number of girls has also drastically risen and threatens that of boys.

Lorraine in her research observed that the number of children are there for a variety of reasons. Although most have run away due to problems in their home life, being abandoned or abused by stepparents and guardians; or because there was no one to care for them following the death of a parent; others have been enticed by friends

or the opportunities of the city. Many feel unable to go home, do not want to go home or have no home to go to. The street has become their home and their friends their family (Van Blerk, 2003, p. 9).

The following are some of the outlined causes for the influx of Street Children:

#### Economic poverty

According to Mr. Joseph Asutai still, much as there are other factors, economic poverty plays a major cause of the influx of street children (Asutai, 2022). Many children have deserted their homes in search of basic needs, for example food. So, they end up moving to urban areas with the view that they can get help there and end up living on the streets. It has also been observed that some of the children are sent by their parents to beg for money to support themselves and the family.

#### Parental deaths

Some children who live in streets have confessed that they moved there after the death of their beloved parents who once alive took good care of them. Failure of the surviving relatives to accord help to them left them with no other option than to join the streets.

## Parental neglect

Most street children are brought to the city streets by their parents, who abandon them there, and these are mostly from Karamoja region. Some parents also just don't care for their children as they have only gotten preoccupied with alcoholism, making the children to forge their own way out onto the streets.

## Violence and abuse of children

Child domestic violence or abuse within communities also should not be underrated in contributing to high rate of street children. In search for refuge and safety, these children tend to flock to the cities. Some parents and relatives get too hostile to their children, beating them, even threatening to rape them, and such conditions force the children to flee from home for safety.

## Sexual, physical or emotional abuse

According to one of our informants, one child confessed to have left her village after being raped by a relative. So, since she could not handle such physical and psychological torture within home, she had to leave her community and ended up in the street.

#### Urbanization

The need to adventure and experience what takes place in urban cities, has also made children to leave remote areas and thus end up being street kids. Thus, they are part of the phenomenon of the rural urban migration.

#### Criminal record

Some after committing crimes in their communities flee to avoid arrests into the urban areas. When they reach there, with no one to house and feed them, they are left with no option but to forge a new life out on the streets.

#### Mental health issues

It has been observed that some of these children are not psychologically balanced, they can't manage to stay home and tend to just move up and down.

#### Substance abuse

Most rural communities do not tolerate the consumption of some particular drugs most especially by the young, and therefore access to them is very difficult. Children have left such places for urban areas in search of drugs and freedom to consume them without anyone policing them around.

## Peer pressure

Influence from friends who end up encouraging their fellows to also leave home to embrace such a life.

## Generation gap

Decay of morals has created gap between the aged and the young, in that the young no longer listen to the old for advice and guidance.

## Failed social fabric

Mr. Asutai Joseph of Soroti city pointed out "failed social fabric at family and communal levels" (Asutai, 2022) as one of the causes of this influx. According to him, little attention and care is given to the children that is why even when they disappear into the cities, no one bothers about bringing them back.

## Child abuse/exploitation and child trafficking

Mr. Asutai also pointed out that, some of these street children are lured by urban dwellers for petty jobs (Asutai, 2022). When the job cannot be sustained, some of them find their way onto the streets. He also observed that here have been cases of Child trafficking by some groups of people. They lure these children to the cities and use them for economic gain either through begging, whereby the money they collect is taken to the traffickers, or they make these children make money for them through prostitution.

And in conclusion, as pointed out in the *First international meeting for the Pastoral care of street children held in Rome on the 25-26 October*, 2004: "there are those who suffered the traumatic experience of a broken family and have remained alone and those who have been driven away or fled from home because they were too neglected or maltreated. There are also those who reject their home or are rejected due to their involvement in some form of deviant behaviour (drugs, alcohol, theft and various stratagems to survive), and those who are persuaded to stay on the streets through promises, seduction or violence by adults or criminal gangs. This often happens to young foreigners who are forced to prostitution or to unaccompanied foreign minors who are forced to go begging" (Pontifical Council, 2004).

## 3. The teaching of the Church's Magisterium

Looking through the Church's documents on social teaching especially those that make reference to children, there is not much to find even just in relation to children in general, let alone the Street Children. Most of these documents, usually those that speak of marriage and family, mostly make mention of children especially in relation to their rights, family upbringing, education, and religious education. Rerum Novarum, the encyclical, promulgated by Pope Leo XIII, 1891 only spoke of child labour when he warns employers against employing individuals "in work unsuited to their sex and age" (Leo XIII, 1891, No. 20). Most often, children are discussed in documents on marriage and family. We have however an elaborate teaching on children which at least implicitly touches even our topic of Street Children in the teachings of Pope John II. In summary, the only documented moment where the Church particularly handles the issue of Street Children was in the First international meeting for the Pastoral care of street children held in Rome on 25-26 October 2004, under the care of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of the Migrants and itinerant People.

