

[共同研究：社会福祉援助技術の研究]

Street Children's Problems and Services in Indonesia: Centering on Jakarta

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1. Introduction

There are a lot of street children in Southeast Asian countries as well as in South American countries. I found many street children in recent years on the main urban cities such as Jakarta, Manila, Bangkok, Phnom Penh etc. in the Southeast Asian countries.

I have been to Jakarta a few times for the purpose of my researching, and I got especially intensive impressions to look at lots of street children whenever I visited Jakarta. And therefore, I thought I would like to research into the current situation of street children, for example, the figures, reasons, their living, families and so on, as well as how to be treating and supporting these street children in Indonesia.

That is, my motivation and objectives having come to write this paper are to clarify what street children are doing, why they live in streets and how they are supported in Indonesia, centering on Jakarta. Consequently, this paper consists of five chapters as follows: (1) Introduction, (2) Current situation of street children, (3) Legislation on street children, (4) Care and services for street children, and (5) Concluding remarks.

The methodology of this paper largely depends on the documentary research study which includes searching many printed materials and literature related to the street children's problems and services in

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Indonesia.

Concerning the definition of street children, there are several definitions of street children by different authors. But I would like to quote from the UNICEF's definition in this paper. Namely, it states that 'Street children are most practically defined as those minors who spend at least a major part of their waking hours working or wandering in urban streets'. This definition is more comprehensive than the definition from the Oxford dictionary which states that a street child is 'a homeless or neglected child who lives chiefly in the streets'.

2. Current situation of street children

In this chapter, current situation of street children in Indonesia centering on Jakarta is depicted as the following sub chapters: Figures on street children; Reasons for being street children; Jobs on street; Homes of street children; and Problems hit street children.

· Figures on street children

In the 1990s, street children in Indonesia, especially in Jakarta have become an inevitable phenomenon. They almost always appear in a busy area where there is at least one of the following characteristics: traditional market, mall, train or bus station, or congested intersection.

Street children in Indonesia are vulnerable members of the 5 - 18 year old which are accounted for approximately 63 million. The mapping surveys of street children in 12 major cities conducted in 1999 by Center for Societal Development Studies, Atma Jaya Catholic University commissioned by Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) estimated that number of street children in 12 largest cities in Indonesia was 39,861. From this number of street children, it was anticipated that approximately 10,373 were in Jakarta where also dominated the highest percentage of young street children. 2,832 street children were found in Bandung, whereas 2,835 were in Surabaya. In 1994, moreover research on the profile of, and the programs and policies available to, street children in Jakarta conducted by the Indonesian Child Welfare Foundation in cooperation with Private Agencies Collaborating Together (PACT) and USAID found that in terms of the definition developed by UNICEF, 22% of the sample were children 'at high risk', 59% were children 'on the street', and 19% were children 'of the street'.

Despite the fact that most of understanding of street children in Indonesia have been biased toward boys whose the total amount is higher than that of girls, there is an increasing incidence of girls in the street in many big cities such as Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, and Medan. (Irwanto *et al.*, 1999) In fact, a 1999 survey of 12 cities found that girls made up 20 percent of Indonesia's estimated 170,000 street children. The survey also found that the majority of the female street children were between the ages of 4 and 18.

· Reasons for being street children

In relation to the reasons of being street children, poverty problem is wildly mentioned in Indonesia as the most notable reason for pushing children out of their schools into the street. In fact, even though poverty is not only factor, the urban phenomenon of street children in Indonesia should be regarded largely as the consequence of poverty. Another important reason for not continuing education, but running away into street instead has been the cultural values which put girl children less deserving than

boys to get higher education. Furthermore, abandonment by families, natural disaster such as flood, divorce family, prolonged sickness of parents, physical abuse by parents, and other causes play significant roles in the incidence of children leaving home or being separated from their families and living on the street. Of the reasons for working on the street, earning money for themselves is the main reason of street children in Jakarta. Only 18% stated that they worked because they were asked by their parents to do so.

