

FROM THE STREET TO THEATRE

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Barefeet Theatre Work Methods through Uncle John Project and the Impact of the Workshops on the Vulnerable Children

Mumba Chimpuku
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Diak University of Applied Sciences, Diak South
Helsinki Unit
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Abstract

The aim of this product thesis was to evaluate the work methods of Barefeet's Uncle John Intervention workshops and the impact they have on the vulnerable children who participate. The workshops which are conducted in a period of ten weeks using Participatory Process Performance (PPP) and Theatre for Developments methodologies provide the children with useful information and skills to help them get empowered to speak about issues affecting them. The study was done using qualitative Methodologies of data collection and analysis. The research study was inspired by the theoretical background of community empowerments and the United Nations Convention of Children's Rights.

The research finding reveals a number of benefits that the children gain from the workshops as a result of Barefeet using theatre in their work methods. The use of Participatory Process Performance (PPP) and Theatre for Developments (TFD) methodologies helps to influence the children's participation and acts as a mode of communication to the communities where these vulnerable children come from and to other relevant authorities that they need to reach out to. The finding revealed how the work methods of using theatre demonstrated ways in which Barefeet's disseminates educational information through entertainment that helps the children start engaging in activities that will empower them to speak out on the different issues affecting them.

Keywords: Street kids, vulnerable Children, Empowerment, Theatre

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1 BACKGROUND

According to Strobe et al (2011) on the Orphaned Vulnerable Children (OVC) situational analysis in 2004 Street-connected children represent a particular subcategory of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) that typically lacks regular family support. Though the exact number of street children is not known, there have been several studies and surveys that have been conducted in the past years in Zambia which have suggested some estimates of the street children. Strobe et al (2011) explained that Studies conducted in 1991 and 2004 estimate that the number of street-connected children in Zambia more than doubled from approximately 35,000 to 75,000 (Tacon and Lungwangwa 1991; Zambian Ministry of Sport, Youth and Child Development 2004). This represents an increase from roughly 0.9 percent to 1.6 percent of Zambian children living on the street. While a growing body of domestic and international studies and reports describes the situation of street-connected children, evidence on the causes of this phenomenon remains scant (Strobe et al 2011, p2). The Lusaka Voice (2013) one of Zambia's local online news media published a response by then Minister of Gender and Child Development Inonge Wina to other members of parliament on the statistics of street children country wide as of September 2012. She told Parliament that 11,475 of the street children were male while 2026 children were female. Ms Wina revealed that ‘‘of these, 193 street kids below the age of 18 were integrated with their families as of June 2012, while 1,095 children between the ages of 15 and 18 received skills training at the Zambia National Service (ZNS)’’. She said government remains committed to reintegrating street children with their families as a first priority, saying only those found to have no relatives are placed in child facilities. Ms Wina said the high number of children living on the streets could be attributed to several factors such as divorce, the HIV and AIDS pandemic and poverty among others. (Lusaka Voice 2013)

Even though the Zambian government has put up measures to address the problems of street children the rising number of the street children has been overwhelming. The Minister of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS) and Minister of sport, Youth and child Development (MSYCD) 2006 reported that stakeholders such as pri-

vate-sector institutions in responding to the problem of street children was critical, especially in an environment like Zambia where government was struggling to meet the needs of its citizens. It was a widely-held view that Non Governmental organization should complement the efforts of government in improving the situation of street children. This led to NGOs in Zambia taking up intervention programmes to help solve the situation of street children. One of the organization taking up these intervention programmes is Barefeet theatre Zambia. The organization provides a number of programmes including intervention workshops for street children and vulnerable children from different communities using theatre. One specific project is the Uncle John where Interventions workshops are held for children to undergo a series of teaching and mentoring about important life skills. The teaching aims to empower the children to overcome some of the challenges they face in life. Barefeet uses Theatre for Development (TFD) and Participatory Process Performance (PPP) methodologies (which are explained in details in the coming chapters) as an approach in their intervention programs.

Having worked for Barefeet Zambia during the international placement work practice as part of the Bachelors in Social Services Studies the author developed the need to understand more about the Uncle John intervention workshops. It's for this reason that the author decided to do this Bachelor Thesis as an evaluation research on the effectiveness of the work methods and on the impact the workshops have on the children.

2 BAREFEET THEATRE

Barefeet is a nongovernmental organization based in Lusaka Zambia. It was founded in 2006 by a group of young Zambian boys some of whom are former street children together with an Irish solo artist. Through the the help of the Irish man who had a background of performing arts they started delivering theatre workshops which sought to empower and protect vulnerable children living on the streets of Lusaka. The use of theatre workshops later proved a great success as the artistic expression was a powerful transformational tool. They came to realize that through this powerful medium, there was an incredible opportunity to reach out to many vulnerable children, guiding them off the streets and in to Children's Centers and other protective environments in which they could be nurtured and cared for, protected and empowered. (Barefeet Zambia)

The aims of Barefeets works are to prevent children from living on the streets and those at risk of going on the streets. This is done by delivering life-saving information and inspirations through their service of outreach programmes, Interactive Theatre Workshops, Barefeet Children's Council, Performance Company and the annual Barefeet Youth Arts Festival. Barefeet also works with partner organizations who share the same goal of empowering and saving the children best interest. Their role as an organization is to be an example to the different communities around Zambia by using their talents to inspire the children who are on the streets or at risk of being on the streets. The organization tries to create a platform that will give these vulnerable children an opportunity to discuss about things that affect them and later be able to communicate back to their communities through different artistic expressions acts.

2.1 Vision and mission statements

Vision; *“A world in which all children and young people are empowered to exercise their rights, have their voices heard, achieve their full potential, and are able to explore and develop their creativity.”*

Mission; *“Barefeet must work to enhance the lives of vulnerable children and young people in Zambia, by providing creative opportunities to learn, express themselves and achieve their full potential.*

With this Vision and Mission in mind, Barefeet has set out its Strategic Objectives below. To understand these objectives, it is best to think of a ‘foot’ with five toes. Each toe is as important as the others, and without one toe, the organization may lose its’ balance and fall over on the side of the road! If all five toes are moving together, as they are supposed to, then the whole foot can move forward. A foot needs also a sole, the base and platform that can carry the weight of the whole body. In Barefeet’s case, the sole is the organizations’ structure – the structures, people and systems that it will use to deliver this Strategic Plan, (Barefeet Zambia 2015)

2.2 Organization strategy

The organization has strategic objectives which have been derived from the organizations name barefeet, representing the five toes of a foot and the sole which holds the foot together. The strategies represents the main areas of services that barefeet concentrates on. These areas of services are being run by the barefeet members who hold different position within the Service area. According to Barefeet strategic plan for 2016-2020, the plan is based upon a Vision and a Mission that the organization has articulated for the next five years. The realization of this vision relies on the achievement of six Strategic Objectives. Each Objective is underlined by a series of specific tasks. These are the building blocks from which Barefeet will become what its’ members want it to be (Barefeet 2015).

