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# Causes of Child Labour

– A case study in Babati town, Tanzania

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## ABSTRACT

Tanzania ratified Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991, but still 32 per cent of the Tanzanian children estimate to be involved in child labour. Why children work, the work they most commonly do, and under the conditions which they work differ regionally. This study aims to find the underlying causes behind child labour among boys in Babati Town, both from the researcher's - and the children's own perspective. The study was accomplished through a qualitative case study in Babati Town and the data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, primarily with the child labourers' themselves to get the right child perspective. The data from the interviews was analyzed according to four chosen theories of underlying causes behind child labor with the purpose to see to what extent the findings of the study correlate to the indicators outlined in each theory. The study found that indicators from each theory correlating with the Babati case with poverty as the major underlying cause behind the labouring. From the child labourer's perspective was poverty the underlying cause for their labouring. Poverty on its own was though, from the researcher's perspective, found to be insufficient to explain the prevalence of child labour. The problem of child labour is massive due mainly widespread poverty but also due the social context and its traditions, insufficient funding, school policies and inadequate implementing of important regulations as the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

*Key words: Child perspective, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Social context, Poverty*

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| CIA    | Central Intelligence Agency                                     |
| CRC    | Convention on the Rights of the Child                           |
| ILO    | International Labour Office                                     |
| OHCHR  | Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| SWO    | Social Welfare Officer  |
| UNICEF | the United Nations Children's Fund                              |

### Definitions

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Child        | According to CRC a child is a person under the age of 18 years. This definition is used when referring to children in all ages, even if “adolescents” in some cases would have been more appropriate. <sup>1</sup> |
| Child Labour | As child labour is a social construct and not a natural phenomenon; there is no single, correct and indisputable definition. This study uses the definition of child labour stated by UNICEF;                      |

*“UNICEF defines child labour as work that exceeds a minimum number of hours, depending on the age of a child and on the type of work. Such work is considered harmful to the child and should therefore be eliminated.*

*Ages 5-11: At least one hour of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week.*

*Ages 12-14: At least 14 hours of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week.*

*Ages 15-17: At least 43 hours of economic or domestic work per week.”<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> OHCHR, 2007b

<sup>2</sup> UNICEF, 2008

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

*Kiros<sup>3</sup> is twelve years old and lives in Babati Town, Tanzania. He sleeps in the streets around the town market or at the garbage dump together with around ten other homeless young boys. They work every day from early morning to late night with carrying luggage for customers at the market place. Kiros has been working since he was seven years old. The work at the market is hard labour with heavy lifting, little sleep and bad pay. The money Kiros earns has to be enough to get food and other basic needs, but with a salary of less than one dollar a day, it is hard to fill out an empty stomach. Sometimes Kiros and his friends do not get a real meal for days and they often have to eat what they can find at the garbage dump which can lead to malnutrition, intestinal worms and bad diarrhoea. Kiros wants to go to school, but without money for uniforms and books, it is not possible. If he could get anything he wanted in the world, anything – Kiros would want to get new clothes.*

Kiros is, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), one of the estimated 158 million children in the world involved in child labour.<sup>4</sup> The reason why these children work, the work they most commonly do, and under the conditions which they work differ regionally, especially between industrialized and developing countries.<sup>5</sup> The number of working children is highest in the poorer parts of the world where 16 per cent of all children between 5 to 14 years old are involved in child labour. In the least developed countries 30 per cent of all children take part in work that can be considered harmful to their physical and mental development. Child labour is most prevalent in Sub - Saharan Africa where around one of three children aged 5 – 14 years works. It is more common for boys to be involved in economical activity classified as child labour; girls are more likely to be burdened with more invisible labour within the household.<sup>6</sup> Children living in rural areas and in poor households are the most common underage workers. In the rural areas of sub-Saharan Africa, 43 per cent of the children are working compared to 25 per cent in the urban areas and in the poorest 20 per cent of all households, 45 per cent of the children are likely to work.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Kiros is a fictive name

<sup>4</sup> UNICEF, 2008

<sup>5</sup> Boyden J, Ling B, Myers W, 1998 p. 23

<sup>6</sup> UNICEF, 2009b

<sup>7</sup> UNICEF, 2009a

## 1.1. Background

Child labour is common in Tanzania. Plan Sweden estimates that 32 per cent of the Tanzanian children between 5-14 years are working, even if the Tanzanian law prohibits work for children under age the of 14. The Tanzanian government ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in year 1991<sup>8</sup>, a legally binding instrument controlled by The Committee on the Rights of the Child.<sup>9</sup> CRC sets out the rights of the child in 54 articles and two optional protocols. The articles include all the basic human rights – social, economic and cultural rights as well as the political and civil ones. CRC incorporate different types of rights such as the right to basic needs, education, participation and the right to protection against discrimination and exploitation.<sup>10</sup> The subject of child labour has its own article, which clearly states that;

*“1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.*

*2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:*

*(a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;*

*(b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;*

*(c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article”<sup>11</sup>.*

It is the governments themselves who are primarily responsible for the rights of the convention to be respected and observed within their own country; but at the same time the convention has made children's rights an international concern. Despite this Kiros and his friends work for too many hours for their young age. This can be serious as they may be exposed to many hazardous environments and miss out on an important education – Kiros's

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<sup>8</sup> Plan, 2009

<sup>9</sup> OHCHR, 2007a

<sup>10</sup> Hammarberg, K, 2006 p.7

<sup>11</sup> OHCHR, 2007b

case testifies that despite the ratification of CRC, children in Tanzania are falling short of what is required of CRC article 32.<sup>12</sup>

## **1.2. Problem formulation**

Child labour is increasingly recognized as a crime against the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The labour is likely to interfere with the education and normal development of the children which can be harmful to their health and morals.<sup>13</sup> Child labourer's risk to be exposed for abuse, violence and hazards which can be dangerous to their life. Effects of labour on children are not the same as on adults as there are major psychological, physical and social differences between the two groups. Children may be seriously harmed by work which makes little or no risk to adults. Hazardous work during development and growth during the childhood can have lasting effects which can affect the children for the rest of their lives.<sup>14</sup>

Child labour is a complex issue and various factors behind the labouring predominate in different contexts.<sup>15</sup> To be able to combat child labour in Babati, the underlying causes must be understood. In-depth understanding of the situation must include special attention to the children's own views which the study believes are the most important source of information, therefore, this study wants to investigate the underlying causes behind child labour in Babati Town mainly from the children's own perspective.

## **1.3. Aim and research questions**

This study aims to find the underlying causes behind child labour among boys in Babati Town, Tanzania. The main focus is the child labourers own perspective on their situation.

The research questions are thus as following;

- What are, from the researcher's perspective, the possible underlying causes behind the child labour?
- What are, from the child labourer's own perspectives, the underlying causes of their labouring?

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<sup>12</sup> Hammarberg, K, 2006 p.7

<sup>13</sup> Weston, H, B, 2002 p.3

<sup>14</sup> Boyden J, Ling B, Myers W, 1998 p.87

<sup>15</sup> ILO, 2004 p.102

### **1.3. Delimitations**

As child labour is such a complex issue this study has got certain limitations. This case study concerns the situation in Babati Town and cannot claim to be generalizing and representative for Tanzania as a whole.<sup>16</sup> It only concerns working boys, as their situation was easier to investigate. Because of time limitations, only the children working around the market place, the bus station and the garbage dump have been interviewed. No attempts have been made to find children with other professions, for example, workers at factories and restaurants.