· Jobs on street

Street children normally work in the informal sector: for instance, collecting spilled vegetables, collecting recyclable waste or scavenging, begging, shoe-shining, car-window cleaning, bus cleaning, street singing, street peddling, baggage carrying, child prostitution, lending umbrellas, and illegal parking assistants. However, from a finding of a research, children who work on the street usually have experience on several activities. Most children, in addition, work honestly on the street whereas some of them committed crimes including doing harms to other street children.

The daily income of street children varies not only by their activities, but also by their sex and age. Younger street children earn lower than the older ones, as well as female street children earn lower than the male ones.

· Homes of street children

The pattern of street children's dwellings varies. There are children who live in a common neighborhood, renting a small house in a squatter area. For one small house, usually there are more than seven children who live together. Children may live with their parents in a slum area by renting a small house and have a seemingly family communication with each other everyday. Besides, there are a lot of children using a place such as in front of a store, in the terminal (bus or train station), in a park, under a bridge, or in the market as their shelters. And also, there are street children dwelling at Open House, Learning House or in the Government Rehabilitation Centre.

· Problems hit street children

From their activities on the street, although the amount of money earned by senior street children per day is not below the income of civil servants who are freshly graduated from university, street children have to encounter various risks in their daily lives.

Street children have worries and fears such as: being captured by the security team which has the duty of clearing certain areas of street peddlers or street vendors; being threatened and beaten by 'Preman', local gangsters; being assaulted and robbed by senior street children; being forced to have sexual intercourse with homopaedophiles; or being involved in commercial sex. In addition, another risk for street children is their own unhealthy habit. Being an active smoker or using/abusing psychoactive substances, especially glue and thinner are the cases in point.

Besides, Dharmono, a child psychiatrist, notes that street children have a problem called "identity confusion" which results from how the community treated them. Street children also face difficulty to trust and to develop trust for others.

In order to protect the threaten from their environment that is not only exists on the day time, but also at night, street children usually associate themselves with each other and form their own gang as their

own quasi families, build solidarity among themselves, and develop relationships with adults who can protect them. They have their own area and do not permit street children from different areas to use it for living.

3. Legislation on street children

The awareness of the importance of children for Indonesia's future has been reflected not only in the 1945 Constitution, but also in a number of laws. Laws and regulations that are most relevant to street children are Law no. 12/1948 on Employment, Law no. 4/1979 on Child Welfare, and the Government Regulation no. 31/1980 on care of the Homeless (Vagrant and Beggars).

Law on Employment states that a child may not work, and the Government urges that a school-age child should not work for a living so that they can get their education and other rights normally. In addition, Government Regulation mentioned above states that the presence of vagrants and mendicants in the community does not comply with the social structure of the Indonesian nation based upon the Pancasila Principles (five principles which constitute the ideological principle) and the 1945 Constitution. In relation to child's right, the article 2 in paragraph 3 of the Law no. 4/1979 on Child Welfare states about child's right on care and protection both in pre-natal and post-natal, and in paragraph 4 states about child's right on protection against the social environment which might be harmful or hinder his normal growth and development. On the other hand, in dealing with children working on the street, the most common strategy, even today is to clean the street by picking children up by force. Such measure is undertaken in most capital cities in the provinces. For example, Provincial Regulation No. 3/1972 on safety and order in public places was enforced in Jakarta.

Despite the existence of these laws and regulations mentioned above, the fact that a number of children run away school, work both in formal and informal sectors, and live like vagrants through out Indonesia unavoidably affects the physical, mental and social growth of children. One might assume that these laws cannot be fully enforced and are questioned "why".

