Evaluating Outcomes
Retrak’s use of the Child Status Index to measure well-being of street-connected children

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Retrak: who we are

• Working to ensure zero children are forced to live on the streets
• Key strategy is providing family reintegration and alternative care for street-connected children
• Established in 1994 in Uganda
• Now active in Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda
• Over 18,000 beneficiaries in 2013
Retrak’s model:
Successfully returning street children to safe homes in families and communities
Family Reintegration SOPs: Development

- Retrak’s experience
- Retrak’s values
- Documented good practice
- International standards and guidelines
- SOPs

Implement - Reintegration
Family Reintegration SOPs: Principles

- see family as the first priority
- be child-centered
- (re)build positive attachments between child and care-givers
- involve community in providing support
Family Reintegration SOPs: Key Steps

Step 1: Child assessment and preparation
Step 2: Family contact and assessment
Step 3: Placement
Step 4: Follow-up and family support
Step 5: Phase out
Monitoring children’s wellbeing: Study overview

• Pilot study during Retrak reintegration programs
• Ethiopia and Uganda throughout 2011 and 2012
• Using Child Status Index with 12 measurable goals:
  – 1a Food Security, 1b Nutrition and Growth
  – 2a Shelter, 2b Care
  – 3a Abuse and Exploitation, 3b Legal Protection
  – 4a Wellness, 4b Health Care
  – 5a Emotional Health, 5b Social Behavior
  – 6a Education performance, 6b Education access
• Each goal scored good, fair, bad or very bad
• 5 time cohorts: street, placement and 3 follow-up points
Monitoring children’s wellbeing: Limitations

- Pilot period, still some issues with data collection methods and data quality
- Only a small sample of children comparable over time
- CSI used with caution as subjective and context-specific
- Long-term change cannot be solely attributed to Retrak’s work
Monitoring children’s wellbeing: Outcomes (Ethiopia)

On the streets (n=24)  
Placement (n=24)  
Follow-up within 6mths (n=24)

1a Food Security, 1b Nutrition and Growth,
2a Shelter, 2b Care,
3a Abuse and Exploitation, 3b Legal Protection,
4a Wellness, 4b Health Care,
5a Emotional Health, 5b Social Behavior,
6a Education performance, 6b Education access

Good  Fair  Bad  Very bad
Monitoring children’s wellbeing: Outcomes (Uganda)

On the streets (n=29)

1a Food Security, 1b Nutrition and Growth,
2a Shelter, 2b Care,
3a Abuse and Exploitation, 3b Legal Protection,
4a Wellness, 4b Health Care,
5a Emotional Health, 5b Social Behavior,
6a Education performance, 6b Education access

Placement (n=29)

Follow-up within 6mths (n=29)

1a Food Security, 1b Nutrition and Growth,
2a Shelter, 2b Care,
3a Abuse and Exploitation, 3b Legal Protection,
4a Wellness, 4b Health Care,
5a Emotional Health, 5b Social Behavior,
6a Education performance, 6b Education access

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Monitoring children’s wellbeing: Outcomes

• Children’s wellbeing improved across all goals
• Education performance and access (6a&6b) are slower to improve
• Emotional health and social behavior (5a&5b) also slow to improve at placement and follow-up, especially in Ethiopia
• Some concern for food security (1a), shelter (2a) and legal protection (3b) in all cohorts in Uganda
Monitoring children’s wellbeing: Deprivations

- General decline in children’s deprivation experienced with time as they move through Retrak’s programs.
Monitoring children’s wellbeing: Deprivations

- Children over 14 years old, have more deprivations than those under 14 years
Monitoring children’s wellbeing: Deprivations

• The longer a child spends in school before migrating to the street the lower the number of deprivations on average.
Monitoring children’s wellbeing: Deprivations

- The longer a child spends in the street the more deprivations they experience.

Deprivations on the streets by time on streets in Ethiopia

- 2 weeks or less
- 2 weeks to 6 months
- Over 6 months
Monitoring children’s wellbeing: Deprivations

- No distinction between region of origin in the level of deprivation.
Conclusion

• Family reintegration is an effective intervention for street-connected children
• Outreach is critical to be able to reach younger children and those who have recently arrived
• Reintegration programs must help children return to education or skills training and provide adequate psychosocial support
• Monitoring children’s wellbeing during the reintegration process is key to ensuring that:
  – placements remains in their best interests
  – programs can respond to needs
Publications on our website www.retrak.org or from Joan joan.townsend@retrak.org