### **1.4. Earlier studies**

The international research about working children started in 1979 and many of the studies were done by children's rights activists and journalists with the purpose of lobbying and encouraging public campaigns. The tendency in many of the earlier studies has been to define work as a serious problem for children and the chosen cases have often been the ones where children get exposed for serious hazards.<sup>17</sup> Child labour was for a long time not recognized as a subject worth studying. One of the reasons for that was that in some countries even childhood itself was given little attention, especially in the official statistics. Children had mainly only figured in statistics concerning under-five morbidity and mortality and education enrolment. They have been studied in the context of the family or the school, not as individuals. Child labour has often been studied by looking at school attendants with the hypothesis of a negative correlation between a child's economic activity and schooling. With this type of research the children's perspective is excluded. Many children do not even have birth certifications, with other words; they do not exist officially which excludes them from statistics and further studies.<sup>18</sup> It is easy to find general research and studies concerning child labor. Since there are many organizations dealing with children's rights, much literature is published based on surveys and interviews with children, but few studies have had interest in the children's view about possible causal factors behind their labouring.<sup>19</sup> A majority of the research about child labour tend to focus on the export sector alone, a serious problem as the most common child laborers' not are to be find in that industry, but rather in family enterprises and inside households.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> ILO, 2004 p.168

<sup>17</sup> Boyden J, Ling B, Myers W, 1998 p.161

<sup>18</sup> Ibid p.147-149

<sup>19</sup> Ibid p.114

<sup>20</sup> Ibid p.321

## **1.6. Structure of the thesis**

The thesis begins with a review of the theoretical framework chosen for the study including four theories of possible causes behind child labour. The following chapter presents the methodology of the study, the importance of a child perspective and possible difficulties that could appear during the study. The chapter also contains a discussion about the material and its validity and finally a description of the chosen method for analysis. Chapter four presents the study area, data gathered during the case study in Babati and its results. Chapter five analyzes the data and compares it to the theoretical framework. Chapter six discusses the findings of the study followed by the conclusions that can be drawn from the study. The last chapter contains recommendations for further research.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Today the common view is that child labour is deeply rooted in poverty, but the causes of child labour are complex and should not be oversimplified.<sup>21</sup> The many causes behind child labour vary enormously between different contexts and cultures. Literature concerning child labour often treats the subject of underlying causes simplistically with the common view that the causes of child work and the surrounding exploitation are already well known. The problem is that the imputed underlying causes are not always as obvious as they appear. It is essential to discover the root of the problem, and not to generalize the issue which can be devastating as different underlying causes imply different measures if action is to be effective.<sup>22</sup>

The chosen theories for the study are taken from the book “What Works for Working Children” by Boyden J, Ling B, Myers W. The book is based on upon published and unpublished literature for researchers dealing with the subject of child labour. The book deals with the child perspective and considers what is best for the child as the most important consideration of all. The authors aim to put the children and their best interests in the centre of the picture, that together with data from field studies and surveys from Swedish Save the Children and other international Non-governmental organizations, make the book a useful source of information.<sup>23</sup> The theories stated in the book cannot be recognized to be the only existing but through findings in other sources, these theories are clearly suitable for this study.

### 2.1. Causes of Child Labour

#### 2.1.1. *Child labour as a contribution to the family*

According to the theory of child labour as a contribution to the family, most children in developing countries work because they want to support their families. Studies done by Save the Children Sweden show that most children start to work on command or at least by a request from their family. In many cases children work simply for the reason that they are told to, some voluntary and some against their will. Most children work because the family need help both with contributing to the family income and help with unpaid household work. As children often value themselves as a part of the family unit, most children say that it is

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<sup>21</sup> Riba, V, 2006 p.3

<sup>22</sup> Boyden J, Ling B, Myers W p.112-113

<sup>23</sup> Ibid p.13-15

plausible to contribute to the household, especially when the family survival depends upon it.<sup>24</sup>

Boyden J, Ling B and Myers W points out in this theory results from studies made in Indonesia and Morocco which show that many children prefer factory work instead of work inside the household. The reason is that they find household work more grinding and futureless. Many children also get a good feeling when they can help their families economically; a fact received from an Ethiopian study, where the children answered that the feeling to be able to contribute to their families' monetary situation was the thing they liked most with work. A survey among street children in Brazil showed that the children lived in the streets because they wanted to help their mothers. The largest part of their earnings was given to their family weekly. The fear of losing support from the family and being left alone is another common factor behind child labour. Boyden J, Ling B and Myers W claim that an underlying fear of abandonment often exist among working children. Children working in urban slums are often personally acquainted with other children in the same situation, it seems to be important for children to get the feeling of close family ties, even if it is not their "real" family.<sup>25</sup> The enforcement of standards concerning minimum age for work has been seen by many children as a threat to their will of contributing to their families and to have an income. The children feel they have the right to work because they must satisfy their basic needs and thereby defend their own survival. Many children even point out that is a right implied by CRC.

### *2.1.2. Child labour as a means of self-actualization*

The principal argument of this theory is that many children would want to work even if they did not have to. Even if poverty were non-existing and nowhere were children obliged to work, some children still would like to take part in productive work. For the same reason as many middle-class children seek part-time work in industrialized countries, the children in developing countries want to work. The ILO declares that work is an essential part of life, i.e. a way to participate in the society and the economy. Non-exploitive work makes children feel more mature, independent and included in the society at large. Many children also believe that work is a good way for them to get education and thus become competent and prosperous adults. According to interviews made by the International Working Group on Child Labour,

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid p.144-145

<sup>25</sup> Ibid p.115-116

many children work at least partially because they like the work they do and also because they feel that they grow and develop in the direction of their own ambition. For example, in a study of 10 – 14 years old street traders in Nigeria whom had the opportunity to go to school, the children considered their work as an important preparation for their future adulthood.<sup>26</sup>

To establish certain independence is another factor that makes children work. What level of “independence” varies between different contexts and can be both psychological and economical. The psychological independence can be a need for children to be able to earn their own pocket money without help from their parents, common in industrialized countries. Economical independence is more about children living in poor conditions wanting to find opportunities elsewhere to get themselves out of poverty and therefore find it necessary to earn their own money.<sup>27</sup>

The theory of child labour as a means of self-actualizing also points out that many children find it fun to work, that the work gives them social interaction and stimulation. A study of children picking garbage at a dump in Manila showed that the children found socializing with friends and the thrill of finding new things to be two of the main factors that made them do this kind of work. This does not state that all children enjoy working, in fact, many studies show that many children would quit to work if they had the opportunity. However, according to Boyden J, Ling B, Myers W if such a large amount of children in surveys refer to the pleasure of work it has to be among one of the causal factors making them work. In a study of 1500 working children in Brazil, most of them working on the street, who were asked the question what they liked most about their lives - nearly 33 per cent answered that it was their work. Other interests at almost the same percentage level were family members, playing football and school.<sup>28</sup>

### *2.1.3. Child labour as a consequence of family-dynamics*

The third theory stated by Boyden J, Ling B and Myers W is the explanation of child labour as a result of inadequate family decision-making or relationships. Child labour can be seen to represent errors either in families’ view of reality or in their strategic thinking about how to best deal with that reality. An example is the idea that most parents who let their children work instead of being in school are ignorant of the importance of education. If those parents

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid p.117-118

<sup>27</sup> Ibid p.118

<sup>28</sup> Ibid p.118-120

would have known what a great outcome education can give, they would have tried to keep their children in school. The family dynamics explanation often blames these moral judgments; child labour can be a consequence of a breakdown in family values in which they do not fulfill their protective function. A breakdown in values is, for example, when parents sell their children into prostitution or bondage with the purpose of material benefit, for example a wedding. This theory also claims that child labour can be a result of ignorant and irresponsible parents.<sup>29</sup>

The World Bank among others has emphasized the relationship between household size and the prevalence of child labour among poor populations in developing countries. A common finding is that children from large households are more likely to be involved in child labour than children from small households. Other obstacles to child development and welfare that are linked to large household sizes are malnutrition, child mortality and morbidity. Children's educational participation and progress in school may decrease through large household sizes as parents invest less in their children's schooling. Children from large households are therefore more likely to get involved in child labour. Not all children in the same household are deprived equally. Many societies send their boys to school, not the girls and the older siblings are more likely to be sent to work than the younger ones.<sup>30</sup>

Education and occupation of the parents is another important factor behind child labour. The more education parents, particularly mothers, have – the less likely they are to let their children work. A common debate is about whether poor families have children as a strategy to provide more workforces. Families with labour intensive occupations, such as farmers, are more likely to have many children. When children start to participate economically from an early age, their income from labour exceeds with the costs of raising them. A single head of household, generally a woman, is one variable that seems to be closely linked with high prevalence of child labour. Those families are commonly among the poorest and especially in urban areas the woman may have to work outside the household with the result that the children are left alone or stay with elders. Boys with single mothers are especially likely to undertake labouring in order to contribute to the family economics. The security of a family's livelihood can be threatened by, for example, harvest failures and job loss or death of an

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid p.136

<sup>30</sup> Ibid p.137

income earner. Under these stressed circumstances it is common for the children to enter child labour.<sup>31</sup>