In fact, in Indonesia child labor can be considered as child abuse or as a mean to help his parents to earn for living. It is claimed that the child goes to work due to not only the weakness in the enforcement of the Law, but also the limitation of educational facilities as well as the loose administration of the municipality so that it gives a chance for the informal economic activities to grow. Therefore, while working children are widely seen, the problem needed to deal with urgently is not abolishment of working child, but provision on work security, education, recreation, wages, the mental, physical and social growth and development of children. To this extent, the government has tried to assist the working child by introducing general and basic education program which covers reading, writing, mathematics, Indonesian language, and general knowledge. Vocational training is also conducted in some factories.

However, if we consider the definition in legal terms of "work", it is defined as "work done by labor for the employer with relation to the wage". Apparently but unfortunately, work done by street children in informal sector is not the "work" according to that in legal terms; hence, the street children are not entitled to the services provided by government.

In spite of the fact that useful experiences and knowledge have been gained over the last decade, there is still no national policy to deal with problems of street children. Most programs rely on the Child Welfare Law No. 4/1979 and existing government regulations which seem not to be in force effectively as mentioned earlier.

Despite the absence of a comprehensive policy, however, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was ratified in 1990 by a Presidential Decree No. 36/1990. The main principles of CRC have become as standard criteria for actions of most technical guidelines for child welfare produced since 1996.

4. Care and services for street children

· Government

At the national level, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) is mainly responsible for policies in the social welfare sector. Although the phenomena of children working and living on the street have been recognized by policy makers since a decade ago, the response was rather late. Until 1996/7 government response to the problem of street children was similar response to the problems of adults Homeless and Beggars (Gepeng). MOSA's responses to deal with Gepeng problems were based on the general idea that only income generating programs would be adequate. Consequently, two main MOSA programs: vocational training followed by micro credit scheme, and transmigration jointly performed with the Ministry of Home Affairs were operated. The goal of the response was to limit the number of Gepeng in the cities and to send them back to their community of origin as skilled workers, otherwise, they were offered to localize into a new promised land. Gepeng who joined the transmigration program were given land property and farming tools.

Regarding care and services for neglected children, they are carried out in the form of institutional as well as non-institutional care which means fostering neglected children, whether in their own or foster families, and also encouraging people to adopt neglected children of babies. And in order to materialize this form to institutional system, children's homes serving children aged between 15 and 21 years are established.

In addition, there are Home institutions managed by MOSA for the disabled, aged, sex workers, and children who were abandoned or neglected by their parents. In these facilities called *Panti*, residences are recruited according to certain rules applied to all *Panti*s. Children who were recruited and allowed to use *Panti* facilities are those reported by parents or community social workers as problematic at home, in school or in their communities. Nevertheless, the procedure to live in there is so complicated that it hinders street children from getting in. Despite its complexity, many registered children who meet requirements are not accepted because of limitations.

In Jakarta, the Governor realizing the problem of street children introduced a law called the Decision of Jakarta Governor no. 1b 13/3/42/1967. The law regulates the execution of rehabilitation and re-socialization of street children at the temporary reception centre named *Observation Home*. After having been served there, street children are either sent back home or to nursing homes.

The first government sponsored program to respond to the specific needs of street children implemented by MOSA began only with a multi-year UNDP assisted project (INS/94/007) called "The Protection and Provision of Social Assistance to Street Children through Open House". This program was designed and implemented as a crises response through intensive cooperation with NGOs in seven main cities in Indonesia. As a result, after the program the number of Open House fully managed by NGOs which were accessible by children has been increasing since then.

Another two notable programs budgeted from the Asean Development Bank (ADB) loans for the poor including street children are the Social Protection Sector Development Program (SPSDP) and the

Health and Nutrition Sector Development Program (HNSDP). Although the first program is designed to address the needs of children who are working on the street but are still in school, in practice the program also includes children who have just dropped out of school or those who have expressed their desire to go back to school. The latter program is designed to address broader issues of children living in underprivileged communities in 13 urban environments.

