

Interview / Focus Group Discussion Guide

Street Children and Youths – Street Experiences, Challenges, Coping, and Social Networks

Introduction Script

Hello, and thank you for accepting to speak with us today. I am part of a team that wants to better understand your experiences living on the street. We would like to hear about your life, your challenges, and how you take care of your health and wellbeing. There are no right or wrong answers. We are only interested in your own experiences and opinions. Please know that everything you share will be kept private and will not be used to identify you. You do not have to answer any question you are not comfortable with, and you can stop at any time.

1. Warm-up and Background

- Can you tell me your name (or what you'd like us to call you)? (For FGD, numbers allocated)
- How old are you?
- How long have you been living on the street?
- Can you tell me why you left home to live on the street? What happened to make you leave home

2. Life on the Street

- What are some of the challenges you face living on the street?
 - (Prompt: food, safety, shelter, police, health problems...)
- Do you have friends here?
 - What do you usually do with your friends?
 - How important are friends to you?
 - In what ways do friends help each other when someone is in trouble?

3. Coping and Daily Survival Strategies

- How do you usually cope with difficulties or bad things that happen on the street?
 - (Prompt: talking to friends, avoiding danger, prayer, alcohol/drugs, running away...)
- What do other children or youth you know do to cope?
- Are there any resources or people (e.g., NGOs, churches, shops, shelters, individuals) you rely on for support?

4. Religion and Belief Systems

- Do you pray or go to church/mosque? Why or why not?
- Do you think religion or faith plays a role in your life on the street?
 - (Prompt: does it help you feel stronger, safer, or give you hope?)

5. Social Networks and Community Perceptions

- Who are the people you interact with most often on the street?

- How do other people (like the general public or community members) usually treat you?
 - (Prompt: kindness, support, discrimination, stigmatisation...)
- What is your experience with police, health workers, or authorities?

6. Safety and Risks

- Have you ever seen or heard of sexual harassment or abuse happening on the street?
 - What usually happens when this occurs?
 - How do people react or protect themselves?

7. Health-Seeking Behaviour

- When you or your friends get sick, what do you usually do?
 - (Prompt: self-medication, go to hospital/clinic, traditional healer, pray, nothing...)
- What makes it hard for you to get treatment or health care when you need it?
- What could make it easier for children and youth on the street to get health care?

8. Closing

- What advice would you give to someone new to the street about surviving and staying healthy?
- Is there anything you would like to share that we didn't ask about?