#### *2.1.4. Child labour as a result of poverty*

Child labour as a result of poverty is one of the most common theories about the causes behind underage work. A majority of studies in developing countries show that poor families put their children in child labour more often than families in a better economic situation. Increase of the household income is one reason but it is also a safety strategy to even out the risk of losing economic income, for example with the loss of an adult income earner or a failed harvest. According to ILO child labour commonly may represent around 20 per cent of the household income, and as poor families spend the majority of its income on food, consequently the children's incomes are crucial. In many households not all income is equally allocated to meet basic needs. Income earned by the mother of the household is more likely to be available for the family than income earned by the father. Children's earnings given to mothers may therefore be more important for the family than the earnings gained by the father. It is common that children are think about such factors, they are fully aware of their work as an important part to support their family.<sup>32</sup>

Economic dependence of households on the work contributed by their children varies extremely, ranging from almost none in industrializing countries to nearly total dependence in families with an absent or disabled adult – common in many African countries being desolated by HIV/AIDS. Boyden J, Ling B, and Myers W indicate that the fundamental importance of child labour as a result of poverty is so widely accepted and well demonstrated that there is no need to question the theory. But, there exist disagreements about to what degree poverty is fundamental to child labour – if poverty was the sole determinant for child labour, the highest rates of child labour would be found in the poorest parts of the world. This is not always the case. The relationship between child labour and poverty is varied, vague and indirect. If poverty would be the only determinant, the same patterns would be found over the world, but they are not. In rich countries it is often the opposite; children from high-income families are more likely to work. The explanation is that children from wealthier families have more work opportunities and are less exposed to ethnic and racial discrimination. A Brazilian study of economical active urban children compared a more industrialized wealthier area in

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid p.137-139

<sup>32</sup> Ibid p.127-128

south with a less industrialized, poorer area in north. The finding was that children in the wealthier south were much more likely to be involved in labour than were the children in the poorer north. The best explanation was that the well-situated environment in south provided more labour opportunities for children. Even if more children might have been looking for work in the northern poor area they could not find it. This is an example of the fact that increased prosperity in an area will not automatically reduce the prevalence of child labour.<sup>33</sup>

Children from wealthier families are sometimes more likely get involved in child labour as children of families owning land or small business may work more than children from poor families without any productive assets. It is common both in industrialized and developing countries to find children working in family business generating livelihoods well above the poverty level. In fact, most child labourers work within the home or in a family enterprise. Poverty itself may be an obstacle to work opportunities, for example it can limit the ability to pay for travel to and from the job-site.<sup>34</sup>

Most common is to think that poverty is an explanation for the flow of children in to the labour market, but poverty can also be an important factor regarding the demand for child labourers. Employers with a bad economical situation often turn to child labour with the wish to keep their cost to a minimum, and poor children come cheap. Poor children have less education, fewer employment options and are less aware of their rights. The globalization of the market puts pressure on the prices and in the search for the lowest prizes child labour seems to be the cheapest option.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid p.129-130

<sup>34</sup> Ibid p. 130

<sup>35</sup> Ibid p. 131-132

### **3. METHOD**

#### **3.1. Qualitative Case Study**

Both quantitative and qualitative methods are useful in research about child labour as these two types of data complement each other. Policy makers and programme planners need the numbers and the broader information available from the quantitative research methods,<sup>36</sup> but as the aim is to reach a more in-depth understanding about child labour in Babati, the qualitative case-study design was chosen. Performing a case study is a research process where the researcher can achieve a more in-depth description of the subject. Case studies can be used to investigate for example situations, programs, individuals or groups of individuals and can involve one or more cases. The strength of this type of method is that it provides comprehensive and adequate data which gives the opportunity to study the issue of child labour both in its real environment as well as in its right context.<sup>37</sup> The study was qualitative in the way that it searched for a complete and deep understanding of child labour.<sup>38</sup> Qualitative research methods have a theory based in social constructivism and intend to explain and reveal the human behaviour from the perspective of the people being studied. As this study partly investigates child labour from the perspective of the child labourers themselves, this qualitative research method was preferable.<sup>39</sup> The researcher can with this type of method learn more about the impact variables behind child labour such as the socio-economic context, the wellbeing of the children and their work situation. The qualitative method can give the study a deeper understanding of the underlying causes behind child labour compared to a quantitative research method.<sup>40</sup>

#### **3.2. Participants and data collection**

The data collected consisted of semi-structured interviews with four different categories of informants in Babati; Children, social welfare officers, the manager of The Manyara Holistic Centre (MAHOCE) and adults. Interviews are one of the most basic methods of social research and can be everything from a casual conversation to a structured and formal set of questions. Case studies about child labour often mainly derive from interviews and reveal a lot about the context around children's work.<sup>41</sup> The interviews were semi-structured in the

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<sup>36</sup> ILO, 2004 p.168

<sup>37</sup> University of Washington, 2009

<sup>38</sup> Holme, I M., Solvang, B,K. 1997 p.78

<sup>39</sup> Rubenson B, 2005 s.19

<sup>40</sup> ILO, 2004 p.173

<sup>41</sup> Boyden J, Ling B, Myers W, 1998 p.157

way that the questions were formulated in advance but with the opportunity to expand the structured questions and to develop the conversation with the respondents to reach deeper information.<sup>42</sup> The questions for the interviews were selected from former studies of child labour and with concepts from the ILO publication – Action against child labour, which sets up guide-lines for child labour data collection among street children.<sup>43</sup>

As the child labourers are the most important participants in this study, they composed the largest part of the respondents. Boys in age 9-19 were randomly selected and out of 30, 27 could be classified as child labourers according to the UNICEF definition. The children were interviewed close to their jobsite in Babati and included children from primarily three different workplaces; the bus station, the market and the garbage dump. The interviews were accomplished at different times during the day to reach both full - and half time workers. From the start 19 questions were asked. As the study went further, additional info was required to get a more adequate view of the situation. A majority, 75 per cent of the children, was found a second time and could answer the complementary questions.

For the interviews with the children and the adults, the researcher was dependent on a field assistant for help with language translation. The interviews with the adults were done to get a deeper knowledge about the social context in Babati, and to get information about the local images of childhood. Ten adults in different ages, with and without own children, were interviewed. To get some inside information and expert knowledge about the child labour situation in Babati, three Social Welfare Officers, SWO: s, on respective town, district and regional level were interviewed. Finally, an interview with the manager for MAHOCE was performed. MAHOCE is an organisation dealing with children classified as “most vulnerable children”. Those interviews could be completed in English without translation from the field assistant.

### **3.3. The importance of a child perspective**

The study was accomplished primarily through interviews with the child labourers themselves with the purpose of getting the children’s own perspective in focus. Until recently, there was a common view that research about children resembled research about adults. Many of the

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<sup>42</sup> Lindberg, C, 1996 p.14

<sup>43</sup> Haspels, N, Jankanish, M, 2000 p.125

enquiries about children were done by asking adults.<sup>44</sup> Many researchers stated that, for example, parents, teachers and social workers could give adequate information about children and their labour with the justification that adults knew more about the children's problem than the children themselves. Sometimes it is possible that children cannot give fully adequate information, they maybe make up things during the interview or repeat what they have been told to say by adults, but this is a validity problem found in all types of surveys. The premise that children are unreliable respondents often turns out to be false. Instead, studies about child labour that excludes children risks bias, incorrectness and lack of depth.<sup>45</sup>

According to CRC article 12 and 13, children have the right to freedom of speech and;

*“The views of the child shall be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child”.*<sup>46</sup>

These articles give the child the right to be recognized as social actors and citizens in the same way as adults. CRC underline the child as an actor in the social sphere, the child has the ability to reflect over its situation and the right to be listened to.<sup>47</sup>

### **3.4. Difficulties in doing research about child labour**

There are some considerable difficulties in doing research into child labour. Firstly, working children are often hidden from the public sphere and are thus hard to find. Secondly, research about child labour can pose a threat to the people benefiting from their work. Finally research into child labour also challenges governments or organizations which are reluctant to criticise their own policies. It is common for the researcher to be exposed by suspicious and adverse local government officials, parents and managers.<sup>48</sup> As all countries have laws against some form of child labour, people may be reluctant to participate in surveys about the issue and there is always a risk that they may get unreliable information.<sup>49</sup> Interviews with children have got their own methods according to ILO. Children shall, for example, never be put in a position where they risk being punished from their parents or their employer for being interviewed. According to this, the interviews shall always be conducted away in privacy to get as reliable answers as possible. Children can also get bored or feel insecure during the

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<sup>44</sup> Boyden J, Ling B, Myers W, 1998 p.167