2.2.1 Barefeet Intervention

The intervention are made to reach out to the children through the interactive workshops were children under go different modules that covers topics of healthy developments of young people. These workshops are facilitated by trained barefeet members who are chosen to run specific workshops. “Barefeet will seek to generate evidence that proves that

the interventions is undertakes, and the methodology it employs, contribute real, measurable, positive and significant behavioral changes in children's lives'' (Barefeet Zambia 2015)

2.2.2 Barefeet Outreach

This is a program where Barefeet provide information and inspire children directly on the streets. They talk about the services that are available for the children at Barefeet and how they can link them to other partner organization that works with vulnerable children. In their Strategic plan it is said that "Barefeet's Outreach Program is at the heart of the organization's approach and is the basic way that the organization identifies and engages with children by engaging their creative and artistic talents and providing them the forum and opportunity to speak about the world around them. Barefeet's outreach, which cuts across and underlines all of Barefeet's specific projects, represents the entry point that Barefeet uses to engage with its' child beneficiaries. It ensures that Barefeet recognizes and understands what issues the children are facing (homelessness; orphan hood; substance abuse; criminality; health; etc.), engages the children around these issues, refers the children to the appropriate social services (provided either through its' partners, other Government); and crucially can follow up to ensure that the children remain on course out of vulnerability and harm's way'' (Strategic plan 2015, p14)

2.2.3 Performance Company

The performance company is comprised of different members of Barefeet, many of whom were products of the Barefeet training and programs. It's used as an income generating wing of the organization. The Artist can be hired for performance and are able to choreograph performance for any event. The proceeds from the performances go back to the organization after the artist have been paid to support the running cost the outreach programs, intervention workshops and other programs within the organization.

2.2.4 Barefeet Children's Council

The council is made out the children that have been engaged in the different activities that Barefeet offers. According to Barefeet strategic plan, “the Barefeet Children's Council is the next key element of the Barefeet Strategy. The Council is a representative committee of children who are selected by children to represent their voice, to ensure that both Barefeet and the other key stakeholders listen to what the children are telling them, are responding to what the children see as important, not just what they think are important, and making sure that what the organization does and seeks to do is both understood by supportive of and responsive to the needs of Barefeet's youthful constituency. (Barefeet strategic plan 2015)

2.2.5 Barefeet Youth Art Festival

The festival is one of the main annual events which comes after the Barefeet fiscal year. It's a platform for the children to have their voices heard and share their ideas. The Festival being one of the highlights of the Barefeet year, gives children a chance to learn from each and share the stage with world-renowned talents. During this time the children showcase different performances and have a chance to reach out to key public figures in Government.

2.3 Overview

According to Barefeet's strategic plan (2016 – 2021) “Barefeet will develop and strengthen the key basic systems and processes required to support the five toes and ensure a well-governed, well-managed, effective, efficient or (Strategic plan 2015.p19). By interconnecting these services the Barefeet is able to provide a platform where the vulnerable children are able to have a voice and share their views on issues affecting them. The services also give an opportunity for the children to have access to some of the basic needs like education, shelter, health care and good adult supervision which would have been near impossible had there been no intervention. Karnes and Lee (1978) noted that “only through early identification and appropriate programming can children develop

their potential” Strategically Barefeet targets the low income communities and to date it has over 2000 children in 40 different communities around Zambia. The rising figures of street children clearly indicate the need and importance for Barefeet existence in these communities. Not every child in these communities have families that can provide them with daily needs such as food, shelter and mental support, but through the services and partners in these communities Barefeet gives the children a chance of having opportunities that they have been missing. One of the main partners and supporter of barefeet is UNICEF and according to them from the time of their formal agreement in 2011 they have provided more than US\$150,000 to support the Barefeet Art festival in 2011 and 2012 (which exposes thousands of disadvantaged children to Theater and Arts) as well as for the Barefeet to conduct Theater for development workshops and training for UNICEF (UNICEF Zambia 2013).

3 UNCLE JOHN INTERVENTION WORKSHOPS

3.1 About Uncle John Workshops

Uncle John intervention workshop is a 10 week interactive workshops where Barefeet uses a fictitious character called uncle john to facilitate the workshops through storytelling. The workshop is created in a story-based module for recreational activities, with a focus on the psychosocial needs of children. This is done by creating an atmosphere where the participants can open up for discussion and be able to relate to the stories being shared by the uncle John character to some of their own past life experiences. The purpose of the module is to: 1) help remove children from the street and to protect those who are at risk of finding themselves on the street; 2) ultimately contribute to producing responsible youth and children with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make healthy decision; 3) give participants an opportunity to explore and process issues and topics that are life-saving in a safe and fun environment; and 4) enable participants to share life experiences, access helpful information and discuss positive solutions when faced with challenges in life instead of engaging in unhealthy activities.

During these workshops the children go through different stages of activities that are aimed at giving them the courage and confidence to talk about things that affect them negatively in their communities and share personal stories that have led them to the current status. This helps the facilitators to learn about the children they are working with and gives them an opener on how best they can help these children. In the 10 weeks the fictitious Character uncle john takes them on a journey of events portraying some of the things that these children might have gone through. This is done in a humorous way in order to help the children overcome some of the fears they have had and open up to share some of their own stories about life's past events that have been affecting them in their communities. The stories shared during these workshops are thereafter transformed in a piece of performance by the facilitators together with the participating children, which is later performed back to the children's communities in a manner that will help relay back the messages that they want to share with the community. Elina Volpi in her report on street children: Promising Practices and Approaches noted that, it is important to design

program activities with children, and not only for them. Children can be involved as peer counselors and facilitators. Their special life experience makes them potential leaders and advocates of development in their communities (Volpi 2002). The workshops include important teachings such as overcoming peer pressure, low self esteem and dangers of drug and alcohol abuse related issues. Were possible the children also undergo Counseling and medical checkup. As earlier stated some of these children would have come from broken homes due to e.g. the death of their parents to HIV/AIDS and have had no access to medical care, while others would have come to the streets due to lack of proper guidance and adult supervision the children may have been exposed to drugs, alcohol abuse, violence and sexual abuse by their peers while on the streets. These checkups and counseling help the children make an important step towards a healthier life.

The Uncle John workshops are being run in different major towns of Zambia namely, Lusaka, Kitwe and Kabwe. Lusaka being the capital city hosts five centers, Kitwe with three centers and kabwe town with two centers. These centers where the workshops are conducted from are run by barefeet partners organizations who are manly orphanages, drop in centers for children in need of shelter and Ngo's working with vulnerable children. Over 700 children are recruited every year to undergo the ten week workshops from these centers as well as those that are recruited direct from the streets through the outreach service.

