

The Rapid Growth of Towns and Migration in Tanzania: A Case Study of Babati Town

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Abstract

This study examines the rapid growth of Babati town which in turn leads to urban problems largely associated with migration. The methods used in data collection were interviews, observations and group discussions. The findings of the study reveal that rural hardship and seeking better employment opportunities in urban areas were the major reasons for migration in urban areas and most migrants were of middle ages. Moreover, increased rate of rural-urban migration exacerbates the existing urban problems such as inadequate clean water supply, poor sanitation, poor health services, street children, child labour, and unemployment. It is recommended that rural areas should not be neglected in terms of socio-economic and technological development in order to reduce the influx of people from rural to urban areas. The study also recommended that both the community and Government should be responsible on reducing the increase of urban problems as far as they are the source of those problems.

Introduction

The rapid growth of Babati town is largely the result of population migrating in large numbers to the town especially after making it the Regional capital of Manyara region. It is the center for administration, political, economic and social services thus this rapid growth has led to several urban problems. There is rapid urban population growth in developing countries compared to developed countries (World Bank, 1999).

Natural increase and high rates of rural to urban migration are the major root factors of the rapid urban population growth in all the towns in Africa and Tanzania although the urban centers have failed to provide even the minimum social services and employment, the population drift in town continues which results to rapid population growth which leads to urban problems, this is due to the fact that there is unequal development between rural and urban areas in Tanzania or elsewhere in Africa (Todaro, 1981).

Rural – urban migration is one of the most critical issues in urban areas in Tanzania. The rapid increase of dwellings in urban centers due to the increase in the rate of migration exceeds the existing services and resources found in those areas, resulting to the socio-economic problems such as unemployment, poor health services, inadequate clean water supply, poor sanitation, child labour, and the increase in the number of street children.

The growth of Babati town as the service center for the Manyara Region and Babati district pull the majority of people to migrate to the town and this has resulted to rapid population growth leading to an increase of urban problems as stated above. These problems are sometimes less understood and poorly documented especially in new formed town centers. Therefore, this study will investigate the repercussion of rapid urbanization of Babati town in Manyara Region.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the urban problems of Babati town which are associated with rapid population growth and rapid urbanization, and the specific objectives include:

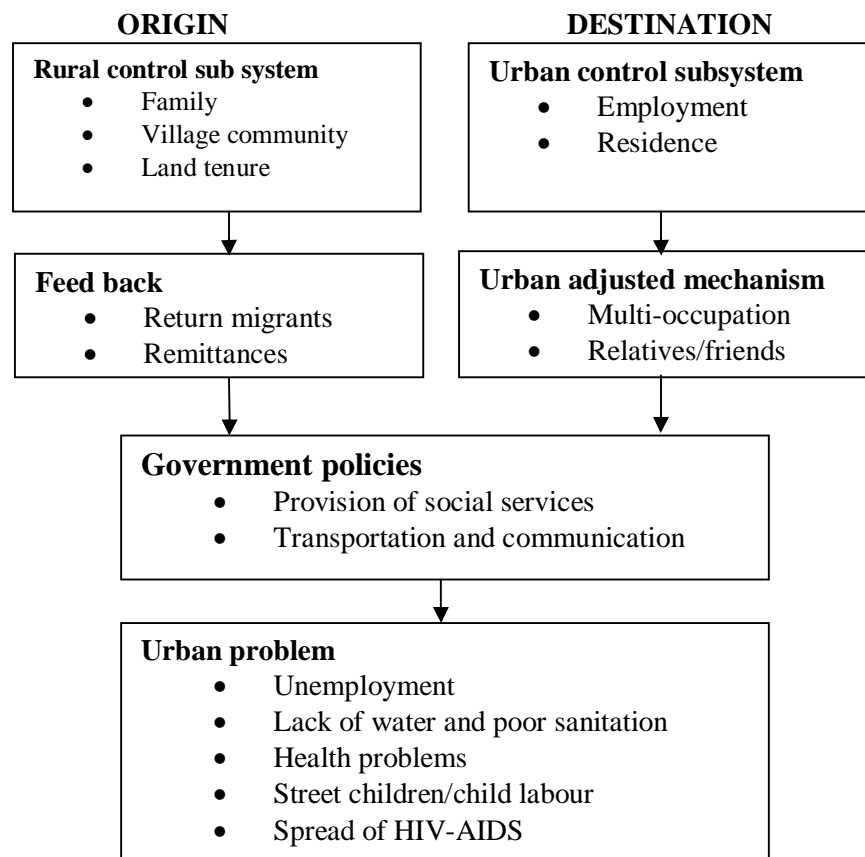
- (i) To examine the causes of rapid population growth of Babati town.
- (ii) To examine the influence of rapid growth of Babati town to urban socio-economic problems.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework under which the migration process operates is shown under two subsystem, these are rural (place of origin) and urban (place of destination). The rural subsystem is controlled by institutions such as the family, inheritance laws and village communities which influence individuals to migrate or not.