<sup>45</sup> Ibid p.171

<sup>46</sup> OHCHR, 2007b

<sup>47</sup> Rubensen, B, 2005 p.11

<sup>48</sup> Ibid p.155

<sup>49</sup> ILO, 2004 p.176

interviews which can result in inaccurate answers. To avoid this type of validity problems, patience and friendliness was shown during the study. The researcher also tried to be around the workplaces of the children in order to gain faith from the respondents, as the children's confidence often must be obtained before they agree to talk about their situation.<sup>50</sup>

### **3.5. Material, trustworthiness and validation**

The reliability of the study depends on how the collection of data is accomplished and the accurateness during the procession of given information. High reliability is obtained if different and independent studies about one case gain identical or similar results when repeated. Unfortunately the time for this study was too short to be able to do the same study more than once. The reliability of this study therefore depends on the trustworthiness of the collected data and its processing.<sup>51</sup> Some difficulties may appear when doing research about children and their labouring. Children may answer the questions in the way they think the researcher prefers or they may without intention give biased information because their capacity and references make them. Hard conditions may also exaggerate their situation in hope to get help from the researcher or some other outside agency. To avoid this reliability problem the purpose of this study was clarified, that it was a study about the situation and not an attempt to change their situation. Given information was written down instantly during the interviews and rewritten a second time and processed later the same day.<sup>52</sup> The language barrier and the diverse cultural background could have been an obstacle when the interviews were accomplished. The study is hence to a large extent dependent on the field assistant for the credibility of the collected data.<sup>53</sup>

To ensure the validity of the study, it is important that the study really examine the object it aims to investigate according to the research questions.<sup>54</sup> It is not enough with reliable data if the information is not correct by definition. It is therefore important to have a well operationalized object to investigate – in this case, child labour. The definition of child labour in this study is according to the UNICEF definition and is stated in the beginning of the paper. Another aspect that must be clarified is the correct interpretation of the term 'child'. The child definition is found in the beginning of the paper.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid p.177-178

<sup>51</sup> Holme, I M., Solvang, B,K. 1997 p.163

<sup>52</sup> ILO, 2004 p.179-180

<sup>53</sup> Rubenson, B, 2005 p.25

<sup>54</sup> Holme, I M., Solvang, B,K. 1997 p.163

<sup>55</sup> Ibid p.167

The data from the interviews is mainly trustworthy. There were some tendencies from the children to have unclear comprehension about time and space, which was expressed in questions of the type – How long have you been working? This could be corrected through triangulation with other questions. By large the interviews with the child labourers were credible. The interviews with the adults also seemed to be valid, especially as the adults did not show any interest in getting sympathy from the researcher. The information given from the SWOs was varying and it is hard to determine which information was correct.

The paper depends on information from secondary sources for the studies regarding Tanzania and Babati and for the data concerning child labour and its legislation. The secondary sources mainly constitute of research and literature instigated by international organizations like Plan Sweden, UNICEF and International Labour Office (ILO). Data is also collected from the Central Intelligence Agency database (CIA) and the Tanzanian government homepage. The information about Babati town is mainly received from the Babati District Council and from earlier disputations and literature about the Babati area. The information taken from CIA, Plan, UNICEF and ILO is recently updated information and their knowledge and data collections were highly relevant for this study. Some hesitation has to be in mind concerning the data from the Tanzanian government homepage. The study found it hard to get reliable statistics from organizations in Tanzania and the reader has to keep this in mind.

It is easy to find general information concerning child labour. In fact, there are so many statistics, scientific articles, disputations etc. to find on the Internet about the subject that it is hard to decide what information to use and trust. The study has therefore tried consequently to use information from recognized organizations as UNICEF and ILO. Much of the literature and scientific articles found is by way of child labour in factories and does not concern children working on the streets. It is also hard to find information, especially scientific articles, that concentrate on the child labourers' own perspective. The book chosen for the theory chapter was the most adequate to be found. The book is quite old, published 1998, but the information given seems to be correct even today.

### **3.6. Method of analysis**

The data from the interviews has been analyzed according to four existing theories of underlying causes behind child labor. The theories have been created from research made by

UNICEF and Save the Children Sweden and are described in chapter 2, Causes of child labour. The purpose of the analysis is to see to what extent the findings of the study correlate to the indicators outlined in each theory. To be able to easily show the summary of the result in which grade the Babati case correlates to the four theories, a table of analysis has been constructed which are illustrated in *Table 5.1. Summary of analysis - Compliance between the theories and the Babati case*

## **4. STUDY AREA AND FINDINGS**

This chapter presents the study area and the data gathered during the case study in Babati. The chapter begins with a short description of the socio-economic situation in Tanzania followed by information about Babati, the current child labour situation and the images of child hood in the area. The findings during the case study are presented thereafter summarized at the end of the chapter in *4.5 Results*.

The information in this chapter, unless otherwise noted, derives from interviews with the child laborers of the study. The names of the child labourers are fictive. The questions for the interviews are to be found in Appendix.

### **4.1 The Tanzanian setting**

The United Republic of Tanzania, shortly called Tanzania, is located on the coast line in East Africa between Kenya and Mozambique. The population is in March 2009 estimated to be 41 048 532 with a population growth rate of 2.04 percent. Most of the people in Tanzania live in rural areas, 25 per cent stay in urban areas but more and more people leave the countryside to go and live in the cities. Tanzania has got a very young population where 43 per cent are 14 years and younger, 54.1 per cent are between 15-64 years and the remaining 2.9 per cent consists of people that are 65 years and older.<sup>56</sup>

Tanzania is in terms of per capita income, in the bottom ten percent of the world's economies.<sup>57</sup> The Tanzanian economy is based primary on agricultural activity and because of this, the country has a serious imbalance of trade deficit as the value of the exported agricultural goods is lower than the value of the major imports consisting manufactured and consumer products. The result is that Tanzania has to borrow money to pay its imports which place the country in a heavy debt situation. In 1999, the total debt stood as US\$7.7 billion and on top of this, Tanzania is heavily dependent on foreign aid, primarily from the countries of the EU. During year 1997, Tanzania received US\$963 million in aid.<sup>58</sup>

Poverty among the citizens is a widespread issue in Tanzania. Poverty is most common in the rural areas but the numbers of poor people in urban areas are growing fast, especially among

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<sup>56</sup> CIA, 2009

<sup>57</sup> Ibid

<sup>58</sup> Advameg Inc, 2008

the people involved in the informal sector and among the unemployed. The general situation for poor people in Tanzania is lack of capital and human assets as the poor people are less educated, have large families to feed and struggle with bad health. The rapid spread of HIV/AIDS has worsened the situation for people stuck in poverty vastly.<sup>59</sup> HIV/AIDS is a serious issue for Tanzania as it kills an important part of the human capital. According to CIA, 6,02 % of the Tanzanian adults are infected and around 196 000 people die every year as a result of the epidemic.<sup>60</sup> Nearly one million children have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS<sup>61</sup> and the young population in Tanzania is mostly a result of the high death rates from the virus.<sup>62</sup>

According to the Tanzanian Primary Education development Plan, all children in Tanzania should have the opportunity to get access to a free primary education of good quality. Gender, poverty, disability or lacks of contributions as school uniforms or material are not allowed to be obstacles for children to attend primary school.<sup>63</sup> The number of children attending primary school has increased significantly since 2000, but less than 20 per cent of the children continue from primary to secondary school.<sup>64</sup>

#### **4.2. Babati**

Babati is a quite small but bustling town and lies on the Great North road some 170 km south from Arusha and 70 km north of Kondoa.<sup>65</sup> The bus station is always busy with arriving and departing buses and other types of transport with people coming from all over Tanzania.<sup>66</sup> The Babati area is attractive, rich in resources and with a good potential for production of agricultural goods. Its multi-ethnic population is rapidly expanding,<sup>67</sup> the high growth rate is due both to high birth rates and immigration from other more unproductive areas in central Tanzania and from the heavily populated areas around Moshi – Arusha.<sup>68</sup> Tanzania has five levels of education; pre-primary school education, primary education, secondary education,

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<sup>59</sup>The Government of Tanzania, 2009

<sup>60</sup> CIA, 2009

<sup>61</sup> UNICEF, 2006

<sup>62</sup> CIA, 2009

<sup>63</sup> Davén, J, 2008 p.10

<sup>64</sup> UNICEF, 2006

<sup>65</sup> Briggs, P, 2006 p.171

<sup>66</sup> Lindberg, C, 1996 p.32

<sup>67</sup> Ibid p.14

<sup>68</sup> Ibid p.33

adult education and vocational training. Around 85 per cent of the children in Babati are estimated to attend primary school.<sup>69</sup>

