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Tamperen yliopiston
Sociaalipoliitikan ja sosiaalityön laitos
Sosiaalityön pro gradu- tutkielma
Tammiku 2007
ACRONYMS

ADPP- Ajuda do Povo para povo [Humana People to People]

DECC, Maputo - Direction of Education and Culture of Maputo City

FDC- Fundação para o Desenvolvimento Comunitário [Community Development Foundation]

FRELIMO- Frente de Libertação de Moçambique [Mozambique Liberation Front]

IASSW- International Association of Social Work

IFSW- International Federation of Social Work

IMF- International Monetary Fund

INE- Instituto Nacional de Estatística [National Institute of Statistics]

MISAU- Ministério da Saúde [Ministry of Health]

MMCAS- Ministerio da Mulher e Coordenação da Ação Social [Ministry of Women and Coordination of Social Action]

NGO- Non Governmental Organization

NSPCC- National Society for the Prevention of Child Cruelty

PRE- Economic Readjustment Programs

PREs- Economic and Social Readjustment Programs

RENAMO- Resistência Nacional de Moçambique [Mozambique National Resistance]

UNICEF- United Nations Infancy Funds

UNDP- United Nations Development Program

UNHCR- United Nations Refugee Agency
UN- United Nations

USA- United States of America
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Tarja Pösö for your incalculable support during the process of elaboration of this study. Your support was as the oxygen in the atmosphere.

To all street children who have agreed in sharing their lives with me, sharing their happy and unhappy moments on the street was one of the most interesting moments of my life.

To Anna Metteri my truly thankfulness for your support when I needed and for all you have done for me during difficult moments and as well happy times. I’m not able expressed by words how glad I’m; only my heart can tell.

To Leena Kurki, Tuula Heinonen and Perti Hautaniemi, I address my deep thankfulness for your comments and support on the research.

To Seija Mietinen, Satu-Ranta Tyrko, Paula Ristimaki, Irene Roivainen, Are, Seija, Paula Palin, Hanelle Forsberg, Leena Eerasari, and all teachers of the department of social policy and social work who direct or indirectly have given me their support and trust and hope to my dreams, and for your empowerment, by teaching me all I know. Thank you for your positive energies.

To Nesse, Kyra, and Shaazia, my lovely family, my thankfulness for your love and care when I needed, even from here so far away.

To my mother Maria and my close friends I address my thanks for your moral support.

Finally, I dedicate this work to the memory of my lovely father Lazaro.

This thesis would not have been possible without the help of all of you.

I’m aware that this research has plenty of limitations meaning that these results are not conclusive neither applicable for all contexts of street children.
SUMMARY

Mozambique has lived 16 years of horrible civil war, which has taken away millions of innocent lives. During this reality, many children lost their parents, and became orphans and the safest place for these children was the streets of the principal cities, where the war had not reached yet.

In that context, it was understandable the increasing number of street children in Mozambican cities streets. This work deals with the dilemma of the fact that, after 15 years of peace, marked by the signature of peace accordance in 1992 by Government and Renamo forces, the number of street children still increases, and at the same time a certain level of apathy by governmental institutions dealing with the issue. In this extend, this work looks after to understand which are the factors which lead children to live on streets in this context of peace, which are their challenges in their everyday lives and which has been the response given by government in terms of social policies and social work practice to give support to these children and to reduce this tendency.

This work is presented in a historical perspective in order to analyze and understand the historical background of social policies and social work practice in Mozambique where are identified five principal stages of social policies and social work practices namely: The colonial period, the post independent period, the Economic Readjustment Program (PRE) period, the Economic and Social Readjustment period (PRES) and the post civil war period. All together, these periods explain the actual situation of social welfare state in Mozambique and its influence on Social work practice.

Theoretically, in this work is used the Structuration theory developed by Anthony Giddens, since that this approach gives us tools to understand how policies, legislation, programs and projects, understood as structures, influence individuals’ actions and how individuals influence structures at the same time producing their everyday life throughout their history. From this perspective it is possible to analyze the process of social change on social work practice for child welfare, by analysing the influence of policies and economic statement that Mozambique has been facing, and how this influences the social work practice. From this it is also possible to analyze the actual situation of street children in Mozambique and as well to
understand its historical overview, in how structural changes have influenced the actual street children and how this is influencing social work practitioners to provide basic services for street children in general.

Methodologically, this work uses a qualitative approach, where the dialectic view acts in the level of meanings and structures, where structures are understood as objective human actions full of meanings. To make it possible, research techniques based in a case study where used in an integrated perspective of their complementarities. The principal techniques used are: literature review, interviews and a participant observation including life stories.