3.2 Uncle John Workshop Goals

Going through the Uncle John Workshops does not bring total transformation for the children. These workshops are an initial stage to tackle the problems these children suffer while on the streets. Because of the nature of problem these children go through while on the streets they require a special approach method and acceptance by them and building a relationship of trust. The workshops create a basis for the children who participate in these workshops to have a clear guidance and understanding to start engaging in activities that will support their well being. It is for reason that the workshops are designed in an artistic way to attract the attention of the children, to late them have fun and at the same time be able to open up and create the trust relationship with the facilitators The use of

the Uncle John character helps maintain interest amongst the participants because of the humor it creates during the workshop sessions. During these workshop sessions the facilitators try to get more information on the children's background. It is important to know the kind of child they are dealing and also for them to have an approach that will best deal with the specific child. The information compiled from the children is analyzed and later passed on to be used for the next stage which comes after the workshops. This stage is where decisions are made on each child on how best barefeet can help to improve the well being of the child. According to Barefeet strategic plan (2017-2021) they explained that there are clear and simple processes and procedures in place that guide the Barefeet team as to how to 'manage' the case of each child; and finally, that there are defined referral paths to appropriate services provided either through Barefeets network of partners institutions and Government, and that the providers of these services recognize the referral as appropriate, and are prepared to act on them. (Strategic plan 2017-2021, p14).

Adhering to one of the Principles of Convention on of the Rights of the Child which explains that "the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions affecting children" (CRC 1989, Article 3). Putting the well being of the child first is the priority in the decision making after the evaluation of the child's background. The decision making also puts in consideration the child's family ties like the capacity of the parents/guardians to support the child and the family relationship status with the child at the time the decision is made. In the UNHCR guidelines on determining the best interest of the Child, the term "best interests" broadly describes the well-being of a child, such well-being is determined by a variety of individual circumstances, such as the age, the level of maturity of the child, the presence or absence of parents, the child's environment and experiences (UNHCR 2008, p.14). Depending on the decision made the child is referred to where they can be best helped. This is where partner organizations play a big role because some of these partner organizations provide specific services that are needed by the children. The children who are brought to the attention of the partner organization still remain in contact with barefeet and are actively involved in the services of barefeet such as the children's council and Performance Company when ever needed.

4 BAREFEET WORK METHODS

4.1 Theatre for Development and Participatory Process Performance

The research was aimed at evaluating how effective are the work methods in the 10 weeks Uncle John workshops and the impact they have on the children that participate in these workshops. Previously there have been articles and videos on social media and organization websites talking about the work barefeet is doing but by the time of data collection there was no study to show the impact of Uncle John workshops on the participants. According to barefeet, Intervention Workshops are the backbone of barefeet (Barefeet, 2008), it is through these workshops that they are able to reach out to the vulnerable children and engage them in activities that will best help them get to a healthier and safe environment. The workshops are delivered through a Participatory Process Performance (PPP) method of Theatre for Development (TFD). Theatre for Development (TFD) is described as a participatory theatre practice which allows communities to write their own stories and perform in a drama based on the messages that emerge from the storytelling process (Participate, 2015). The use of TFD by barefeet is a way of supporting the intervention programs for vulnerable children by providing educational information through entertainments. It encourages participation by the audience in responding to some of the challenges that are presented before them through the plays that are created out of the stories made from the target group in this case the vulnerable children. The stories used for the plays helps in understanding what happens in the children's daily life which are usually not told by the children in a normal circumstances.

The TFD is done in alongside with a methodology called Participatory Process Performance (PPP) a methodology barefeet has created to use during these workshops. The PPP methodology defines how the workshops are conducted as explained below;

Participatory; being the involvement of the workshop participants in sharing their life stories and things they feel affect them in a way the feel uncomfortable,

Process; is the analyzing of the information generated during the workshop and creating a play that will help them reach out to their communities with a message they want to relay back to them.

Performance; is the finale stage where the workshop participants are given a platform to perform the play they made back to their communities. It is during this time that the children are able to tell their stories in a form of play with a message on issues affecting them. (Barefeet, Zambia, 2006). According to Barefeet in their strategic plan they explained that, PPP draws together a range of Theatre for Development and Participatory Research methods. It is process and product. Community artists/participants can tell their own story, highlight their own concerns and develop their own strategies amongst themselves, with their neighbors or with those policy makers in the wider world who have power over their lives – all facilitated by the processes of PPP (Barefeet, 2015)

4.2 Research Questions

Research needs to hold results and for this to happen it needs to have a concrete foundation where to base the whole research process. It is for this reason that the author came up with research questions that would guide this research process. The research was based on 2 questions and them being;

1. How effective are the work methods for the Uncle John workshops on the vulnerable children?
2. What is the impact of the workshops on the vulnerable children who participate?

5 EMPOWERMENT AND SELF-EXPRESSION

5.1 Empowerment

Experts from the Finnish and Russia University explained that empowerment means not only empowering individuals, but also acting politically to promote equality and solidarity in society. First, this means that individuals have opportunities to act in society and to gain control of decisions that affect their lives (Torrönen, Borodkina, Samoylova & Heino 2013). This research was focusing on an intervention workshop that empowers the target group to participate in activities that can influence decision making and their well being. The target for these workshops being children living on the streets and those at risk of living on the street or being in a vulnerable state are given a chance to rediscover their potential. Empowerment is not achieved in one goal or training but it's a process that is ongoing. Boehm and Boehm (2003) in their case study noted that "empowerment also refers to the results of the (empowering) process, which include feelings of self-respect and self-esteem, a sense of power, control and autonomy, as well as a reallocation of resources, with greater personal and collective access to them" (Miley and DuBois 1999; Staples 1990). The Uncle John Intervention Workshops act as an initial stage to the processes of empowerment. The use of theatre to empower the street/Vulnerable children enables them to creatively develop their background stories into plays that will foster learning not only for the children but the community as well. Once people are empowered in a community their self esteem gets higher, meaning they become ready to take action towards the needed change. An empowered community will have individuals that will lead and stand up to contribute towards the common good of others. This opens up doors to other opportunities to access a variety of services through the public and private sectors that will benefit the community.

The Uncle John Workshops considers two elements of empowerment during the processes of the workshop which are Access to information and Inclusive participation by the children and the communities where they come from. Narayan (2002) explain that Information is power. Informed citizens are better equipped to take advantage of opportunities, access services, exercise their rights, negotiate effectively, and hold state and non

state actors accountable. Without information that is relevant, timely, and presented in forms that can be understood, it is impossible for poor people to take effective action (Narayan 2002, p18) Through the performance the communities are informed about the problems affecting the children and the communities and at the same time they are given the relevant information to consider on how best they can tackle the challenges affecting the children in the community. On inclusion and participation Narayan (2002) explained that “inclusion focuses on the who question: Who is included? Participation addresses the question of how they are included and the role they play once included. Inclusion of poor people and other traditionally excluded groups in priority setting and decision making is critical to ensure that limited public resources build on local knowledge and priorities, and to build commitment to change” (Narayan 2002, p19). As the workshops focuses on vulnerable children it is important that these children are involved in the discussion and decision on their well being. Involving the Parents/guardians or the community at large in participating, makes it possible to create lasting solution as they are the best people to address the children’s problems with. The inclusion and participation of the children and the community gives them exposure to different activities that would help them learn about new idea on how to approach different challenges the face.