Child labour exists in almost all large cities and towns in developing countries. Babati makes no exception. The location of Babati makes it an attractive town for children in search for work, Babati is growing and so are the job opportunities for cheap and unskilled labour. According to the MAHOCE manager and the SWO at Babati District Council, child labour is common in Babati,<sup>70</sup> while the SWO at Babati Town Council consider child labour to be less common with prevalence on 2-3 per cent. The general number of children living in Babati is not known by any of the SWO: s. There are numbers at the Babati Town Council of children classified as “Most Vulnerable Children” which include children working and living in the streets. According to a survey done in 2008, 193 children in Babati are classified as MVC’s, 113 of them get secondary school paid by the Town council. MAHOCE pays basic demands for 69 of the younger children. Thereby eleven children are left which do without sponsorship from the organizations. According to the SWO at Babati Town Council, those are the children working and living in the streets.<sup>71</sup> The regional SWO reports a different number in contrast to the Town Council, referring to another investigation accomplished in 2008 where 250 children were found on the streets of Babati. Most of the children come from the outskirts of Babati and some even from outside the district.<sup>72</sup> No particular regulations concerning child labour exist at the different Social Welfare offices in Babati.<sup>73</sup> According to the SWO at Babati Town Council, the regulations is due to the national law i.e. CRC. No local regulations or working strategies exist<sup>74</sup>

The study found it easy to get hold of working children in Babati. The three chosen job sites; the bus station, the market place and the garbage dump are places full of people and have got many job opportunities for young and unskilled labour. A majority of the children in the study work with carrying luggage for customers at the bus station or at the market. Seven of the 27 respondents work at the garbage dump collecting firewood to sell. One respondent drives carts when he is not carrying luggage and two of the children work with repairing cars at the

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<sup>69</sup> Council Profile 3, 2008, received from SWO Babati District Council, s.31

<sup>70</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati District Council 2009.02.25, Interview with the MAHOCE manager 2009.03;03

<sup>71</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati Town Council 2009.04.04

<sup>72</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati Regional Office 2009.02.25

<sup>73</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati District Council 2009.02.25, Interview with the SWO at Babati Regional Office 2009.02.25

<sup>74</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati Town Council 2009.03.04

bus station. According to ILO those children are classified as “street children” and “child porters” and belong to the category of “potential worst forms of child labour”.<sup>75</sup>

The classification of “Street children” divides the children in two groups. The first group of children works during the day and sometimes during the evening, but they live at home with family or relatives. The second category are working and living in the streets, they have left their families and are independent. Some of the respondents in this study, namely 15 are staying without their parents or some other older caretaker. Eleven of those children staying in the streets around the market and spend most of their nights sleeping on top of the garbage dump. Street children without parents are vulnerable and in the risk of being involved in stealing, drug abuse violence and commercial sexual exploitation,<sup>76</sup> a fact the Social Welfare Officers in Babati are well aware of.<sup>77</sup> The classification “child porters” also comprise of two categories. The first category are children carrying loads over long distances and the second are the ones working short distances in areas such as markets, business centre’s and bus stations. Children get money for payment in both cases. The respondents in the study are classified in the second category of short distance workers.<sup>78</sup>

### **4.3. Images of childhood**

To be able to discuss child labour the context of what is known about childhood must be considered. According to Boyden J, Ling B, Myers W, the debate against child labour has for a long time been dominated mainly by the western images of childhood, both in industrialized and developing countries. This has resulted in some problems as it is complicated to apply western understanding and definitions of childhood into other cultures with other norms. The western childhood has since 18<sup>th</sup> century been a time for learning, clearly separated from economical life. The norm is thus based on school children, which makes the labouring children deviants or victims. The western imagination of child hood underpins many important international agreements as CRC and the ILO Minimum Age Convention and is built on the belief that the best for every child is to be economically dependent on their parents until a certain age. School is the best for the development of the child while work is regarded as a potential obstacle to development. In a survey made by Save the Children

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<sup>75</sup> ILO, 2008 p.54-55

<sup>76</sup> ILO, 2008 p.54-55

<sup>77</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati District Council 2009.02.25

<sup>78</sup> ILO, 2008 p.54-55

Sweden 80 per cent of the respondents imagined childhood as a joyful, stress free time dedicated primarily to be in school and play.<sup>79</sup>

Many children grow up in contexts that are different from the western approach. The Tanzanian society is one example of this with other expectations on the children to participate and help their families both within and outside the household. To be able to understand the social context and its imagination of childhood in Babati, interviews were made with ten adults living in the district. The Social Welfare Officers also contributed with their knowledge and so did the manager for the MAHOCE organisation.

For the majority of the informants, a child should start to help their parents in the household at a younger age than ten years; the most common answer was “at eight years.” Two informants find age 15 a plausible age, when the child has completed primary school. A child in Babati should contribute primarily with cleaning, but also with tasks like fetching water, preparing food and with taking care of cattle. The expected working hours differed among the informants but three and four hours a day was the most common answer with around two hours left to play or after the duties have been completed. School attendance was extremely important for all of the participants regardless of education and occupation. Two of the informants had their own children working. They really wished their children could go to school instead, but could not change the situation because of both lack of money and lack of power.

All informants find child labour to be inappropriate and wrong. The most common belief is that poverty with hard life conditions is the underlying cause of the labouring. For the majority of the informants, a child is old enough to take care of itself at age 18 to 20 or when they have completed school. The Social Welfare Officer at Babati Town Council explained that many parents think their children are old enough at age ten, and ready to help within the household already at age five. Many parents accept that their children run away to an urban area in search for a better life.<sup>80</sup> The SWO at Babati District Council had a similar view and believes child labour as socially acceptable in Babati.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Boyden J, Ling B, Myers W p.27-29

<sup>80</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati Town Council 2009.03.04

<sup>81</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati District Council 2009.02.25

## **4.4. Findings**

### *4.4.1. Causes of child labour in Babati from the researcher's perspective*

Six children of the study are originally from Babati and the remaining 21 come from other towns and villages like Majengo, Magugu and Arusha. Many of them moved on their own to Babati in search of work and the possibility of earning money. Among the 20 respondents who were asked the question if they had decided on their own to start working, solely one boy answered that he had been forced by his grandmother. The majority of the children work entirely because they want to support themselves with food and other basic needs. Four children give all their earnings to relatives and seven contribute with some of the money in order to help their family. Eleven children still stay with at least one caretaker, eight of them contribute with money in order to expand the household income. The children working most hours, 77 hours and more, all keep the money for themselves. All of those children staying without parents, five live at the garbage dump, three sleep around the market and three of them rent rooms alone or with friends. One boy stays with his grandmother, but still keeps all his earnings. One of the respondents works with the intent to get money both for himself and his brother. He pays the education for his brother and likes the feeling of being able to support him.

All of the children interviewed would quit their work if they had the opportunity; one of them wants to do other types of business instead. 24 of the 27 respondents would rather go to school than work, whilst almost 50 per cent of the respondents tell that school and studying are things they like most in life. One child says that work is the best thing in life, do business is another answer given. One boy likes to earn money most in life, another answers "good job and school". Very few of the respondents actually like their work, one 10 year old boy claims that he likes his job, but he only works two days a week. James, who works with repairing cars at the bus station, likes his job and prefers it before school. He earns a bit more money than his friends and he is proud over the work tasks he performs. The opportunity to earn money is what the majority of the children like most with their job. Salim, 14 years old, even likes the fact that his work can give him a change to personal development. Many respondents give the answer that there is nothing fun with working, they get in a lot of trouble with customers who beat them, who do not pay and they also have problems with diseases and work that is too heavy for them. The only thing that seems to be quite good with work is that the boys have got each other. Amiri tells that he and the other children working at the garbage dump and the

market have got a close relationship. They all help each other out if, for example, a friend does not have enough money to buy food. Despite all existing problems a majority of the 18 asked children are proud of themselves working. 14 boys say that they are proud that they can earn their own money while four explain that their situation is nothing to be proud of. One boy thinks his labouring is a sign of having problems and two respondents explain that they cannot always get what they need.