On the other side, urban control subsystem tends to encourage individuals to reside in urban areas due to housing and economic opportunities that sustain the means of livelihood while in urban areas. The presence of relatives and friends in urban areas is the one of the mechanism in which migrants use during their first arrival as they provide food and accommodation to them (Fig.1)

Figure 1.1: The Conceptual Frame Work



Source: Modification of Mabogunje's system approach of rural-urban Migration (1970)

Literature Review

The attraction of urban areas is largely economic and that rural-urban income and quality of life differentials remain large. The availability of jobs is critical and urban labour migration is dominant (Adepoju, 1990). Mlay (1976) observed that one of the most important factors influencing the initial urban ward migration is the need for regular cash earnings from wage employment. Moreover, many inter-urban migrants are seeking to improve their living condition or to better their job prospects. Scholars like Mayombo (1990) and Shivani (2002) emphasized on economic benefits as factors which influence the migrant decision to move out of rural areas and settle in urban areas.

Not only economic factor influence migration but also education achievement is an important qualification in the urban labour market (Mlay,1977) has proved that, apart from economy, education was one of the determining factor in the differential drift to the towns. Due to low education women engaged in low status jobs like barmaids, domestic workers and low income activities in informal sectors (Mbilyni and Omary, 1996)

It is also observed that most of the young girls who are from the countryside do not move to town in order to be employed as domestic servants, but they are forced to enter into this profession because of lack of employment opportunities in the formal sector (Lugalla, 1990) Rural-urban migration exodus continues unabated and due to the general economic stagnation and the nature of the urban economy itself, the urban employment situation fails to absorb all the in-migrants. The need to survive forces these in-migrants to engage in various economic activities. Most of them resort to doing old jobs, which characterize the informal sector (Lugalla, 1995)

Mbonile (1993) emphasizes that regional imbalances established during the colonial period coupled with rural-urban imbalances which existing now influences much to the movement of people from rural to urban areas.