As principal findings from the field work street children’s situations is worsening in Mozambique, and that the principal factor for their decision to live on streets is related to domestic violence associated to the fact that they are mostly orphans from one or both parents making a great effort to survive on their own. In most cases a growing number is forced to live on the streets or to earn an income as street workers, where they develop many and different activities to survive.

In Mozambique, there are many and very good defined social policies concerning to child rights and child welfare, that if well implemented, the situation of street children could reduce or even to finish. But, even with these policies, there is no institutional capacity to put those policies in practice, first due to the lack of professionals in social work, low financial capacity and inexistence of social work institutions.

In this perspective, we can affirm that there is a big gap between social policies and social work practice associated to the institutional incapacity to solve the issue.

As a solution proposal, we address community based social work as an alternative for Mozambique, since that there is lack of financial, institutional and human resources to develop social work practice, where education can be the basic feature to be developed by promoting empowerment to communities and developing in them the capacity to deal themselves with the problematic situation of child rights and child protection.
Abstract

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In Mozambique, the 16 years civil war had a deep and direct impact on women and children’s lives, where families were displaced and family integrity became in a deep chaos. Mozambican government, based on international statements of children's rights and human rights, has been implementing projects and developing actions to promote child welfare and to restore family integrity destroyed during the war. This has been done with the collaboration of different international institutions and NGO’s. After 14 years of post civil war many actions took place to promote family integrity in Mozambique, but the street children is continuously an increasing phenomenon in urban areas of Mozambique. In my master’s thesis research on street children, I discussed the relation between social work practices and social policies in Mozambique and their effectiveness on street children welfare. The aim of this research was to identify the main factors for the increasing number of street children and to analyse the effectiveness of social policies and social work practices for child welfare in actual context. Using Human agency approach I analyzed the past and present role of social work practice for child welfare in Mozambique, and its challenges for future social work practices for child welfare. Empirical data was gathered in a qualitative research perspective, using participant observation, interviews to street children, to social workers in Mozambique, and to governmental workers related to child welfare and as well a bibliographical review. My findings show that there is a gap between institutional practice and social policies defined for child welfare; domestic violence, child labour and orphaned situation of children are the main factors influencing children to decide to live on streets. Community based social work is proposed as alternative to promote child rights and child protection in Mozambique.

Key Words: Social work practice, social policy child welfare, street children.
I live on the street

I have been burnt by the sun
I have been wet by the rain
I have been there on the street

In the cold nights
Under the cover of the sky
The branch is my bed

In the sunny days
Under the angry eyes of the world
Under the sorrow of the world
Containers are my plates

In the rainy nights
My hope is my umbrella
My dreams are my hopes

I have no where to go
But I have where to live
At least street is better
Than the grave of violence at home

I live on the street

By Marrengula Miguel (2006)
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1 Introduction

During the 16 years civil war in Mozambique, many of us lost our parents, our relatives, our “protectors”. Most of us (especially children and women) had no where to go, had nothing to do, had nobody to be looked after by. It was a period of social, economical, political and moral chaos … total crisis! Sleeping on the street was not a surprise, to eat from trash, and to fight with your friends just for a piece of bread from a container of trash was normal. This is what I always remember when I walk trough Maputo’s streets and I look to street children lying down in the ground by the morning time, with a cold weather; eating some rests of food from trash containers; smoking tobacco and drugs without fear or assistance of nobody and I remember… how hard was 14 years ago…during the civil war…it is surely still hard for them too.

Most interesting is to look around and notice that no one cares about such a situation, it is “normal”; it became one of “normal” pictures of people’s everyday life. Some give to these children names, make them work for them hardly, and argue…“this is the only way to help you”. Others, just kick them away… insult them… beat them…“they are just demons”, they argue!

These issues developed in me the interest in making a research about the situation of street children in Mozambique, in which I would understand the factors of the increasing number of street children and the roles of governmental institutions regarding to this issue. “Social work practice for child welfare in Mozambique- The case of street children in Maputo city: ‘BAIXA’- 1975-2006” is the theme I decided to define as matching to my intensive curiosity.

It is my general aim in this study, to understand the actual situation of social work practice for child welfare. In this general goal, I distinctively draw as specific goals to analyse the trends of Social policies and social work practice in Mozambique throughout the history; to analyse the role of social work practice for child welfare; to identify factors which lead children to live in streets; and to identify actions that are being taken into practice to provide street children’s welfare;

To make this approach possible I address some questions such as: What are the principal factors for the increasing number of street children in Maputo? ; What kind
of challenges do street children face in their daily lives? Are there social policies which promote social work practice for street children and children in general? How are these policies being implemented? Which are the main challenges for Social work practice concerning child welfare?

Somehow, the central question for this research is summarized as follows: Which is the role played by social work institutions and social policies to promote street children’s welfare?