The majority of the respondents asked have got, or had good relationships with their parents. A majority of the parents like that their children work, solely one parent does not like that her son works, but states that she has no other choice. One respondent told that his parents did not know the importance of education, and that was the reason he got left without it. Other children have parents that did not care when their children decided to leave home in search for money

– Abraham, 15 years;

*“I ran away from home at age five and ended up at the bus station in Babati with my older brother. I begged for money for five years until I started to work with carrying luggage. My parents did not care that I ran away”*

According to the SWO at Babati District Council irresponsible parents are a common problem behind the child labour in Babati. The parents do not care if their children work or not, they do not know their responsibility.<sup>82</sup> The manager at MAHOCE also points out the problem with irresponsible parents as an underlying cause behind the child labour, he also think different types of family problems matter.<sup>83</sup> Irresponsible parents are a serious problem and it seems to be getting worse with the globalisation. Before parents looked after each other’s children, but today, this is not the case.<sup>84</sup>

The child labourers in the study come from families of different sizes. 18 respondents were asked how many siblings they have got and the result was diverse. Some children were the only child while some had ten brothers and sisters. The study could not find any particular pattern. It was most common for the respondents to be the youngest child in the family; ten

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<sup>82</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati District Council 2009.02.25

<sup>83</sup> Interview with the MAHOCE Manager 2009.03.03

<sup>84</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati Town Council 2009.03.04, Interview with the MAHOCE manager 2009.03.03

children was the younger sibling, four middle children, two older brothers and two respondents did not have any siblings at all. Close to 50 per cent of the children have at least one parent with primary education. Five children know that their parents lack education, six do not know and the remaining three answered that their parents are dead. One of the boys not included in the study with the reason that he is not working enough hours to be classified as a child labourer, has got a father with secondary education - the only parent found in the study with more than primary education. Of 27 respondents, solely four still live with both parents. Seven children are from households with one single caretaker; two stay with mum, four with grandmother and one stays with his aunt. The remaining 16 respondents stay alone on the street, rent rooms alone or together with friends. One of these boys stays at the MAHOCE organization. 15 children have got one or both deceased parent; 8 respondents have lost both parents and the seven remaining have lost their father. Eleven children of those 19 with one or both parents alive have left their families and now stay on their own.

As the majority of the child labourers with parents alive explain that their parents are poor, there is no question that the majority of the children come from poor households. Exceptions are one child who works because his stepfather refuses to give him money and one child who tells that his parents were wealthy when they still were alive. All of the respondents work because they are in need of money in one way or another. A majority of the children earn around 500 – 2000 Tanzanian shilling a day and use the money to buy basic things like food, clothing and soap. It is rare that the parents of the children in the study have occupations that could bring good salaries. Eight mothers work with selling crops, peeling beans, cooking food, water carrying and two are farmers. Four fathers are working constructing bicycles and houses, two are farmers. Eight parents are unemployed and one boy has got parents that also collect firewood on a garbage dump in another town.

Babati is an expanding area. The town got the classification “town” in 2004 and the development has grown quickly since then. The Social Welfare Officer at Babati town council explains that the expansion of Babati has led to more children coming from other areas in search of a better life. She also points out the global change as an underlying cause behind the child labour. Today children want to earn their own money. Hard conditions in the villages, lack of peace at home and alcoholic parents are other causal mechanisms.<sup>85</sup> The Social

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<sup>85</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati Town Council 2009.03.04

Welfare Officer at Babati District Council finds poverty among the families as one major factor. According to him, the typical child labourer in Babati has got poor, irresponsible parents and comes from a rural area. Concerning the orphans, he states that the government tries to take care of them according to national law, but the law is hard to implement.<sup>86</sup> For the Social Welfare Officer at the regional level, lack of things to do is the main underlying factor behind the child labour in Babati. He says that the children in Babati need playgrounds - today they are idle and work instead of playing.<sup>87</sup>

#### *4.4.2. Causes of child labour in Babati from the children's own perspective*

The explanations for why children in Babati work are generally corresponding among the respondents. Most of the children talk about reasons deriving from poverty. Most of the children decided on their own already at a young age to start work;

*“I decided to move and start to work at the garbage dump when my mum died a long time ago. We were living in a room that claimed monthly payment. I could not afford the rent when mum died, so now I have to sleep at the garbage dump. ” – Victor, 14 years old*

This is a common life story among the boys. 15 of the respondents has lost one or both parents and had to start working to survive daily life. A majority of the remaining twelve children tell that they have poor parents and chose to start work because their parents cannot support them. The majority the respondents tell that they work to get money for food and other basic demands. Two of the 27 children work to get money for school. Six of the children talk about family problems and hard conditions as the major reason behind their labouring. The family problems described are one disabled mum, separated parents and alcoholism. One child has a mum and a stepfather with quite well economic situation, but he has to work as his stepfather refuses to give him money because he is not the “real son”. Two other children stated that their parents did not care when they ran away from home to start work. One child works to get basic needs for both himself and his little brother. He also supports his brother's education.

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<sup>86</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati District Council 2009.02.25

<sup>87</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati Regional Office 2009.02.25

## **4.5. Results**

### *4.5.1. Researchers perspective*

- A majority of the children chose to start work themselves
- They work because they want to support themselves with food and other basic needs
- A majority keeps the earnings themselves
- Eight of eleven children still staying with a caretaker contribute with money to the household
- The children would quit working if they could, they do not like work
- The children like to earn own money but would rather go to school
- A majority of the children are proud of themselves working
- A majority of the parents like the fact that their children labour
- Many parents did not care when their children left home in search for work
- Irresponsible parents are a problem in Babati
- The children are from diverse household sizes and a majority are the younger sibling
- The parents has got low education level and a majority have got low income occupations
- Seven children stay with a single woman and 16 children stay without any family
- Death among income earners is common
- The children has got poor parents

### *4.5.2. Children's perspective*

- The children work because they need money for food and other basic needs
- Many of the children have got deceased parents and have to take care of themselves
- The children with parents or caretakers still alive explain that their parents/caretakers are poor
- Some of the children has got family problems
- All of the children live under poor circumstances, they need to work to survive

## **5. ANALYSIS**

### **5.1. Causes of child labour in Babati from the researchers perspective**

#### *5.1.1. Family-contribution theory*

The study did not find the theory about child labour as a contribution to the family to be totally agreeable with the Babati case. A majority of the children keep their earnings for themselves; only four boys contribute with all their earnings to their family and six children give some of their money. This finding can depend upon the fact that such a large part of the children are independent from their parents, if only the eleven children still staying with relatives investigates - the study find that eight of them contribute with money to help the household economy.

According to the theory about child labour as a contribution to the family most children start to work on command or at least by request from their family. In Babati all of the respondents except one started to work by their own will. No single person forced them to start labouring, but according to other findings in the study, it was rather the environment which left them with no other choice. Only one child labourer in the study expresses a feeling of happiness to be able to support his brother, the other children appear to not reflect over their contribution. None of the children talk about their labouring as one of their rights. They also do not talk about fear of losing support from their family if they are not working. The family-contribution theory is therefore solely found to be partly correlating to the Babati case.

#### *5.1.2. Self-actualization theory*

The principal argument of the theory about child labour as a means of self – actualization is that many children would want to work even if they did not have to. This is not consistent to the Babati case as the majority of the children do not like the work they perform, and all except one, would quit the labouring if they had the opportunity. A majority of the children would also prefer to attend school instead of working. One boy actually told that his job was the best thing in his life, but still - a majority of the child labourers in Babati do not want to work. They like the fact that they earn money and that the work give them opportunity to get food. The children do not talk about their work as a way to feel more independent or mature and they do not believe that work is a good way for them to get education. They do not work because it is fun; they work because they have to if they want to survive.

That children work because they want to establish certain independence is another indicator of the self-actualization theory. The child labourers in Babati correlate to the idea about “economical independence” - those children in poor conditions wish to get out of poverty and therefore find it necessary to earn their own money. Even if the majority of the respondents do not like their work, most of them are proud over the work they do and they like the feeling of earning their own money. The study found this theory to correlate partly to the Babati case.

### *5.1.3. Family-dynamics theory*

There are many of indicators in the theory of child labour as a consequence of family-dynamics which correlate to the Babati case. According to the SWO at Babati District Council and the manager at MAHOCE, irresponsible parents are a major cause behind the child labouring in Babati.<sup>88</sup> A majority of the children in the study explain that their parents like the fact that they are working which can be seen as a sign of lack of moral judgement. Solely one mother does not like her son’s labouring, but she cannot do anything about it as she is extremely poor. One respondent states that his parents did not know the importance of education, and that was why he had to start to work. The study thus finds that a majority of the parents do not have any objections to their children’s labouring, but it is hard to know if it is because of a poor environment or due irresponsibility. The idea that most parents who let their children work instead of being in school do not know the importance of education, does not fully correlate with the Babati case. The study rather finds poverty as a major obstacle for the children with regards to not being in school. A majority of the child labourers would rather go to school than work but as they do not have money for essential items such as uniforms, books and food, they are forced to work instead. The parents have probably no other choice than let their children work, but as the parents of the children did not get interviewed, it is hard to be sure.