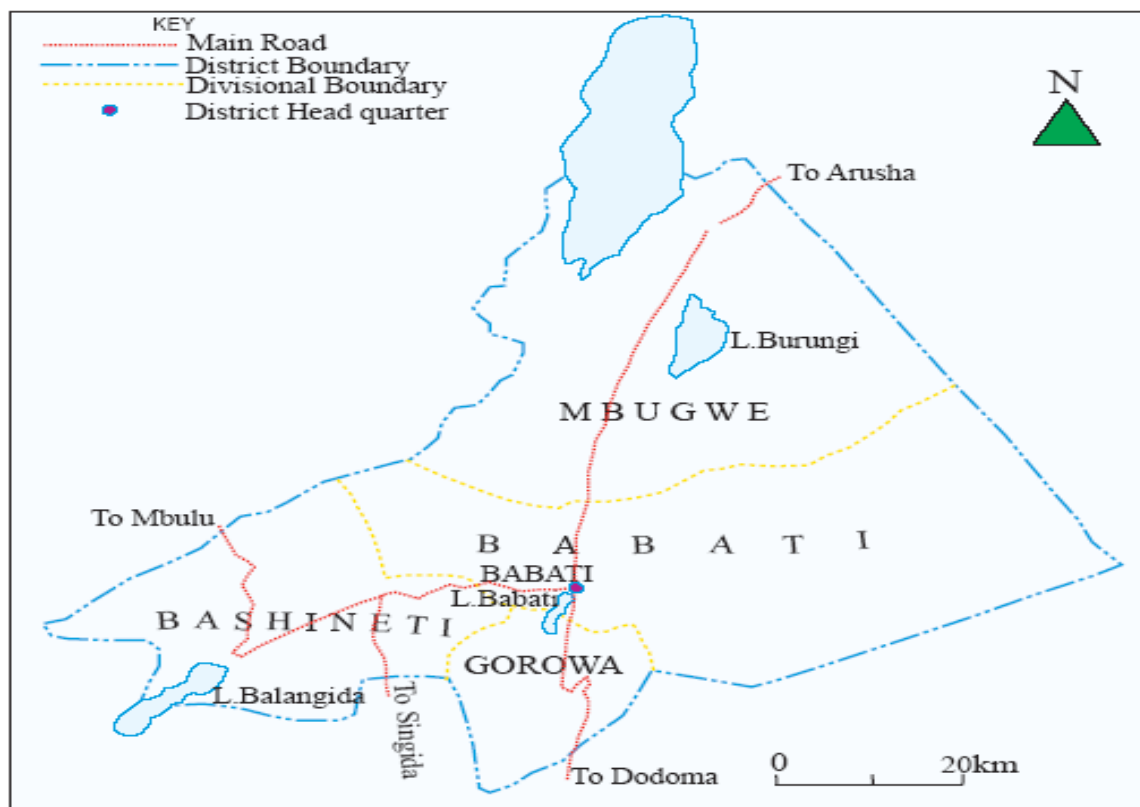
Studies on rural-urban migration speak of forces that work upon a given population to encourage movement from the rural to urban areas. These factors are termed the push factors. Among the common push factors are lack of sufficient or productive land, lack of alternative employment opportunities, absence of sanitation and medical services, poor educational facilities, and in some cases lack of security and natural disasters (Bergman and Renwich, 1999).

Mabogunje (1999) however, notes that rural-urban migration account for the growth of the urban population in Africa. This explains why there has been such a rapid growth in the informal sectors and the consequent pressure on urban land and services.

Location and Size of the Study Area

Manyara Region is situated in the north east of Tanzania and has five districts which are Babati, Hanang, Kiteto, Mbulu and Simanjiro. Babati is 164 kms from Arusha City and is located about 1,500 meters above the sea level. In the north Babati District is bordered by Simanjiro district, to the south by Kondoa district of Dodoma Region, to the southwest by Hanang district, and to the Northwest by Mbulu district (See Map 1).

Map 1: Administrative Boundary of Babati District



Sources of Data and Sampling Procedure

Selection of studied wards was randomly selected and these wards were Bagara, and Babati. A sample of 200 household was selected and a total of 751 respondents were found. The term household here refers to a person or group of persons who reside in the same homestead/compound but not necessarily in the same dwelling unit, have same cooking arrangements, and are answerable to the same household head. (URT 2012)

The data collected were from primary and secondary sources. Interviews were conducted with respondents including key informants. These were complemented by close observation and discussion with non migrants so as to countercheck the validity and reliability of the information given by migrants. Data processing and analysis were through SPSS program (Statistical Package for Social Sciences Research)

Estimation of Population Growth of Babati Town

Factors of population Growth

As observed by Mwageni (1991) urban population growth can be influenced by natural increase, reclassification and migration. Population growth of Babati town was estimated by using the place of birth and place of residence data. The results show that there is rapid urbanization of Babati town due to migration, natural increase and reclassification. This is vividly shown by classifying the migrants by place of births that is the same locality or other localities. The same locality category consists of those born in the same place of residence. It thus includes the population growth due to natural increase and reclassification. Other locality groups consist of the population born outside Babati town thus it consists of both intradistrict rural-urban migrants and interregional migrants. In this case the study shows that about 60 percent of the population of Babati was born in other localities while those born in the same localities were 40 percent (Table 1)