5.2 Self Expression

The term self expression may have a number of definition depending on what angle you want to look at it. In the Zambian culture it is a common practice to express one’s self through different forms of traditional acts such as songs and dances. Barefeet has adopted the use different self expression acts in form of plays, dance and music to address some of the issues the need to communicate to the different audiences. These acts of self expression helps the children share their inner feelings and physical emotion on different issues affecting them. The children express themselves in these acts on how their lives have been on the streets and how they wish their lives situation can change to a more productive one.

Once again the use of theatre by the workshop facilitators helps the children to re discover themselves and to have the confidence and courage to use some form of expression

to reach out to others. For one to self-express effectively the need to have the power within and high self-esteem. Taking for instance the children who participate in the Uncle John workshops almost all of them come from very poor families; this does not mean that the families are not doing anything to help themselves improve their livelihood, but it may be that they don't aim high enough to achieve certain goals that may help them improve their lives. An example from the interview data which revealed that some of the children who still have parents/guardian spend most of their time begging or selling something on the street even though there was a free community school that would provide free education and meals during the school time. Their parents thought it best if they don't go to school because they feel school would not help their child improve their current situation. This is one demonstration of having low esteem. The parents/guardians of these children make the children feel not worthy of education when in the actual sense these children have the potential but the lack someone to trigger that motivation. Ponton (2016) in her article *Building Self Esteem* explained that "Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself as a person. Those with high self-esteem believe that they are adequate, strong and worthy of a good life, while those with low self-esteem feel inadequate and worthless. Low self-esteem can develop in childhood and continue throughout adulthood, causing great emotional pain" (Ponton 2016). The Uncle John workshops works towards giving the children and the community at large that chance to rediscover themselves to know their true worth and what they can be. By empowering and building their self-esteem, the vulnerable children and the communities are motivated to express themselves a manner that they can reach out to the relevant authorities on issues affecting them.

6 STREET AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN ZAMBIA

6.1 Who are they?

Street kids is a common terms used in Zambia to call children who are living on the streets. These children are usually roaming the central business centers and selling different kind of things, begging for money near shopping malls and city center. The questions still stand as who these children are and where they come from? But before we get to that and for better understanding we get to know the definition of a child. According to the United Nation Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC) Article 1 of the convention states that, For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier, (UNCRC,1990). Zambia is also a signatory to a declarations regarding children rights by the African Charter on the Rights and welfare of the Child which states in article 2 that, A child means every human being below the age of 18 years (ACRWC, 2010). Both declarations define a child to be any person below the age of 18 and all the persons referred to as a child in this research mate the criteria of a child at the time of data collection as noted in both declarations

6.2 Street Children/Vulnerable children

Zulu (2013) in her article which featured in the Anglican Communion News erVICES (ACNS) explained that “In Zambia the death of parents, poverty and family breakdown have pushed thousands of children onto the streets” (Zulu 2013). During the data collection the author got an opportunity to talk directly to some of these children on the streets who told many different but similar stories of how they have come to find themselves on the streets. The common story being that their parents could not afford to send them to school and hence sending them to beg or sell stuff on the streets. Other children told that their parents had died and none of the relatives would take them in. As a result they had ended up on the streets were they join other gang of children and make the streets their home. Each of the child interviewed for the study would have at least mentioned one of

these reasons; neglect, lose of parents, low family income and homelessness. According to Agence Française De Developpement (2012) on street children noted that “Understanding who street children are and what drives them to live on the streets and to remain there also raises the question of how street children and young people live in the urban environment. The street is where they find their life resources, whether these be economic, human or sometimes merely play and recreation” (AFD 2012). The UNICEF defines the street children in three categories as;

- Street Living; Children who ran away from their families and live alone on the streets.
- Street Working Children; children who spend most of their time on the streets, fending for themselves, but returning home on a regular basis.
- Children from Street Families; children who live on the streets with their families (UNICEF 1986).

Sampa (1997) revealed that evidence indicates that, rather than being abandoned, the majority of street children leave home in a progressive manner, initially staying away for a day or two, and then step by step spending more time away from home. Gradually, the amount of time spent away from home with other children increases, contrary to the common belief that street children totally break family ties. This can be substantiated by the latest findings that as many as 90% of street children maintain some contact with their family and most of them contribute a portion of what they earn to the family's livelihood, (Aptekar 1996) Despite the categorization of these children they all have one thing in common, that is a disconnection from the society to leave as normal children. These vulnerable children require immediate intervention by all concerned organizations that are able to provide the services that tackle the problems that these children face. As noted in the savior communs series (2012), “pull” of the street wins out when the environment in which the child lives is no longer “attractive”, in the sense that there is no longer anyone to hold the child there (AFD 2012). Despite the reason behind the children being on the streets, their rights have to be respected and given possible opportunities to have a normal childhood.

In this research study the term Vulnerable Children is used because all the children targeted children are affected in one way or the other by thing that put them in a vulnerable state. As mentioned in Barefeet strategic plan, Barefeet considers vulnerable children as children living on the street; children at risk of living on the street; children from refugee backgrounds; children living with HIV or other health conditions; children living with a disability (strategic plan 2017-2021).

7 DATA COLLECTION METHODES

A multiple of qualitative data collecting methodologies were used to successfully complete the research study. In a more academic term its called triangulation whenever more than one method is used to collect data. A definition by the Research Guideline Project noted that Triangulation involves using multiple data sources in an investigation to produce understanding (RWJF 2008). The primary source of data collection was through video and photography, semi structured and narrative interviews. The author also used some of the already published data that has been collected for other purpose but met the author's research needs.

7.1 Interviews

Qualitative research interviews seek to describe the meanings of central themes in the life world of the subjects. The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say (Kvale 1996). In other explanations Folkestad (2008) said "When a research project is conducting qualitative interviews there is (and presumably must be) a reason for it. One of these reasons might be because it provides a new insight into a social phenomenon" (Folkestad 2008). Using semi structured and informal Interviews helped in getting the data needed in a manner that would make the interviewee to be more open in what they share and not feel influenced in any way on how they respond. According to the Qualitative Research Guidelines Projects, it explains that "Semi-structured interviews are often preceded by observation, informal and unstructured interviewing in order to allow the researchers to develop a keen understanding of the topic of interest necessary for developing relevant and meaningful semi-structured questions, while informal interviews the researcher engages in fieldwork - observation and informal interviewing - to develop an understanding of the setting and to build rapport (RWJF 2008). The target groups for the interviews were those that have been through these workshops and the barefeet members who organize and facilitate these workshops. Conducting interviews with target group that had experience of the workshop gave a good insight of their experiences and own understanding of the Uncle John workshops.