The view that children from large families are more likely to be child labourers cannot be confirmed in the Babati case as the children all come from different family sizes. According to the theory older siblings are more likely to be child labourers. The study found the opposite pattern in Babati where the majority of the children are the youngest sibling. Lack of education among parents is on the contrary a possible causal mechanism pointed out in the “family-dynamics” theory which correlates to the Babati case. Not even 50 per cent of the

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<sup>88</sup> Interview with the SWO at Babati District Council 2009.02.25, Interview with the MAHOCE manager 2009.03.03

child labourers have got one parent with primary education and none of the parents has got secondary or higher education. One boy interviewed, not classified as a child labourer, has got a father with secondary education. The boy attends school and only works ten hours during the weekend, maybe because his father realises the importance of education.

There is no doubt that the family-dynamics are one causal mechanism behind the child labour in Babati as solely four children still stay with both parents. Seven children live in the household with one caretaker – in all cases a woman and the remaining 16 child labourers stay alone on the street or in rooms alone or with friends. They have run away from home or have got deceased parents and no other relatives to rely on. A single head of household, almost always a woman, is one important variable behind child labour. This is a fact the study clearly finds in Babati. Five of the seven boys in the study with single female caretakers have been undertaking labouring in order to contribute to their family. Death of an income earner appear to be a major cause behind child labour in Babati as 15 of 27 respondents has lost the father of the family or both parents. Nearly one million children have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS in Tanzania, and maybe the virus is the underlying cause behind the high death rates in the Babati case. The study found the family-dynamics theory to be close to completely correlating to the Babati case.

#### *5.1.4. Poverty theory*

The study found that poverty is common among the child labourers in Babati as the majority of the children with at least one parent or relative still alive explain that their caretaker or caretakers are poor. This appear to be credible when very few of the parents seems to hold high status jobs or jobs that possibly could bring good money.

According to the poverty theory it is most common for children to work because families need to increase their household income. As eight of the eleven children staying with a caretaker contributes with all or some of their earnings this could be one causal factor. Among the majority of the caretakers none appear to have “high status” jobs or jobs that could possibly bring good money which presumably results in poor households. Almost all of the child labourers would prefer to attend school instead of working and 25 of the 27 respondents are in school or have once been. Many of the children explain that they had to drop out of school because lack of needs. They had no funds for education which definitely can be a sign of poverty.

The 16 children staying without caretakers all live in poor circumstances as the majority do not earn more than 500 – 2000 Tanzanian shilling a day. All of the children in the study work because they need money for food or other basic needs, none of the children work in order to be able to consume other things than essentials. The study finds this fact to be an indicator of a poor environment.

According to the “poverty theory”, poverty found among the households is not the only factor making children work. Poverty among the employers can also be an important underlying cause. Children in Babati are the cheapest workforce to be found as they have got no education and not so many employment options. This makes them perfect employees for poor or greedy employers. The bus station, the market and the garbage dump are easy markets for the boys in search for job opportunities. The study found the poverty-theory to be correlating to the Babati case.

## **5.2. Causes of child labour in Babati from the children’s own perspective**

All children of the study are involved in child labour because they are in need of money for food and other basic needs. Many of the child labourers tell stories about how they had to run away from home in search for money when one or both parents died and about how they had to stop school because of lack of funds. A majority need to earn own money because of either poor and/or dead parents/relatives. Family problems are another underlying cause combined with the poverty. The decision to start working has been taken by the child labourers themselves, except one boy who got forced by his grandmother. The child labourers do not talk about any own request behind their labouring, any wishes to contribute to the family or about irresponsible parents. They do not either mention any will to be independent from their families or a wish for earning extra money for leisure. From the children’s perspective, poor environments are the major cause making them work. They work because they need to survive. The poverty-theory is in this case most correlating with the children’s own perspective.

### 5.3. Summary of analysis

#### 5.3.1 Research question 1 – researcher’s perspective

The study finds child labour in Babati to be much too complex to explain by one single theory. All of the chosen theories correlate in one way or another with the poverty theory as the most correlating. A summary of the compliance to each theory are to be find in *Table 5.1- Summary of analysis- Compliance between the theories and the Babati case*

*Table 5.1. Summary of analysis- Compliance between the theories and the Babati case*

| THEORY   | Compliance |        |          |            |
|--|------------|--------|----------|------------|
|  | not        | partly | close to | completely |
| Child labour as a contribution to the family     |            | X      |          |            |
| Child labour as a means of self-actualization    |            | X      |          |            |
| Child labour as a consequence of family-dynamics |            |        | X        |            |
| Child labour as a result of poverty              |            |        |          | X          |

#### 5.3.2 Research question 2 – children’s perspective

The underlying causes of child labour in Babati from the child labourer’s perspective correlate mainly to the theory about child labour as a result of poverty. The family dynamics theory also correlates, but to a considerably smaller extent.

## 6. DISCUSSION

Trying to find the underlying causes behind child labour in Babati through the children's own perspective proved to be the right procedure. Without the children's own view the study would not have reached the same in-depth understanding; no one else could have explained their situation better than the child labourers themselves. The diverse information given by the SWO could not give an adequate explanation about the causal mechanisms behind child labour. The findings of the research into the causes of child labour in Babati from the children's own perspective do not leave much space for discussion. There is no doubt that the children in Babati find themselves working because of poverty. They have to work to get food and other basic needs because of deceased or extremely poor parents. The information was consistent among all the respondents except one who worked because his stepfather shuts him out from the family.

From the researchers perspective the study finds child labour to be a varying, complex and multifaceted issue impossible to explain with one single theory. The result with poverty as one of the most important causal mechanism behind the child labour in Babati is not surprising, but it is important to indicate that poverty alone is not the only underlying factor behind the labouring. As mentioned in the theory chapter – if child labour was the only determinant behind child labour, the highest prevalence of working children would be found in the poorest parts of the world, and this is just not the case.

The study found family dynamics to be an important causal mechanism. The children talking about underlying causes remaining from family dynamics are few, but the researcher's findings correlating with this theory are interesting to take into consideration. The idea of child labourers as the oldest sibling from a large family could not be confirmed in the Babati case, but the view about irresponsible parents seems to be quite correlating. According to the SWO at Babati district council and the manager at MAHOCE irresponsible parents are an important factor behind child labour in Babati. 19 children still have one or both parents alive, eleven of those are staying on their own, independent from their parents. The question is what kind of parent would let their child stay on their own at such a young age? Is it the poor environment which makes them incapacitated to take responsibility for their children? There must be some kind of choice, no matter how poor the circumstances are, no parents would like to have their children sleeping at a garbage dump. Poverty can be the pushing factor, but

there must be other factors that affect the situation. It is important to distinguish the orphans from the children with parents still alive. The orphans have no caretaker with primary responsibility; they are totally dependent on their own work for their survival. The children with parents still alive are in a different situation altogether. It is their parents who are still primarily responsible for them. Some parents do not let their children run away from home, even if they are extremely poor, and some do. There must be some kind of choice being made.

The study has tried to find explanations to those choices through the social context. It is important to consider that child labour cannot be judged the same way in all contexts. Child labour has to be seen in the right context and could not be analysed only through western values. The social context in Babati is different from the contexts in most western countries. Different images of childhood exist where the child expects to, for example, contribute to the household more than children in western countries. While many parents in western countries are satisfied if their children clean their room and take care of the dishes, a majority of the parents in Babati require their children to work in the household around three to four hours a day. The step from contributing with the household work to be involved in child labour is smaller in this context than in western countries. The perspective of childhood is different in Babati and the study finds this different narrative as a possible reason that makes the parents of the child labourers to accept and even like the fact their children work. There is also a problem with the fact that most of the child labour is to be found in developing countries, but most of the international norms for defining and combat it derives from the rich western countries. The study finds a need for more intervention models constructed in the right social context.