## Familiaris Consortio of Pope John II (22.11.1981). Special attention to be given to children by the family

The Holy Father calls for a special attention to be devoted to the children in a family. If children feel this love, attention, and respect for their person and rights in their families, they wouldn't have to be lured to seek a prematurely independent life in the streets: "In the family, which is a community of persons, special attention must be devoted to the children by developing a profound esteem for their personal dignity, and a great respect and generous concern for their rights. This is true for every child, but it becomes all the more urgent the smaller the child is and the more it is in need of everything, when it is sick, suffering or handicapped" (FC, No. 26).

#### The role of the elderly and family

Most African adults today can relate how they benefitted greatly from the instruction of the elders especially through night-time stories around the fireplace. In the recent past this practice has disappeared. However, a few elders still find a chance to educate their grandchildren at home. Pope John Paul II recognizes this indispensable role played by the elders in the growth and nurturing of children: "The elderly often have the charism to bridge generation gaps before they are made: how many children have found understanding and love in the eyes and words and caresses of the aging!" (FC, No. 27). Children who grow up alienated from this touch miss so much. The Holy Father also acknowledged the educative role of the parents and necessity of family when he said: "Parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it [...] Hence, the family is the first school of those social virtues which every society needs" (FC, No. 36).

The Holy Father in emphasizing the irreplaceable role of family in the growth of children encourages Christian families to be able to show greater readiness to adopt and foster children who have lost their parents or have been abandoned by them. According to him, rediscovering the warmth of affection of a family, these children will be able to experience God's loving and provident fatherhood witnessed to by Christian parents, and they will thus be able to grow up with serenity and confidence in life (FC, No. 41).

## Letter of His Holiness John Paul II to the Secretary General of the United Nations Organization on the occasion of the World Summit for Children, September 22, 1990

The Holy Father in this letter affirms that, "the Church has a vivid perception of the immense burden of suffering and injustice borne by the children of the world. In my own ministry and pastoral journeys, I am a witness of the heart-breaking plight of millions of children in every continent. They are most vulnerable, because they are least able to make their voice heard" (John Paul II, 1990, No. 4).

Many when they see these children on the streets feel nothing but disgust. They cannot see that like their own children back at home, these children too yearn for love. Thus, the holy Father in this letter rightly observes; "the children of the world cry out for love" (John Paul II, 1990, No. 5). I could add, especially those who have no one to look after, and who have to fend for themselves.

His holiness continues to observe that, "the children of the world cry out for greater respect for their inalienable individual dignity and for their right to life from the first moment of conception, even in the face of difficult circumstances or personal handicap. Every individual, no matter how small or how seemingly unimportant in utilitarian terms, bears the imprint of the Creator's image and likeness" (John Paul II, 1990, No. 7).

As a way to sum up his points, he remarks, "indeed, in the Christian view, our treatment of children becomes a measure of our fidelity to the Lord himself" (John Paul II, 1990, No. 3).

## Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of the Migrants and itinerant People; First international meeting for the Pastoral care of street children Rome 25-26 October 2004

#### Pastoral care for the street children

During the meeting, the President of the Pontifical Council, H. E. Cardinal Stephen Fumio Hamao stated that "the street becomes a place for planning a specific pastoral care for the children who live there" (Pontifical Council, 2004, No. 3). The council further went on to underline that, the Church has deep concern for the children on the streets and invites us to understand the spiritual and theological values underlying a pastoral commitment that reveals the goodness of God towards these children too, with the awareness, on the part of everyone, of the tragedies underlying this experience.

"Street children undoubtedly constitute one of the most serious and disquieting challenges of our century for the Church, as well as for civil and political society [...] a real social emergency, besides being a pastoral one" (Pontifical Council, 2004, No. 1).

#### A call for change of attitude towards the street children

In the meeting, it was noted that, the prevalent attitude in the civil society itself is often one of social alarm, because it is faced with a threat to public order. There is thus more concern about personal protection from the danger that the street children present than a readiness to help them; the humanitarian aspect and sense of solidarity with respect to this problem emerge with difficulty, not to mention a Christian attitude towards it.

#### 4. What have the authorities done to address the issue?

In many countries, notwithstanding Uganda, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, although formally approved, is still quite insufficient in its application. Meetings have been held, budgets made and yet there seems to be nothing visible on the ground as the numbers of children on the streets keep increasing. Legally, Uganda ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and is therefore obliged to protect the rights of all children including the street children. Uganda has further ratified the AU Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children. The charter emphasises the need to take appropriate measures to promote and protect the rights and welfare of the African Child.

The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda too recognises the need to protect the rights of children without discrimination. In addition to this, the Children's Act Cap. 59 provides a legal framework to protect and promote the rights of children. The Local Government Act 1997 schedule 2 mandates the local administration to provide services to the children within their areas of jurisdiction without discrimination. Below are some of the implementations done so far by the authorities:

## Rounding up and withdrawing the children from the streets

The government in collaboration with the Police, with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development playing the lead role, Office of Prime Minister (Disaster Preparedness and Karamoja Affairs), Ministry of Internal Affairs (Police – Child Protection Unit) and District

Local Authorities, Development Partners, NGOs working within street children, and other agencies have on many occasions rounded up and withdrawn these children from the streets. However, this has always had a setback. Aware that rounding up is done during the day, the children have changed their time of begging to the evening and night, or playing a hide and seek game to evade the authorities. For this reason, it has been impossible to clear the streets. Some have got so attached to the street life that they tend to return once "the air has cooled".