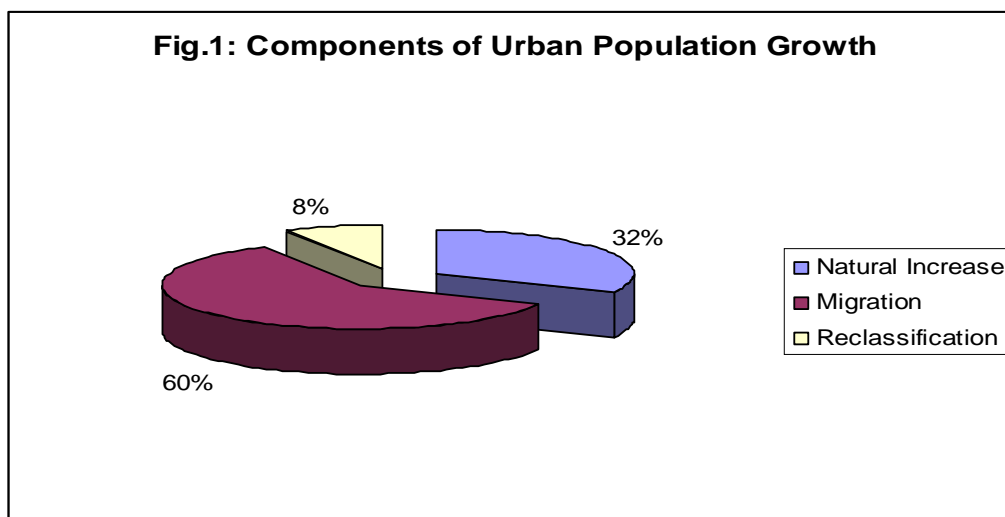
Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents by Place of Birth and Residence

Place of Birth	Respondents	Percent
Same locality	302	40.2
Other locality	449	59.8
Total	751	100.0

Source: Babati migration survey

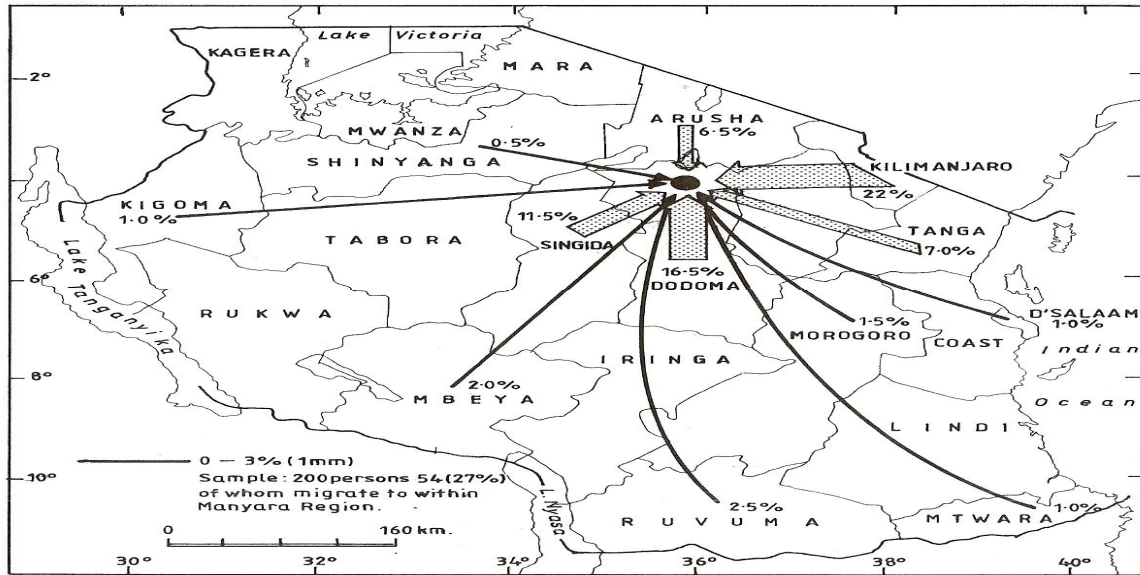
Besides migration the other factor which contributes to population growth is natural increase which was obtained by classifying the respondents born in same place of residence. Those affected by boundary change or reclassified population were excluded since they were considered under reclassification which has contributed to the growth of several towns both in developed and developing world (Todaro ,1981).

The study shows that migration contributes 60 percent of urban growth of Babati town when compared to 32 percent of natural increase. On the other hand, reclassification contributed 8 percent in the growth of Babati town. As observed by Kulaba (1987) in other towns migration became the dominant factor for population increase in Babati town because it is the center for administration and commerce especially after becoming the capital of Manyara region (See Fig. 1). After acquiring this status the town became very popular and attracted migrants within Manyara region and other regions in the country irrespective of distance.