The Tanzanian government points out that poverty and lack of school uniforms and material are factors that should not be obstacles for children to attend primary school. The Babati case clearly proved the fact that poverty in fact is indeed an obstacle for children to attend school. The study found that a majority of the children rather would attend school than work but lack of school uniforms and other needs caused obstacles. Another problem is the fact that a majority of the children do not get served school lunch in primary school. The study found that to be one of the major obstacles for the children in the study who attend school – if they went to school, they could not work. And if they not worked they could not afford to buy food. To serve school lunch in the Tanzanian primary schools thus could get more attendance rates.

The premises for the orphans of the study are different from the children with parents still alive. The SWO at Babati district council explains that the government has got the primary responsibility over children without parents. The study easily found 15 children staying in the streets and at the garbage dump. Probably more orphans are to be found in other locations than simply the ones studied. Why is the government not taking its responsibility? Is lack of funds the only reason or does the problem with irresponsible adults to be found even at the government level? No consensus was to be found among the three SWO interviewed. According to the SWO at the regional level there are 250 children staying in the streets in Babati town, while the SWO at Babati Town Council explains that solely eleven children are to be found. The SWO at Babati District council explains child labour to be common in Babati while the SWO at Babati Town Council recognizes child labour to be almost none existing with a prevalence of 2-3 per cent. The study find child labour to not be one high priority issue for the government of Babati, but as Tanzania is in the bottom ten percent of the world's economies, the researcher understands the low priority. There are a lot of issues deriving from poverty to combat in Tanzania and lack of money for action is a devastating problem.

The study found that no working strategies or special regulations concerning child labour exist in Babati. Information given by the SWO was varying and therefore not completely reliable. The fact that no working strategies exist and that the SWO: s did not show much knowledge is a proof of lack of action. The study found it hard to determine if the lack of action is due to lack of funds, due lack of will or due both of them - the only sure finding is that not much has been done in Babati to decrease the prevalence of child labour. CRC was ratified by the Tanzanian government in 1991, yet still 32 per cent of the Tanzanian children are involved in child labour – a clear sign that Tanzania does not fulfil the obligations stated in the convention. But, Tanzania is not the only country with inadequate implementing of CRC, even wealthy countries as Sweden have problems to fulfil all the stated obligations.

No special regulations concerning child labour are to be found in Babati, the regulations are according to the national law. There is not either any work strategies for combating child labour. It must be hard to work against child labour when no working strategies exist. One easily written information sheet about child labour was to be found at the Babati Town council with the task of informing about the new child labour laws. A good initiative but

according to the interviews made with the adults, the laws are only written words. They are not implemented or practiced. What is the point with ratifying a convention when the articles do not get observed in the reality? CRC is a legally binding document and crime against it should be punished. If not, the whole international legal system risks getting undermined. The international system and The Committee on the Rights of the Child have got a responsibility to make sure that the rights of the child stated in CRC is enforced, why is there still such a large amount of the children in Tanzania labouring? Is this a result of irresponsible politicians? It does not matter how many written documents and regulations there are in Tanzania if no one makes an effort and a priority to fulfil its obligations. To know the underlying causes behind child labour is significant if action is to be effective, but the truth is that probably one important underlying cause behind child labour is lack of will to take action. The irresponsibility is to be found both at family, governmental and international level. It does not matter how good a convention like CRC sounds in the theory, if its articles does not observe the reality. Written documents and empty words will not change the reality for Kiros and his friends.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Even if poverty was, from the researcher's perspective, found to be the primary underlying cause behind child labour in Babati, the study found poverty on its own insufficient to explain the prevalence of child labour. The causes of child labour are much too complex to explain with only one causal factor especially when the social context is taken into account.

The children in Babati decided to start work because they had to support themselves with basic needs. A majority of the children staying with caretaker's work in order to contribute with some money to the household, but the majority of the child labourers keep the earnings themselves. The child labourers in Babati do not like to work; they would quit if they had the opportunity and attend school instead. School uniforms and lack of school lunch are two major obstacles keeping the child labourers from school. Irresponsible parents are a significant underlying cause behind child labour in Babati and lack of education among parents and low income occupations are other potential causes. Death among income earners are common and many of the children lives in household headed by one single woman- two important variables behind child labour. The study found indicators from each theory correlating with the Babati case, which underlines the finding that the poverty theory alone is not capable of explaining the prevalence of child labour. In conclusion, the problem of child labour is massive due mainly widespread poverty but also due the social context and its traditions, family dynamics, insufficient funding and inadequate implementing of important regulations as CRC.

The underlying cause of child labour from the children's own perspective is clear – they work because of reasons deriving from poverty. Some children also have got family problems. Deceased parents are one major factor behind the poverty and the children with caretakers still alive explain that they have to work because their parents or relatives are poor. The children explain that they work because they have to get money for food and other basic needs. The conclusion of research question number two is therefore - from the children's own perspective, the main cause behind their labouring is poverty. They need to work to survive

## **8. FURTHER RESEARCH**

There is a need for further research of child labour among street children. There is a tendency to focus on child labour inside the export sector which results in a approach that has little applicability outside that sector, for example on the children working on the street. More research also has to be done from a child centred perspective as no one else can explain the situation better than the child labourers themselves. The study also finds it to be important to do research about how improved school policies can change the situation for children working on the street.

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## **Interviews**

Notes during interview with the MAHOCE Manager, March 03, 2009

Notes during interview with the Social Welfare Officer at Babati District Council, February 25, 2009

Notes during interview with the Social Welfare Officer at Babati Town Council, March 04, 2009

Notes during interview with the Social Welfare Officer at Babati Regional Office February 25, 2009

## APPENDIX

### Interview questions Child labourers

1. Name and age
2. Where are you from?
3. Where do you live? And with who?
4. How long have you been working for? – Did you chose to start work yourself?
5. For how many days a week and hours a day are you working?
6. Why are you working? – Why didn't you have the money to food/clothes/school?
7. What do your parents work with?
8. Do you go to school, or have you ever attended school? – Why did you have to stop?
9. What is your parent's education?
10. If you could choose, what would you prefer, school or work?
11. What do you like about your work?
12. What do you not like about your work?
13. How much do you earn each day? – Do you keep the money for yourself?
14. What do you do with the money you earn?
15. What do you like most with your life?
16. What are your plans for the future?
17. What is your largest dream?
18. How many brothers and sisters have you got? – How many of them are older than you?
19. How is their lifesituation today?
20. How is your relationship with your parents? – Do they like that you work?
21. Would you quit working if you could?
22. Are you proud of yourself for working?

### Interview questions Social Welfare Officers and MAHOCE manager

1. Name and position
2. Do you know how the regulations concerning child labour looks like in the regulations of Babati district? Does the regulations;  
*(a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;*  
*(b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;*  
*(c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article”.*
3. Do you think the regulations of Babati protect children against economical exploitation and hazardous work?
4. Do you know how many children up to 17 years living in Babati district?
5. Do you know if child labour is common in Babati district?
6. Can you estimate how many per cent of children that are involved in child labour in Babati?
7. Are the children mostly from here or from other areas?

8. What is the most common work for children in Babati?
9. What does babati society think about child labour? Right, Wrong? Necessary? Common?
10. What is the image of childhood in Babati? What is the typical childhood? Social context?
11. What is the duty for a child to do in the household?
12. How is the respect for children?
13. Is going to school the norm, or are there other views?
14. Who has got the primary responsible for the child?
15. What do you think are the primary underlying causes making children work in Babati?
16. Can you describe a typical child labourer?
17. How are their physical and mental health?
18. What consequences do you think child labour get?
19. Do you know if there is any knowledge about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in babati?
20. Do you know if there are any projects working against child labour in the district?
21. Do you know if there is anyone ever listening to the children own views?

### **Interview questions Adults**

1. Name, age?
2. Where are you from, where do you stay?
3. How many children have you got? Age? Sex?
4. What are they doing, studying or working? – If they work, why?
5. What do they work with? – Difference between girls/boys?
6. At what age did they start to work?
7. Why did they start to work? What do you think about it?
8. How many hours/week do they work?
9. Do you know if it is common that children work in Babati?
10. What do you think about children that work?
11. What do you think is the primary cause making children work in Babati?
12. In what age did your children start to help you in the household?
13. What do you think the duty for a child is to do for the household?
14. How many hours/day does your children help you at home?
15. How many hours is it ok for the child to play each day?
16. Do you think it is important for a child to attend school?
17. When do you think your child is old enough to take care of him/herself?
18. What is your education? – Your wife's/husbands education?
19. Do you know if there are any laws against child labour?