#### Resettlement and rehabilitation

According to Mr. Joseph Asutai, a resident of Soroti city, the government has tried to create homes for resettlement and rehabilitation of these kids (Asutai, 2022). Some of them have actually benefitted from the program, however so have escaped and returned to the street life. This makes the efforts of the government futile.

### Evoking parental responsibility

The government authorities have tried putting stringent measures especially on the parents who abandon their parental responsibility by arresting and charging them in the courts of law. However, attempts to make the parents of these aware of their responsibility have never borne fruit. This is because, the "Children in the streets" have parents or caregivers who encourage them to go on the streets to secure additional financial support for the family. So, some of these children are actually bread winners in their families, and so to these parents and caregivers, their street life actually benefits the family.

## Sensitizing the public

Ms. Atim Anna a business woman in Soroti city observed that the authorities have been using various forums for sensitizing the general public on the dangers of streets for the children. To her, this may have kept away some children from the streets but not all (Atim, 2022).

## Bursary programs

Speaking to Mr. Opul Joseph, an education consultant in Soroti city, he noted that the government in collaboration with some NGOs, has created bursary programs to help these children attain education. After being withdrawn from the streets, they need direction for a clearer future just like all the other children. Bursaries give them no room for excuse of not having money for going back to school (Opul, 2022).

## Resettling them in their homes

Some of the children have been picked up, their families traced and handed back over. According to Mrs. Odele Martha, a teacher in Soroti teacher, to resettle street children and families in their own home areas of origin would be a great idea, however, it is useless if the original issues which drove those kids away from home in the first place are not resolved (Odele, 2022). This is because they will definitely end up returning to the streets.

#### Empowering with skills

Some of the street children especially those who would not fit in school with other kids, have been empowered with livelihood skills for self-sustenance. Some are now mechanics, welders, carpenters and technicians. This has made them earn their living in a more decent way. Some have even been able to establish for themselves families.

#### 5. What can the Church do to address the issue?

It was noted at the First international meeting for the Pastoral care of street children held in Rome from 25-26 October 2004, that the dioceses and the national episcopal conferences do not sufficiently assume this problem both for its prevention and for the rehabilitation of the children. The Council admitted that commitment in favour of street children is certainly not easy. At times it can even seem useless and frustrating, and in those cases one can be tempted to lay down one's arms and retreat (Odele, 2022).

#### Liberation and rehabilitation

One of the propositions given by the council was that of liberating these children from the conditioning and disorders that led them to the street. They also encouraged the human rehabilitation of the child with the goal of giving him or her back equilibrium and normality, a full human identity (Odele, 2022). The Church in collaboration with other authorities can spearhead this move and thus restore the dignity and identity of these children. Many attempts to withdraw these children in the streets have often been futile because the original conditions that led them to the streets are not handled. It is not as simple as taking them back home. There is need to strengthen much the families where these children originate from, so that parents may feel that sense of responsibility.

#### *Initiate support programs*

For a majority of the children on the streets, their own families may not be able to support their education and needs. In order to actually help them, the Church needs to create charitable programs like support the education of these children and provide for their other needs. This can be easily done by engage other stake holders and even the Christian communities, reminding them of their role as a Christian family that is obliged to embrace these needy children.

## Strengthen pastoral care for the children

The Church can strengthen pastoral care for children and specifically incorporate street children and not to look at them like a menace but as the "sick and needy". This can be done by organizing for Sunday schools and conferences where they can always meet the children and encourage them on the dangers of street life. Associations like the missionary childhood also be taken to the street children and this will help draw them closer to God.

## Help build family relations

According to Ongodia Gerald a seminarian from Soroti diocese, the Church could reduce the influx of street children by strengthening the family unit and help repair broken families (Ongodia, 2022). It is from these broken families that children run away from in distress. One the family is restored; it extends to the wider community social fabric. It is true that what we see in the community is a reflection of what actually happens within the family walls.

## Help empower with skills

Soroti diocese has quite a number of technical institutions where youth acquire skills like building, carpentry and mechanics. The local Church could find a way to absorb some of these children, especially those who are above the age of 15, into some of these institutions where they can acquire skills to help them through life.

#### Conclusion

I have by now tried to show that the phenomenon of Street Children is a real challenge that needs concerted effort to stop it. I have shown vividly how miserable the life in the streets is for the kids who end up there. There are varying reasons that take children to the streets. I am certainly not the first to treat this issue as already shown in the

body of the work. The Universal Church herself in her care for the children, the future of the Church, has shown concern for the issue. The government of Uganda has tried its best to restore these kids back to normal lives. It may have not completely succeeded but at least some of them have been rescued and given back their dignity. As the challenge continues, I have called upon the local Church especially in Soroti diocese to work out ways of removing children from the streets.

#### **Abbreviations**

FC Familiaris Consortio RN Rerum Novarum

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