

*“No refuge in the streets”*  
**Participatory Research Findings on Police Violence  
Against Children and Adolescents in Jinja and Kampala,  
Uganda**



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*“A multi-disciplinary child-focused research institution that generates evidence to inform policies and practice for the wellbeing of children in Africa ”*

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- ***What forms of violence do street-connected children and adolescents endure outside of family care?***
- ***What are their forms of resistance in the streets?***

## *From Collective Fear of Policing to the Struggle to Recover Lost Humanity in the Streets*

- Drawing from the context of Brazil, we employ Perry's (2012) framing of state violence in terms of the collective fear and reactive movement building it inspires.
- Perry describes how **“collective fear of police torture and death exists side-by-side with black communities’ unwillingness to accept routine forms of state violence”** (Perry, 2012, p. 137).
- **“...out of police violence emerges black peoples’ agency and political will to survive, their determination to defy individual and collective death”** (Perry, 2012, p. 137).

# Methodology

Method	Respondent Category	Number
Life History Interviews	Children aged 13 to 17 years	24
Focus Group Discussions	Boys and girls aged 13- 17 years	22 (N=176, 88 girls/88 boys)
In-depth Interviews	Adult Caregivers	20
Focus Group Discussions	Male and Female Caregivers/parents	5 (N=30, 12 Male, 18 Female)

**Data analysis** included a youth-driven, participatory coding process that involved two coding cycles using exploratory and axial analytical techniques within NVIVO 14.

*“We are A Centre of excellence in the study of the African child.”*

# Results



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“Most people here in Katwe are thieves (boys and girls). Girls pick shoes from people’s doors and clothes from people’s wires and sell them to buy food. Boys break into people’s houses and take things when they caught, they take them to police but they pay some money and get realized. There are no rules here. Sometimes when a girl is taken to police for stealing, policemen sleep with them and release them. When you refuse to sleep with policemen, they come and beat everyone around”.



“I was arrested by my mother. I was feeling hungry and my mother was not around so I touched in her bag and picked 2000 to get something to eat. When she came back and realized that something was missing she took me to the police and I was beaten for stealing that 2000. My mother beat me up so badly and even broke my leg then she took me to the police and locked me up for 2 weeks. After two weeks my mother was feeling bad that i had been arrested so she came and begged for me to be released. The police asked her to pay 20000 which she paid and I was released. I had cut weight and my mum was heartbroken and crying, I reminded her it was her who arrested me and she cautioned me to not ever steal again”

“I have also been arrested at work where I dance karaoke. There's this girl who works with us who came and started abusing us because of house rent issues. She kept on abusing us even when we asked that she stop, then we ended up beating the girl. When the old man saw us beating her he came and we also beat him. We ran away from home but we were arrested for 3 days without food or water and we were taken to court and pleaded guilty but showed them that we were attacked first. Court released us but they cautioned us to stop beating old people”.

“When I find a policeman when I’m from working I don’t run away I stay and talk to them if he takes me to police to arrest me I would be confident because they even tell us that if a policeman gets you just agree and go with them because if you fight with them they might kill you otherwise if you agree with them they take you in peace and then you give them money because they usually want money from us. If and when you have not done anything wrong just accept and they take you then you will talk when you reach the police you tell them the truth then they will release you”

# ***Do you trust the police?***

“I trust police ... 0% because there is one of our colleagues who had got some clothes to sell and was caught by city council police together with the police they took him to Gwanda mall and they had to beat the guy seriously. When they realized that the guy was almost dying they got the guy and took him to a police station where he died from”.

“For me I give it 0% ... they give me 30 canes at the back I cannot even give them 1%”

“I don’t trust police the way I trust my friends because for friends even when you don’t have money they can give you some money but police instead when you go to report something they want money from you. If you want them to arrest someone they’ll ask for fuel even when they arrest them and you don’t give them money they get money from the culprit and release them. I don’t even give them 1% of trust”

“I do not trust police at all I rescue myself or my friends will come to my rescue”

“I don’t like police at all. Even if I find a policeman being killed, I hit him the last nail and finish him off. The way they used to beat us and almost made us lame, they would beat our feet, if I never had this brother of mine, I would not be walking”.



“Police may arrest us for no good reason, arrest us and put us in prison, if you go to Kampiringisa you will find there innocent children. I really, hate police”

- On the process of building decolonial response to police violence (understood as the criminalization of poverty).
- How to form sustainable and community-driven structures of care?
- Plans for future participatory action research.

THANK YOU!