Apart from the above programs, in 2000 ADB (Asian Development Bank) launched its Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction with a US\$1 million project to help young female street children in Indonesia. The Indonesian Government and NGOs financed the balance. The executing agency was the National Welfare Agency of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, and NGOs implemented the project which scheduled to be completed in March 2002. The project aimed to help victims of sexual abuse and child prostitution in Yogyakarta which had a lot of NGOs being addressing elements of the program and University of Gajah Mada's Department of Social and Women's Affairs and Reproductive Health helping to implement and evaluate the program.

・ Non-government organizations (NGOs)

In dealing with the social development, the Indonesia government explicitly admits that the state lacks fund and hence invites and encourages the Community's participation. Particularly, the direct service for street children executed by the Ministry of Social Affairs is rather insufficient. Apparently the role of voluntary agencies has become prominent in this respect.

One of the well established organizations which handle street children problems in Indonesia is the Indonesian Child Welfare Foundation (ICWF). It was founded in the spirit of the international year of child welfare in 1979 and supported by Indonesia's first lady, Mrs. Tien Suharto, and wives of the prominent politicians. The goal of this organization is to rise people's awareness of the issue of child welfare development as a part of national development.

According the data from ICWF in collaboration with an American PVO and USAID, in 1994 there were 15 NGOs having a working project related to street children. Generally speaking, some non-government organizations' responses to the needs of street children have been initiated earlier than the Indonesian government. A number of NGOs in some cities have started their programs as early as 1990.

For instance, in 1992 USAID funded the Reaching Street Children in Urban Environment (RESCUE-Indonesia) project through an American PVO and its national partner the Indonesian Child Welfare Foundation (YKAI). In collaboration with at least ten other NGOs, RESCUE I and II provided literacy programs, survival skills including practical health related skills, public awareness on child rights and the situation of street children, and psycho-social intervention. It was through this project that many NGOs in Jakarta and other cities learned how to manage and implement specific programs for street children.

After that, in 2000 USAID awarded sub grants to local nongovernmental organizations in Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, and Medan for the Urban Street Children Empowerment and Support program. The funding period of the program is from 2000 to 2003 with total amount of aid at US\$3 million. Its goal is to expand, strengthen, and mobilize local responses to meet the special health, behavioral, educational, legal, and social needs of girls and boys living and working on the street through activities to develop alternatives to living on the street. The activities also include formal and non-formal education, vocational and financial management training, and creative and leisure programs.

In relation to care and services provided by NGOs for street children, initially, they were dominantly

street based and mainly meeting street children's basic needs. In time they had realized that these were inadequate, and they broadened their concept to include others than street based approaches and viewed the importance of long term programs that would empower street children. As a result, Open Houses have been established as an alternative strategy to the existing Home institutions (Panti) managed by the government.

As a whole, Open House (OH) aims to help street children to move out of street life; therefore, it functions as a place where children may find refuge, education (literacy programs), foods, and psycho-social help. Although there are many components that differentiate one OH from another, in general, most OHs have similar components: a physical structure with basic facilities to accommodate a number of children, a small team of social workers who operate the OH, and programs and services such as scholarships and vocational training for children and income-generating activities for parents and children. In all OHs, the social services are given to both boys and girls, but only boys are allowed to stay overnight in the OH.

Most parents have a positive regard for the OH because they know that it helped to reduce the negative impact of the street and lessened their worry about the children's safety. Likewise, most street children viewed the OH as a safe place where they could eat, rest, play and avail of various services to meet their urgent and basic needs. However, according to data from Evaluation of Open Houses of Irwanto et al. (1999), children experienced both positive and negative sides of OHs. In short, the choices of OH depended on several considerations, i.e. facilities and services offered by OH; social climate of OH; rules and regulations implemented by OH; and relationship between street children with the staffs and other children in the OH.

To protect and develop children who work on the street, OH social workers have certain strategies which span the period from making contact with the children until they can discharge them to go back to their families. In OH, street children are not viewed as pathologic children in the way assumed by the correctional approach. Rather, they are forced by their environment to work and sometimes also live in the street.