7.2 Video

Loizos (2008) is referred in an articles about video production and analysis of video recording in qualitative research which explains that, “video recording is necessary when ever any set of human actions is complex and difficult to be comprehensively described by one observer as it unfolds" (p. 149). The author mentions examples such as religious ceremonies, art activities, one hour of teaching in the classroom, children's games in the school yard, among others” (Garzes, Duete & Eisenberg 2008). In another article on videos on social research Schnettler and Raab (2008) explained that “Video-cameras, camcorders and webcams offer novel modes of data collection for the social sciences. These devices do not only allow for a comprehensive documentation of social action and interaction. Moreover, they provide researchers with new qualities and quantities of data (Schnettler & Raab 2008). The use of video was aimed at sketching out some of the real events as the happened during the data collection which were later going to be used for data analysis and a short documentary for the finale presentation for the research. In other research methods the participants are given the cameras to record themselves but in this case the author was using the camera himself to capture random scenes of different occasion. This was done because the reaction of the target group varied from time to time and it was important that these different reactions were captured in a natural way whenever possible. The use of theatre allows the children to use different gestures to communicate. It helps bring s out the inner feeling that sometimes can only be best expressed through non verbal communication. These kinds of moments are better explained through video recording which can be later reviewed over to get an understanding. This was going to be helpful in the analysis stage as it would give the author a wider perspective about the participant’s physical emotion and reactions to the different setting.

7.3 Photography

In a similar way like the video the use of photo images also comes with its own advantages in the research. A photo image enriches the readers understanding of the topic at hand and enhances how the author interprets and express views of the participant in a way that written text alone cannot express. The physical emotions captured during interviews and

other activities for the children, helped the author make comparisons in relation to how the children react to different experiences. According to Holmes (2008) in her *Qualitative Social Research on Photography* stated that “the purpose of the use of photographs in interviews is not only to encourage the interviewee to tell about their everyday lives, remember past events or to unlock forgotten information, but also to reveal participants' hidden views and values” (Holm 2008). Another study research on photo elicitation by Shelia Linz revealed that “Images evoke deeper elements of human consciousness than do words; exchanges based on words alone utilize less of the brain’s capacity than do exchanges in which the brain is processing images as well as words” (Harper 2002, p.13).

Photo images depict many aspects of the target group emotion through different activities; it was for this reason that the author opted to use it for this research as it helped give a good insight of how the target group responded to the activities introduced to them through the workshops. Photos were taken from different setting for example, during interviews, during the performance and other activities that were introduced to them during the workshop periods. In participatory research children are given the camera to take photos of places of their choice, space the hang out and anything of interest they like to share. In this case the author could not give the cameras to the children for security reason as advised by the Barefeet members. Some of the reasons being that these children were not yet stable or trusted enough that they would return the cameras and also the focus of the research was to capture the moments when they are involved in the activities that are introduced to them by Barefeet.

8 DATA ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

“Good analysis depends on understanding the data. For qualitative analysis, this means you read and re-read the text. If you have tapes recordings, listen to them several times” (Taylor & Renner 2003). This explanation was a good guide to start the data analysis process. The data collected through interviews, pictures and videos was enough in this study to analyze and to be ready for evaluations. To analyze the collected data the author used a qualitative analysis approach called Inductive Content Analysis. Inductive analysis seeks to generate a theory based on the findings from the data collected. Shane Hall (2016) in her featured article on the chrom.com website entitled what is Inductive Content Analysis? explained that “Quantitative and Qualitative methods of content analysis exist, but one qualitative method enables researchers to analyze documents in areas in which only limited knowledge exists. This method is known as inductive. With this method the researcher examines collected data to come up with a theory that collaborates well with the data. This is done with the individuals or groups perspective in mind that the data has been collected from” (Hall, 2016). Further explanations from other studies explained that, inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis (Patton 1980, p.390).

The author started the analysis by going through the collected data and picking out key information that was most relevant to answering the research questions and looking out for new ideas that may emerge from the data to enable enhance the findings. As the data collection was done with multiple methods it was important that the amount of data was reduced to concentrate only on the data that would emphasize on answering the research questions. Philipp Mayring explained about the three fundamental forms of analysis which are Summary, Explication and Structure, Which he describes as;

Summary; The object of the analysis is to reduce the material in such a way that the essential contents remain, in order to create through abstraction a comprehensive overview of the base material which is nevertheless still an image of it.

Explication; the object of the analysis is to provide additional material on individual doubtful text components (terms, sentences...) with a view to increasing understanding, explaining, interpreting the particular passage of text.

Structuring; the object of the analysis is to filter out particular aspects of the material, to give a cross-section through the material according to pre-determined ordering criteria, or to assess the material according to certain criteria (Mayring, 2014).

In the book *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* it was noted that, the challenge is to make sense of massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, identify significant patterns and construct a framework of communicating the essence of what the data reveal (Patton, 1980, p371). As the author had applied a multiple data collection, a great amount of work was done to reduce the data to a manageable yet comprehensive size. As this was a product thesis, a short documentary was to be made from the visual data that would communicate with theoretical part.

8.1 Video and Photo Analysis

The Video and photo data were aimed at making a short Narrative documentary to be used in collaboration with the written text on the research findings. Though photo can be used on the written text the video data cannot. For this reason it had to be used separately but consistent with the written text. By going through the video and photos taken during the research, the author was able to carefully study the content for patterns and events that were more significant to answering the research questions. The first step for the author to analyze the data was to organize it into categories with points of interest in different parts such as; facial expression, repeated sentiments in interviews, behavior changes by the participants in different situations and if any new information was emerging from the data. A well known term for this kind of process used in research is called coding. As noted by Morse & Richards (2002) in their *user's guide to qualitative methods* book, "coding if well done, is the way you monitor occurrences of data about your ideas and the way you test them. It makes resilient links between data and ideas, links that you can trace back to find where particular ideas came from and what data are coded there, to

justify and account for the interpretation of the ideas'' (Morse & Richards 2002, p.115). The process of organizing the data can be tiresome and time consuming as it is repeated a number of times before coming up data to be used for the finale analysis. The selected data used to link with other existing material and examined so that it can provide an interpretation for the research results.