These include neighbouring regions such as Tanga, Kilimanjaro, Arusha, Dodoma and Singida. It also managed to pull long distance migrants from regions such as Kigoma, Mwanza, Morogoro, Dar es Salaam, Mtwara, Ruvuma and Mbeya (See Map 2).

Map.2: Migration Flows to Babati town by Region of Origin



Source; Babati migration survey

Characteristics of Migrants in the Study Area

People’s decision to migrate from one place to another may be influenced by economic, social and technological factors but economic factors play a great role in influencing rural to urban migration. Among the reasons which make migrants to migrate to Babati town include rural hardship and seeking of employment opportunities. Also, the majority of migrants are in middle ages and most of them are married. Besides this most of the migrants have low per capital income which forces them to engage in agriculture activities as their means of survival.

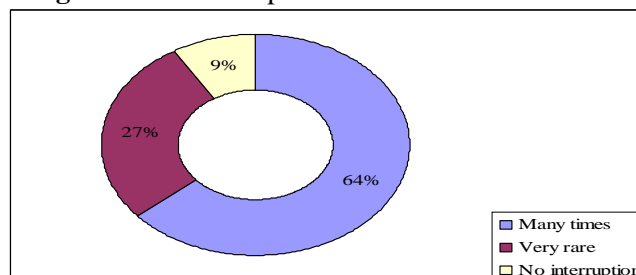
Effects of the Rapid Urban Population Growth to the Urban Areas

Urbanization and migration are among the greatest global phenomena. Most African countries are undergoing unprecedented urban growth partly as a result of rural-urban migration since the rapid population growth due to rapid urbanization is directly associated with the increase of urban problems such as shortage of services like housing, health, water, street children, child labour, increase of social crimes such as gambling, smoking of marijuana, prostitution and robbery.

Babati as the headquarters of Manyara region has brought many changes to the town and district as the whole. There has been a great influx of people from different regions and rural areas who later have been migrating there to either try new life or and precisely establish new business ventures. They move to change Babati from a district headquarter to the regional headquarter has made the town to experience rapid growth and increased population especially through rural and urban migration in which occupants consequently cannot improve their dwellings and living standards.

Since the population increases, the water demands and uses increase, but due to the minimal water sources in Babati town there is water interruption. The study shows that 64% of the respondents face water interruption many times in the week compared to 9% who do not have water problems (See Fig.2).

Fig 2: Water interruption in a week in Babati town



Source: Babati migration survey

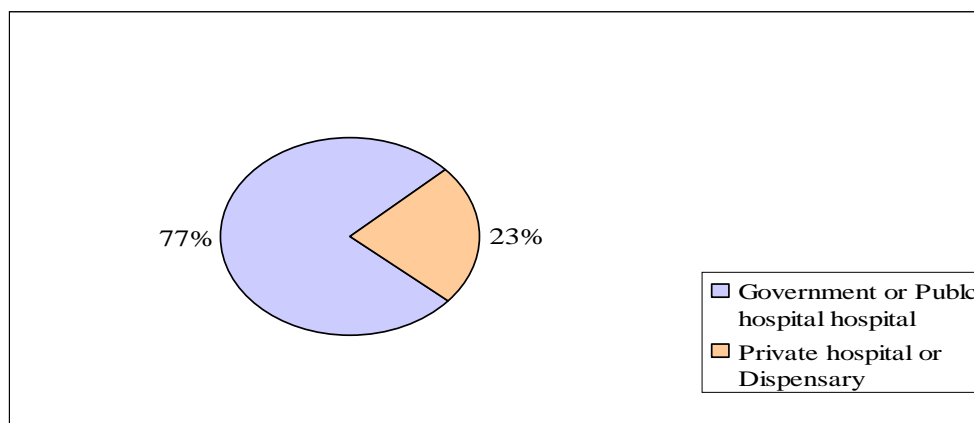
Due to water problems in Babati town it was observed that the shared latrines are not suitable for the health of people for it is difficulty to maintain cleanness of the latrines. As a result almost half of the respondents use shared pit latrine, forty percent use private pit latrines while five percent use private flush toilets and these are for the few who own the houses and have high income (Plate 1)



Plate 1: Shared pit latrine in Babati ward

Good health is the center for development and critical problems associated with health care include shortage of health and medical staff, medical equipments and medicine has increased from one day to another. Kulaba, (1994) and Lugala, (1995) observed that although the number of health facilities has increased overcrowding and inadequate personnel shows that the service offered must have worsened. The rapid population growth in Babati town has increased the health problem due to the fact that most of migrants have low income and so they use the government hospital for their treatment which is less costly than private health centres. Even worse there is only one government hospital which is the district hospital as well as the regional hospital. This has lead to the overcrowdings in health centers in turn leading to poor health services (Fig.3).