The intervention processes in OH basically relate to its approach as a rehabilitative institution. In the beginning of the intervention process, the social worker acts indirectly and is not too pushing, so that the children are motivated to go to the OH by themselves. And after the children have joined the OH, the process of re-education or re-socialization commences. At this stage, the children socialize everything needed for being a person in a normal society, i.e. social norms, basic personal hygiene, appropriate behaviors and manners etc. Social workers also assess the possibilities of reuniting the children with their families in order to support each child in relation to his decision to return to his home village. In such cases as the children do not want to reunite with their families and insist on staying on the street, social workers directly and indirectly teach them the skills needed to survive on the street.

Although each NGO has their own way of helping street children generally based on some concepts evolving through their experiences with street children, the practice of street children NGOs, basically, cannot be separated from the political and economic conditions in Indonesia. It is also influenced by the trend of the street children issues; the political will and the attention of the government agencies; and also the funds from local and international agencies. The situation of several funding sources contributing to support the various components of the same OH program, environmental phenomena in any aspects, and several government and non-government agencies implementing the concept of the OH

created some confusion and problems in the actual implementation of the OH concept. Consequently, there were overlapping functions and sometimes contradicting interpretations of what an OH is and how it should be. In sum, OHs have come to have to face many obstacles in developing the centre including limited funds, limited authority and freedom to operate its own centre, the limited number of social workers to deal with the children in the centre and the limited material sources which can be used by the children.

5. Concluding remarks

We have made efforts to clarify what, why and how about Indonesian street children in this paper, which would be summarized and arranged as Conclusion in this chapter as follows.

Street children in Indonesia, especially in Jakarta have been an inevitable phenomenon since the 1990s. They have almost always appeared in such a busy area as traditional market, mall, train or bus station, or congested intersection. And they mostly used to work in the informal sector such as shoeshiners, street peddlers, street singers, car washers, beggars and so on, to earn the cost of living for themselves. Street children in Indonesia are vulnerable members (estimated 170,000 children) out of the 5 - 18 years old which are accounted for approximately 63 million.

One of the most notable reasons for being street children is regarded as poverty in Indonesia. Poverty clearly plays a major role in low school participation and drop out, and easily pushing children to the street. Moreover, abandonment by family, prolonged sickness of parents, physical abuse by parents, and other causes play significant roles in the incidence of children leaving home or being separated from their families and living on the street. It is not uncommon for children to leave their home and school to work on the street after their parents were separated.

The pattern of street children's dwellings varies. There are lots of children using such a place as in front of a store, in the terminal (bus or train), in a park, under a bridge, or in the market as their shelters, while the other children may live with their parents in a slum area by renting a small house.

Regarding the risks of being street children, there are several risks such as being threatened and beaten by local gangsters, being assaulted and robbed by senior street children, or being forced to have sexual intercourse and so on. Besides, a child psychiatrist notes that street children have a problem called "identity confusion" which results from how the community treated them. Street children also face difficulty to trust people and cannot develop trust for others.

Concerning the services and protections for street children in Indonesia, the Government has been always negative in dealing with the street children's problems although the policy makers have been recognizing them over the last decade. And so the direct services for street children have been very insufficient, because the Government has considered the family and community to be basically responsible to street children. Consequently, the Government has encouraged the community's participation and NGO's collaboration to deal with street children's problem.

After all, Indonesia Government does not yet enact the comprehensive legislation and policy for supporting street children, and therefore the Government response to the street children's problems is mostly same as the response to problems of adults Homeless and Beggars and the goal of the response would be to limit the number of street children in the cities, and send them back to their families and their community of origin.

