

UPENDO DAIMA'S COUSELORS ROLE

Many of the children we deal with at UPENDO DAIMA come to the streets after leaving their homes for different reasons, such as poverty, social conflicts, death of parents, parent separation or divorce. All of which cause the children to lose their life direction and goals.

Identification of the children from the streets

How we identify the children from the street? We usually use street visits, during which we make thorough observations and communications, hence we build good relationships and trust with the children. Any child who wants to come to the centre and who accepts himself and is ready to return home is taken to the Back Home House centre for more counselling and psychotherapy.

There are several categories of children that we are confronted with. They are observed with different abnormal behaviour, such as fighting due to anger-aggression, sexual abuse, unknown identity of the biological father, stealing and abandonment.

In order to deconstruct this negative behaviour, we utilize different counselling approaches: individual and group counselling, family counselling, and psychotherapy, with the goal to heal their traumatized mind and emotions and bodies. We use games and sports, prayer, capacitor exercises such as tai chi, pal dang gun, tapping, finger holding, meditation, body listening and visualization. In order to attain true healing of the trauma, they have to go through the experiences which led them to go to the street again, which is sometimes not easy, but very effective to:

- Empower them to be able to manage in life with the negative experiences they had in life
- Build awareness of their past situation
- Enable them to forgive themselves and those who caused them to live such a life, not having shelter, food, security and education.

Even though healing is a long process we have already see the fruits from it.

Success

Many of the children that have come to the centre have been united with their families, and have continued education programmes from primary school up to university level. Others have achieved good vocational training and do live their own life. Most of those who stay with us for a long time, and live at Malimbe Family centre, have discovered their life problems.

Challenges

Due to the heavy workload of many children versus a limited number of counsellors (only two), many children make a wrong decision before they are fully counselled. Many families need deep counselling sessions in order to strengthen the family relations and love their children. Children who do roam in the street lack counselling guidance, they continue with their abnormal life.

Counselling unit future plan

The counselling job is very important in behavioural construction and change for the children who live in the streets, but the counsellor's number is not adequate to meet the need. Street and family counselling is mandatory in order to minimize the negative behaviour revealed by street children and those families who abandon their children for unbelievable reasons. Some of these families live in very remote areas; hence reliable transport is a necessary tool for accomplishment of the task. Families who live in extreme poverty might need some training to empower them and to enable them to meet their basic needs, such as training for a home vegetable garden, poultry keeping and microfinance management.