



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

STATE DEPARTMENT FOR LABOUR

**OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE REPORT OF THE
NATIONAL CENSUS OF STREET FAMILIES 2018**

**SPEECH BY THE CABINET SECRETARY,
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION
MR SIMON K. CHELUGUI**

10TH JUNE 2020

The Chairperson and Trustees of SFRTF Board of Trustees

The KNBS Director General, Mr. Zachary Mwangi

The Country Director, UNICEF Kenya

Representatives from other institutions / organizations

All Government officials

The media

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning

It is with great appreciation that I welcome you all to this occasion of the official launch of the 2018 National Census of Street Families Report that my Ministry in collaboration with various stakeholders conducted in 2018.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Kenya is a signatory of a number of international commitments such as; the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In committing to the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States recognized that the dignity of the individual is fundamental and that the Agenda's Goals and targets should be met for all nations, people and for all segments of society. In this regard

implementation of the SDGs should endeavor to be all inclusive and reach out to the vulnerable in the society.

Street families continuously face many challenges including, premature deaths orchestrated through mob injustice, malnutrition, inadequate health care and exposure to substance abuse. Similarly, they pose challenges in urban centers including negative influence on social behavior, increased levels of insecurity and mushrooming of informal settlements.

The Constitution of Kenya stipulates that all Kenyans irrespective of their social status should enjoy all rights as enshrined in the Bill of Rights. In this regard the Government of Kenya is committed to improving the welfare of the street families.

In the last two decades, the Government has put in place measures and interventions to address the plight of the street families. Key initiative being the establishment of the Street Families Rehabilitation Trust Fund to address the concerns of all homeless, destitute and vulnerable persons in urban areas.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Availability of accurate, up-to-date and credible data is key for planning, budgeting and evidence-based decision making. Over the years, the Government has been promoting socio-economic interventions targeting the vulnerable and marginalized groups, with an aim of empowering them for

sustainable livelihoods. However, due to unavailability of up-to-date data on street families they have not fully benefited from this support.

It is on this background that this survey was commissioned whose overall objective was to create a national data base of the street families' population in Kenya. The specific objectives of this survey included; establishing the magnitude and demographic characteristics of the street families in Kenya; assessing the socio-economic and political push and pull factors of street families; and mapping out existing services, opportunities and potential challenges for street families. This census was the first of its kind to be conducted in the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The report being launched today provides information on the structure, size and distribution of street families in Kenya. It highlights the push and pull factors that drive persons to streets and therefore provides a framework for the stakeholders to understand the finer details of this population in order to mount rescue, rehabilitation, reintegration and re-socialization activities aimed at supporting this vulnerable group.

It is important to note that the issue of street families is a persistent problem that is fuelled by a number of factors the main one being urbanization and rural-urban migration, particularly in the developing countries such as Kenya.

The other factors that push children into living and working on the street include; poverty, death of parents, separation/divorce of parents, abandonment, mistreatment by parents or relatives, tribal displacement, inadequate food at home, getting lost during traveling, fear of being reprimanded, corporal punishment, domestic violence, among others.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is worth noting that as African cities continue experiencing rapid growth, the number of street families has also increased such that today, millions of children are living or working on the streets. These are either “families on the street”, who are engaged in economic activities, but who mostly still go home, or “families of the street”, who live on the streets. The latter group contributes to the growing number of homeless adults and families living on the pavements of African cities.

In Kenya, the problem of street children was first identified in the early 60s and their number has been increasing ever since. This phenomenon calls for an urgent initiative to bring together the different actors, in a bid to urgently address and improve the livelihoods of street families and develop preventive measures against the underlying factors that force them onto the streets.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I want to assure you that my Ministry in collaboration with the various stakeholders will utilise the information collected and analysed in this report to advocate for systematic and increased use of the data for evidence-based decision making. This will inform the targeting of street families for inclusion in the social safety net programme so as to ensure they benefit from the support. Additionally, the data will enable my Ministry to draft policies that will guide implementation of the rehabilitation of street families, develop the National Street Families Bill and a Street Families Trust Fund Strategic Plan. The data collected will also enhance monitoring and evaluation of the already existing projects/programmes that focus on this segment of the population.

I want to greatly appreciate the work that the street families trust fund has been doing during this period of Covid-19 pandemic. So far, This fund has supported institutions that have been rescuing street families and has so far spent **KShs 44** million and managed to rescue over **1000** street families .All those who have been rescued are currently undergoing rehabilitation for the purpose of re-integration to the community

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to recognize the continued support we have received from our development partners over the years in enhancing statistical capacity and complementing Government efforts in providing resources for statistical activities.

In this regard, our special gratitude goes to UNICEF for financial and technical support, without which this census could not have been conducted. I appeal to our other development partners to continue partnering with us to meet the expanding demand for statistics. This will go a long way in providing high-quality official statistics to ensure inclusive development.

My Ministry would like to acknowledge and appreciate a number of institutions and agencies for the roles they played during this survey. These include; Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, State Department for Interior, State Department for Social Protection, Council of Governors, National Council for Population & Development, Kenya Police Service, AMREF Health Africa, and Action for Children in Conflict.

Special thanks also goes to the Technical Working Committee drawn from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, line ministries, Council of Governors, National Council for Population and Development, Amref Health Africa and Action for Children in Conflict for providing their technical input that ensured successful completion of the census exercise.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I conclude, let me thank all the staff from the participating institutions and agencies, the Supervisors and Enumerators who worked tirelessly for long hours to collect data to ensure the success of this census; the respondents who

sacrificed their time to volunteer and provide the required information from which this report was developed.

Let me also thank my staff for their dedication and tireless effort in coming up with this report; not forgetting the important role played by the media in sensitising the populace during the survey.

Distinguished Participants,

With these few remarks, I wish to thank you all for finding time out of your busy schedules to attend this launch. It is my now my honour and duty to officially launch this report on Street Families in Kenya

Thank you very much and God bless you all!