But the Indonesia Government (MOSA) seems to be irresponsible for Indonesia people because Gov-

ernment policy makers have not discharged their duty (i.e. their responsibility of taking the proper legislative measure and social policy) to save and support street children, although they have recognized the existence of lots of street children over the last decade. And also, the irresponsibility of Government may be revealed in the fact that MOSA has been unwilling to give money and limited funds for supporting OH concept and its operation, and meanwhile has willingly depended on the financial assistances from UNICEF and foreign countries (USA, Japan etc.).

The Government's corrective approach and the policy sending forcedly them back to their family and community are fundamentally wrong because they are not perpetrators or pathologic children and they became reluctantly street children owing to the serious problems of their family and community.

Street children are basically victims of social and structural injustice including poverty, broken family, vicious social environments and so on. Many projects and programs developed from now on for street children involving the improvement and promotion of OH concept & its operation should recognize and respect the rights of these children for survival, development, protection, and participation by taking comprehensive and legislative measure for supporting them as well as the full financial investment concerning street children's problems. And all of such legislative policies and interventions should be designed for the best interest of the child since Indonesia Government already ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child by a Presidential Decree No. 36/1990.

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Street Children's Problems and Services in Indonesia: Centering on Jakarta

Shin-ichi MATSUMOTO

This paper concerning street children in Indonesia aims to clarify what street children are doing, why they have become street children and live in streets, and how they are supported in Indonesia, centering on Jakarta. As a result, this paper consists of five chapters. The first chapter is Introduction. The second chapter presents the description of current situation of street children, and the third chapter reviews the legislation on street children. The fourth chapter describes the care and services for street children, and the last chapter is Concluding remarks. The outline of this paper is as follows.

Street children in Jakarta mostly work in the informal sector as shoe-shiners, street peddling, street singers, baggage carriers, car washers, beggars, and illegal parking assistants etc. People can find them easily in such areas as traditional market, mall, train station, bus station, or congested intersection.

Poverty is regarded as one of the most notable reasons for being street children in Indonesia. Poverty clearly plays a major role in low school participation and drop out, pushing children to the street, pushing girl children into commercial sex industry, and pushing children to work full or part-time earlier. Furthermore, the urban phenomenon of street children in Indonesia is largely related to such serious family problems as family discord, domestic violence, divorce, abuse, remarriage involving children, and so on.

The pattern of their dwellings varies from street children's conditions. There are more than seven children who live together renting a small house in a common neighborhood, while there are lots of children using a place such as in front of a store, in the terminal, in a park, under a bridge, or in the market as their shelters.

In relation to the services and protections for street children at the Government level, policy makers' response was very late although they have been recognizing the serious street children's problems over the last decade. Until 1996/7 government response to the problem of street children was similar response to the problems of adults Homeless and Beggars, which were based on the general idea that only income generating programs would be adequate.

The first government sponsored program responding to the specific needs of street children implemented by Ministry of Social Affairs began only with a multi-year UNDP (United Nations Development Program) assisted project called "The Protection and Provision of Social Assistance to Street Children through Open House". This program was designed and implemented as a crises response through intensive cooperation with NGOs in seven main cities in Indonesia.

After the program the number of Open House (OH) fully managed by NGOs has been increasing since then. As a whole, OH aims to help street children to move out of street life, and it functions as a place

where children may find refuge, education (literacy programs), foods, and psycho-social help.

Although each NGO has their own way of helping street children through the intervention process in OH, the practices of NGOs basically cannot be separated from the political and economic conditions in Indonesia. Accordingly, some confusion and problems recently took place between government agencies and NGOs in the actual implementations of the OH concept and its operation. Consequently, OHs have had to face many obstacles in developing the centre including limited funds, limited authority and freedom to operate its own centre, the limited number of social workers to deal with the children in the centre and so on.

After all, Indonesia Government does not yet enact the comprehensive legislation and policy for supporting street children, and so the Government seems to be irresponsible for Indonesia people because Government policy makers have not discharged their duty to save and support street children, although they have recognized the existence of lots of street children over the last decade.