8.2 Interview Analysis

In many cases interview analysis process starts at the same time the data is being collected and it must be understood that data analysis is a continuous process that goes on until you reach a conclusion to the findings of the research. The author had to start by going through the interview data each time after collection just to be sure that the data being collected is meaningful towards answering the research questions. As explained in a presentation on analyzing data interviews by Hoyes & Barnes (2008) were they suggested that ''starting to analyze early may suggest new questions to ask in the interviews, suggest what to focus on during the interviews and may also give an indication of relevant and non relevant constructs'' (Hoyes & Barnes, 2008). The same procedure of coding was used on this data as the other research data. The author had to go through the interviews several times before and picking out relevant data that had the same issues emerging. The picked out data was then carefully examined on how well it responded to the research question. Some of the data used was from the responses that was given by the children like their feeling about themselves after the workshops, views on what they intend to do after the workshops and how they liked being in the workshops.

8.3 Summative Evaluation

''Summative Evaluation is given at a conclusion of a unit or a course of instruction and it focuses on determining whether learning has occurred and if the desired outcome has been achieved'' (McDonald, 2002). The evaluation method corresponded well with the research as the author was going to use the analyzed data findings from the research to determine outcome of the target group. The research needed to draw conclusion on

whether there were any impact on the children who attended the workshops by way of improvements in behavior change and if any knowledge and any new social skills were acquired in the workshops. The evaluation was also to determine the effectiveness of the workshops work methods of using theatre as an approach and to empower vulnerable children. The evaluation was based on the information that had emerged from the analyzed data as it had revealed answers to the research questions. The evaluation tried to make an understanding of these finding and if they mate the intended outcomes of the workshops. Some of the out comes from these workshops as mentioned in the previous chapters are, behavior change, new knowledge on things relating to the Childs well being and self esteem to be able to self-express themselves on matters affecting them. For this evaluation the outcomes did not have to come with long term or short term effect but the fact that the above mentioned changes occur as this will imply the impact on them. The author did not also have a preconceived idea on the end results of the evaluation but an open mind on any possible conclusion. Depending on the results the evaluation might benefit the organization on how to re-strategies the organizing and delivery of the workshops.

9 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research was seeking an understanding of the Uncle John workshops by evaluating the work methods of the workshops and the impact it has on the participating children. In this view the author was able to generate some understanding through the data collected from Barefeet organization. The findings are explained in a detailed way to give the reader a clear picture on what had been revealed in the findings. The explanation on the findings in the next chapters also reveals the process of measuring the effectiveness of the work methods and impact.

9.1 Effectiveness of Work methods Findings

The workshops are conducted using performing arts as a way of communicating and creating dialogue with the participating vulnerable children and their communities. In the interview data, the workshop facilitators mentioned that some of the children they intend to recruit for the workshops have faced with stigma from the communities around them that has led to low self esteem and hence they don't open up easily to share the problems they face. This has been the reason why the facilitators are trained and have specific skills in communication, individual support and empowerment. These skills help the facilitators in many ways to deal with the situations that may arise while working with these children such as conflict resolution, counseling and distress by the children. The work methods are characterized by three factors which are Motivation, Empowerment and Freedom of Expression. These three factors are what the organization intend to achieve after the ten sessions of the workshops.

Empowerment is the main goal for the workshop which comes about by finding the potential within the child, the capacity to initiate and make decisions on matters that concern them. This is extended to the communities were the children come from, as the adults members of these communities play a role in the well being of the vulnerable children in question.

Motivation is an ongoing process to keep the children in attentive and to give them hope for new positive beginnings. This is done by letting the participating children feel relaxed and making the workshop environment less destructive with things that might disturb the children's attention away.

Freedom of Expression mean for the vulnerable children to be able to come out and express themselves freely with confidence about their needs and things that affect them

The use of Participatory Process Performance (PPP) methodology and Theatre for Development (TFD) enables them to break the barrier between them and the children or the communities were the work from. Breed (2002) explained that Theatre for development creates an infrastructure for communities to define themselves by developing systems of communication that identify key issues, implement solutions, and establish partnerships between resource groups. Barefeet integrate with the communities the work with by engaging in the community activities and using some of the community members who have undergone the workshops or anyone who is motivated enough to help stimulate change to vulnerable children and help out in the facilitations of the workshops. This is done as a way of building trust and relations with the target communities for them to give support towards the children attending the workshops and encourages early intervention for the vulnerable children. The interaction with the community also gives them ideas on the cultural backgrounds of these communities as this may affect on how to address some of the issues that are raised in the workshops by the participating children. Cultures in some of the communities were these children come from forbids a child to talk about certain topics with adults especially those outside the family setting or close community members. It is for this reason that part of the work before the workshops begin is to familiarize themselves with the target community. Further explanation on TFD says that while TFD is used as an information gathering and development implementation tool, it also works as a methodology for teambuilding, cultural identification, and conflict resolution. Theatre creates an open space to play the roles of self and other, thus communities are given the opportunity to question and challenge social hierarchies, gender roles, and discrimination (Breed 2002, p.2). The use of Theatre brings the community together, it allows interaction amongst the community members and gives chance to those that are not heard

a platform to be heard by the concerned authorities and take action on the matters that are raised.

During the workshops the facilitators have to keep the children motivated for them to complete the ten sessions. The motivation comes through the use of theater. Barefeet understands that children like to have fun and like spending most of their time playing. It is for this reason that they take advantages of play in their work methods as a way of capturing the children's attention and using it to assess the children's needs. An article by Action for the Rights of Children (ARC) on working with children explains that; adequate time needs to be given to help the child to feel relaxed, to develop mutual trust and to enable the child to feel that he/she is being taken seriously. Time for playing together may be helpful in developing rapport, and conversation about neutral issues (school, games etc.) may be appropriate before more personal or painful topics are discussed (ARC Revision 01/01). Through the analysis, the author found out that the work methods of using theatre does not only provide easier access to the children but it is also used to help them influence behavior change which may lead to the vulnerable children realize the potential within them while playing the role of themselves in the plays that are presented to the community. The research revealed that the use of performing arts give the vulnerable children the courage and confidence to express themselves freely about things that affect them and provides them with skills of coping with peer pressure and problem solving. It gives the participating children a sense of connection with the rest of the community through the roles they play during the performances. Regardless of the child's background the workshops atmosphere gives the children a chance to build their confidence and voice out their concerns to the community.

Further finding in the research revealed that theatre addresses the emotional needs of the participating children which are mostly neglected by those working with vulnerable children. The absence of parental supervision and missing family connection makes the children lack emotional and moral support. This has led the children to withdraw from creating trusting relationships with other children or adults. Traumatic past experiences also affect their emotional wellbeing as they tend to feel no self worthy to be included in a normal family setup. According to the 2004 OVC Situational Analysis, psychosocial support is a new type of intervention for (street children) programming in Zambia, which has

arisen from the finding that the lack of emotional support when their parents die may be as important as the lack of financial and material support in making children vulnerable (MCDSS, MSYCD 2006). During the performances, their roles in the plays gives them a chances to bring out the emotions that are usually difficult for them to bring out. The performances bring back the sense of trust with others to share what they feel deep inside. The workshops provide extra counseling to the children who are identified to be in need of it and also refer some cases to partner organization if the cases go beyond their specialization. This helps the children to reconcile with families, communities and themselves for a fresh start. The use of other services of Barefeet such as the children's council is made available to the children who have undergone the workshop where they can discuss and advocate issues relating to the vulnerable children's needs.