Fig 3: Place where most migrants get their medical service



Source: Babati migration survey

The decrease in agriculture production in rural areas and increasing of urban poverty has forced many African children to seek work at younger ages.



Plate 2: Child Labour in Bagara Ward

Parents often have no choice but to have their children help them in their informal activities. Many girls of ages 9-15 who migrate from rural to urban areas are employed as domestic servants, carry cargos and most of them are street children whose number increase daily. Field observations and focus group discussions shows that many children in this sector work more than 12 hours a day and are not properly paid. They face physical and sexual abuse by employers or employers' family members (See Plate 2).

The rapid population growth has been associated with an increase in the number of children living alone on urban streets or spending most of their time in the streets in search for survival. Currently urban street children are seen as a problem which further compounds the nature of the urban livelihood. Street children are probably the most visible face of child labour most of them work informally during the day so as to survive. In the study most respondents indicated that street children are the result of rural economic hardships and poor parental care. Meanwhile a small proportion indicated that they are the result of single parents care and orphanage. Street children have difficulties in accessing sufficient fresh and nutritious food, clean water, reliable shelter, and poor health care, and these make them be involved in deviant behavior like gambling, smoking marijuana and even robbery (Plate.3)



Plate 3: Street Children Gambling in Bagara Ward

As indicated above high population growth rates due to migration leads to urban problems such as unemployment, and as in the study area this is a big problem in many towns in Tanzania where most people are engaged in low income activities in the informal sector as small traders popularly known as “machinga”, barmaids and cart pushers. This high level of unemployment is the main cause of rampant pickpockets and robbers (See Plate 4).



Plate 4: Youth Engaged in Informal Sector to Get Income in Babati ward

The rapid growth of cities and towns places ever increasing pressure on the urban infrastructure and employment. The lack of employment opportunities in the modern sector pushes thousands and thousands of migrants into marginal jobs leading to low earning capacity (URT, 2006:33). The study revealed that the mean per capital income of migrants is Tshs 61,250/= per month and this implies that most of the migrants in Babati town are poor. The study further shows that most of the migrants in Babati town earn low income because most of them are unskilled and so they fail to involve themselves in different activities to increase their income (Table 2)

Table 2: Income per Month of the Household Members

	Respondent	Percent
0 -50000	133	66.5
50000 -100000	47	23.5
100000-150000	4	2.0
150000-200000	1	.5
200000-250000	3	1.5
250000-300000	3	1.5
300000-350000	3	1.5
350000-400000	6	3.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Babati migration survey

The other problem is the mushrooming of unauthorized business premises which some of them contravening town planning procedures. The move to make Babati the regional headquarter has made the town to experience rapid growth and increased population especially through rural to urban migration in which occupants consequently cannot improve their dwellings and living standards (See Plates 5 & 6).



Plate 5: Petty Trade at Bagara Ward



Plate 6: A Petty Trader in an Open Space (“Genge”) in Babati Ward

Another observation shows that most unemployed youth in Babati town are involved in different social evils like prostitution, robbery and drug abuse like smoking marijuana. This is the result of an increase of urban poverty.

Conclusion

It has been observed that rural-urban migration is the main causes of the rapid population growth in Babati town. In turn it influences the increase of urban socio-economic problems such as scarcity of water supply and inadequate health facilities. Also, education on the family planning to the society will reduce fertility rate since natural increase is another major contributor in urban rapid population growth. Therefore, in order to reduce rural-urban migration the Government should find ways of improving and providing services like education, health services and clean water supply in rural areas. They should improve agriculture which is the big employer in rural areas by providing them with modern agriculture equipments.

The government should put more attention on the issue of street children and child labour which is now a serious problem in town. Non-Governmental Organizations and community themselves should also help these street children and stop child labour as it is against human rights. By-laws should be enacted so that street children remain among their family members.

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