In conclusion about the effectiveness of the work methods, it can be said that the work methods have been found to be effective in a positive way as they provide a multiple benefits to the participating children. It's not an easy task to keep children motivated to undergo a series of workshops in a space of ten weeks especially when they have a troubled past experiences. But through the model of the work methods of making the workshop sessions fun and easy going for the children, they are able to develop an interest in these children that will foster change.

9.2 The Impact of the 10 Sessions Workshops on Vulnerable Children

The Uncle John workshops do not guarantee any random change after the workshops but the facilitators hope the children grasp something out of the workshops that would stimulate the change. But the question to answer is if there is any impact on the children by these workshops? The author approached this evaluation with a two way of measuring the impact. First task was to look at the learning aspect of the participating children and the second task was to look at the reaction of the children towards the workshops. According to the information from the analyzed data, it highlighted a number of things that determined the impact of the workshops on the participating children.

To start with the author looked at the learning aspect of the workshops. To determine that learning had occurred, the author tried to look for any changes in the children on the knowledge acquired after the workshops. Through the interviews, the children shared their views on the things they were able to learn during the workshops. The author gives some of the accounts of the interviews;

Author: Did you learn anything?

Child 1: Yes I learnt something, when Uncle John arrived in the big city he was scared and he felt lonely, but uncle john said that its okay to be scared and when a young person get scared of something they should share their worries to the adults around.

Author: have you been scared of something before?

Child 1: yes I have been scared before when my step mother used to beat me up if I refused to go and sell things on the streets instead of me going to play with others or go to school.

Author: what then did the workshop teach you when you are faced with such kind of situation?

Child 1: Uncle John said when we don't feel comfortable of doing something we should always try to find another adult and share our problem and that it's not right for the adults to beat us.

Interview 2

Author: Did you enjoy the workshop?

Child 2: yes I did

Author: Any new thing that you learnt?

Child 2: Yes I learnt from Uncle John that it's not okay for us children to be taking drugs and living on the streets

Author: How are you able to stop when others are doing it when you are on the streets?

Child 2: We were told that drugs are not good for our health and even when others are doing it we should not be forced to do it. Uncle John also said they are places where we can go to seek help and they would give us shelter and food.

The point the author was trying to raise to the reader from these interviews is that, children start to show that they got something new out of the workshops. The reference to the Uncle John also indicates how the characters are having an effect on the children. The children also show knowledge of being aware about the option about on the services available for them to help them to leave a normal life as a child. The workshops try to bring to their attention that as a child they have human right and they have the right to claim for services that will improve their well being. During the workshop sessions the children are given sufficient skills and knowledge to help them start making own choices about what they want to change in their lives. To help the children with the decisions the children's rights are emphasized. Two of the valuable rights that are made available to help them towards the life changes are Article 13 and article 20. According to the UNCRC (article 13) states that ‘‘the child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice’’. While article 20 states that ‘‘a child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State. Such care could include, inter alia, foster placement, kafalah of Islamic law, adoption or if necessary placement in suitable institutions for the care of children. When considering solutions, due regard shall be paid to the desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing and to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background (UNCRC, Article 20 1989). The realization of these rights during the workshops starts to make the children enthusiastic and show interest in knowing more on the services available for them. Evidence of learning to have occurred is that

the children take advantage of these rights to seek for services available for them. Though the author was not able to get the exact numbers about the children who have undergone the workshops, interviews data from the facilitators and the children themselves, revealed that a good number of children who have undergone the Uncle John workshops have moved out of the streets and have been taken into care by organization that are able to provide a home like environment. For those that had families they no longer frequent the street but have been enrolled in free community schools and actively participate in programs that would help them grow into responsible adults. The decisions that these children make at the end of these workshops are triggered by the information that they receive in each session of the workshops. This was one clear demonstration that knowledge was acquired even though this only marked the first steps towards a positive change

Secondly the author looks at the reaction of the children toward the workshop presentation. To measure the reaction the author had to look at how the children reacted with the facilitator's communication to them and if the style of the workshop presentations helped them raise the interest to feel comfortable or dislike being in the workshops. The reaction interconnects with the learning part. As stated in the paragraph above the children get to learn something new and beneficial towards their wellbeing and as a result it brings some kind of eagerness towards learning more. The interviews data revealed that the children were opening up to the facilitators and shared information on things that have been affecting them. This clearly implied that the workshops presentation was done in a child friendly manner and they were able to relay the intended message to the children. One important aspect to consider is that it would be impossible to achieve anything in these workshops if the children are not made to feel comfortable or having no interest to be in the workshop. According to a resource pack article on communication with children explained that "everyone learns best when content is presented in interesting ways and through good stories. No one, especially a child, learns best from a didactic or preachy presentation of information. The principles of child-friendly education apply equally to child-friendly communication" (Kolucki & Lemish 2011). The workshops lay out are made in a creative and fun way that the children not only enjoy but they start to find the relevance of the information they gain in every session of the workshops. Play time is part of children daily routine, using the Uncle John Character enables the atmosphere for the workshop sessions feel like play time making the children feel in control of the space

while at the same time the facilitators take advantage of the time to fuse in the intended information to the children.

9.3 Evidence of Impact

The vulnerable children who successfully undergo these workshops change their ways of living especially those who have been staying on the street full time. Even though they still remain in poor conditions they get to have a more dignified life style than before. They begin to show less interest of going back on the streets and move into shelters or Home centers which are run by partner organizations for the streets children where they are provided with bed space, meals and some recreational facilities. Those that have families return home and still visit centers that provides free education for the less privileged. For those that are fortunate enough they get sponsorship to 'normal schools'. The children from these workshops also have demonstrated having developed self esteem and are actively getting involved in the services available for them in their communities and some are in the forefront of advocating for programs that improves the well being of the children through the barefeet children's council and other organizations that advocate for Vulnerable children's wellbeing.

According to the data collected from the interviews and videos, the conditions of the children on the streets does not give them much to look forward to in life other than to survive the day, make more money than the previous day, survive the night violence and seek protection from the gang street leaders by engaging themselves in criminal activities. Through the workshops they begin to realize that they can have a choice to look forward to a much better lasting solution of improving their lives. A study noted that "disengaging from street life, like beginning street life, was not an abrupt procedure but a slow process of estrangement brought about by the inability to live well on the streets, a feeling of meaninglessness, and a sense of not resolving the psychological issues that led to beginning street life in the first place" (Visano 1990). Starting the process of change is a significant step to the child, this process is a demonstration that the workshop has had an impact on the child and they are making the step.

10 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

10.1 Discussion

This research demonstrated a number of benefits for the children who undergo the Uncle John workshop towards a healthy and child friendly life style. The children's change of behavior and life style because of the acquired knowledge demonstrated the impact of the workshops. The children leave the workshops after the 10 sessions feeling empowered and ready to make the steps towards change. To help these vulnerable children make those steps towards change there is need to incorporate the families and communities where these children come from to address the issues that are causing the children to be in a vulnerable state. The research noted in the previous chapters that most of the children have left home for various reasons such as; being abandoned by the families because of low income, loss of parents to HIV/Aids or other health related factors and abuse in the family. These problems begin within the family or community hence the need to approach intervention for these children with a wider view of not only dealing with the children but to also try to solve the root cause of these problems. In the UNHCR hand book (1994) it was noted that although the Convention on the Rights of the Child gives individual rights to children, the CRC also emphasizes relationships. The well-being of children and the enjoyment of their rights are dependent upon their families and their community. The CRC recognizes that the family is "the fundamental group of society" and places children's rights in the context of parental rights and duties (arts. 5, 14, 18, etc.). The importance of the community is constantly recognized (arts.5, 13, 14, 15, 20, 29, 30). The research suggested an approach of empowering of those with parental and guardian responsibilities in these communities as well. Bartle (2011) in his article making neighborhoods stronger explained that "to empower a community it means we want the people (not just individuals) as a whole (collectively) to have power. We want to find ways for the community to have more power, wealth and capacity (Bartle 2011). In regard to this research, the need of the community to take up control and responsibility of their situation is important and to be ready to take over once these children who are on the streets are ready to reconnect back to their families and communities. The workshops main concern may be on the children but it can't be ignored that these children have broken away from the families hence

the need to address both sides the children and the care givers side. Taking for instance the case of these children who undergo the workshops, some of them are willing to move back to their homes but the families have no capacity to take care of them and when they go back it's likely that they will end up on the streets again. The use of Theatre for development (TFD) for the workshop engages both the participant (children) and the audience (Community and family members) during the performances. Sharma (2015) in his journal on empowerment programmes noted that, Theatre provides an excellent platform to critically deliberate, discuss and debate the identified issues in a lively and entertaining way, thereby leading to the process of community based decision-making and collaborative action. Thus, instead of being social-worker, broker or dispenser of service and information, the members of the social activist group tend to become the 'facilitator and catalyst stimulating a process of community conscientization' (Malamah-Thomas 1986).

The performances by the vulnerable children raise issues that are usually ignored or less talked about. It's during these performances that the audience gets an opportunity to understand what changes or needs the children want in the communities. This sparks discussions with the audience who are given a chance to suggest solutions to the problems that are portrayed in the plays. The community engagement is a way to empower them in taking responsibility of their own situations and learning skills that are needed to tackle the challenges they face. Once the community realizes that they can foster change, it is easier for them to support these children when they return home and prevent those who are at risk of disengaging from the families or community.

Early intervention and child friendly environmental setup in which children grow up plays an important role in the upbringing of children. Many of the children on the streets are as a result of being exposed to unfavorable environments at an early stage such as poverty in the family, no parental supervision and physical and mental abuse. It is well known that children like to copy what adults do and it is important to know that as early as an infant they start to learn from their care givers and start coping with what's happening around them. Depending on the type of home or environment they are exposed to, it might have a great influence over them in due course. Parke & Clark-Stewart (2011) in their book on social development used Erickson's theory explanation on children's developmental stages which noted that; in Erickson's first stage the main task is acquiring a sense of basic trust.

By learning to trust their parents or caretaker infants learn to trust their environments and themselves. If they find others untrustworthy, they develop mistrust of both themselves and the world. In the second stage, children learn in early childhood must learn self control and develop autonomy; they develop shame and self-doubt if they remain worried about their continuing dependency and their inability to live up to adult expectation (Erikson 1959/1980). The different communities where these children come from need to be aware that as the children grow they need to be involved in activities that will support their growth to adulthood. This does not only mean parental care or financial support but to have services in the communities that are educational, social and empowering. It is important that through the acquired skills of empowerment that they may get from the different organizations, communities need to start standing up on their own to lobby for services that they are deprived of from the relevant authorities. The children are given a platform through the Uncle John intervention Workshops to openly speak about their needs. When they use these platforms they need to know that there will be someone listening and be able to provide the support towards that change, and the first place where these children need to turn to for that attention is from the families and communities where they come from.

10.2 Conclusion

The issue of street and vulnerable children may have different approaches depending on how the interveners providing these preventive and intervention programs want to approach them. Barefeet Zambia through its Uncle John intervention workshops has contributed greatly in supporting the well being of vulnerable children from its time of inception. It has had an enduring effect in reaching out to a great number of vulnerable children in the towns and cities where they operate from. The use of theatre has proved to have had a positive effect on behavior change, boosting self-esteem, stimulating an interest of learning and giving the vulnerable children confidence to self expression. Providing empowerment skills in these workshops has also led to an increase of opportunities for the vulnerable children to gain access to services that support their well being. These workshops act as a bridge to connect the vulnerable back to their respective communities

as well as engaging the same communities in services that will enable them get empowered to support these children. Through Theatre there has been an indication that a lot of success can be achieved from the intervention programs than just the intended goal as it has the potential to address a number of issues that affect disadvantaged communities.

10.3 Self Development

From the beginning of my studies in diak we have been always asked to reflect on our personal development after each assignment. During the following years in the studies I learnt to take on assignments with a view of how I will benefit as a student and how my skills will improve. I always took self assessments before and after to check on how I have would enhance my level of understanding and my approaches to the challenges that came with the assignments. For this research it came at a time when I had some experience of taking on assignment with a view of not only completing it but taking it as a learning process and also whenever possible be able to share some of my strength and skills with fellow team members.

The research process helped me increase my level of understanding the different qualitative research methods. It also helped me learn about the different approaches when dealing with vulnerable groups. The need to have passion towards what you are working on and believing in one's self towards an intended goal. The experience has accorded me a chance to learn more about the situation of vulnerable groups and not only in Zambia but also other countries facing the same situations. I hope the skills that I have developed during this time will help me later in the field of social work.

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12 APPENDIX: PHOTOS



RECRUITMENT PROCESS AT CHIBOLYA COMMUNITY SCHOOL



13 APPENDIX: PHOTOS



A BOY (ON THE RIGHT SIDE) HELPING IN INTERPRETING FOR HIS FRIEND FROM CONGO DR
BECAUSE HE COULD NOT SPEAK ANY OF THE LOCAL LANGUAGES

14 APPENDIX: PHOTOS



PERFORMANCES AND MATCH PAST DURING THE BAREFEET ANNUAL FESTIVAL

15 APPENDIX: PHOTOS



DURING PERFORMANCES IN THE CHILDREN'S COMMUNITIES