Based on this question, this study presents two features, to be a descriptive approach and at the same time an exploratory research, since that there is a lack of research in this issue in Mozambican context and at the same time tries to illuminate the type and extend of social work practices in this context. Hypothetically the answer for this question can be addressed as follows:

1. There are different factors which lead children to live on the streets, and the principal ones are related to family decomposition and family abuse to children;
2. Street children face in their daily lives, different social risks and discrimination by the entire society;
3. In Mozambique, social policies do not have any impact on street children’s lives and there is a large gap between institutional social work practices and social policies.

Social work “is socially constructed activity”, says Payne (1991:7) to refer that it can be understood in a cultural and social context of participants. Citing Rein & White (1981:37) he refers that “the knowledge must be developed in the living situations that are confronted by contemporary episodes in the field”.

There have been many and different research on this field and specifically on child welfare. Unfortunately, there still exists a very large gap of information on street children social work practice. In Mozambique, few signs of social work practice related to child welfare can be seen and very little research has been taking place on this issue. This becomes obvious if you have a look at the increasing number of street children and their conditions which might be getting worse. In this sense I suppose that this research will give a featuring of the actual situation on child welfare in Mozambique and as well will provide a source of information on street children’s

social situation, from which can be developed new issues for a better practice on child welfare. From this practice, I hope that child rights will be reconsidered and implemented in a more deep perspective reducing in a certain point of view the tendency of discriminating children, in poor situations and looking forward for a better placement process of exposed children.

Historical overview is written in order to analyze and understand the past and present background of social policies and social work practice in Mozambique where I identify five principal stages of social policies and social work practices namely: The colonial period, the post independent period, the Economic Readjustment Program (PRE) period, the Economic and Social Readjustment period (PRES) and the post civil war period. All together, these periods explain the actual situation of social welfare state in Mozambique and its influence on Social work practice.

I delimitate my approach on the period 1975 - 2006, in order to analyse social policies being implemented by Mozambican government since the independence period for child welfare. Somehow, it is not viable to develop such approach without going trough the antecedent historical period, the colonial domination period which easily provide an insight for the following period. In this sense I refer briefly to this period as a contextualizing element to my discussion.

The data for this study was gathered by the use of a qualitative research perspective where I applied techniques as literature reviews, participant observations and life stories, and interviews. Results of this research are presented in form of deployments in order to give those children an opportunity to tell about their experiences.
2 Conceptual framework

In this chapter I discuss the principal concepts used in the core text of this document, looking forward to understand different definitions of concepts like street children, social work practices and child welfare. These three concepts are the essence of this study and have different approaches according to the context of research and to the sensibility researchers have in its use.

2.1.1 The concept of Street children

The concept of street children is so vast and complex that it may be controversial and even constitute a source of conflicts amongst different approaches working with the issue. It is difficult to find a unique definition for this concept, since that in most cases it must be understood according to the context in which it is used and as well according to the perspective of its usage. In this perspective Hautaniemi (1999:15) says that “defining street children is vague and needs a far more specific definition”.

In some research approaches, the process of categorization takes place as an analytic view in understanding street children’s everyday lives. “The eye of the tourist do not necessarily recognise the shifting experiences in the street children’s lives that explicated in two simple research categories: ‘children on the streets’ are distinguished from ‘children of the street’. These categories implies the degree of the contact with children and their families in one hand, and the degree of relationship with the daily activities and work outside their homes, on the other (Onta, 1996:175 quoted by Hautaniemi 1999:15)

For Onta (1996), “‘children on the street’ usually work on the street where they might spend few days but still live with their families. ‘Children of the street’ work and live on the street spending time in shelters, in the rented room of friends, and go home to their parents occasionally. Yet, individual children constantly move between these two categories”. The concept given by Onta (1996) in Hautaniemi (1999:15) is in certain point of view a very important element in discerning and establishing analytic categories. But it doesn’t cover out the idea of street children in the understanding of this study, since that there are children without parents, without relatives, without anywhere to go. In which category can we put those? Since that for him, both
‘children on the street’ and ‘children of the street’ have the possibility to go home one day. It is important also to reflect on those children who do not have any contact with their relatives, those who do not have any parent’s home to go one day, those who do not have any home to go at all.


For him, **throw-away** “children are completely abandoned and neglected by their parents or caregivers; they do not have any contact with their biological families and depending totally on themselves and their ‘street family’ for any kind of protection physical and psychological” and **Run-away** “children are all those children who have ran away from their homes due to deprivation, physical or sexual abuse, alcohol abuse and general peer pressure to join the ‘perceived’ freedom that street life seems to offer” (Tudorié-Ghemo, 2005).

In other hand Rehman quoted by Tsotetsi (1998) refers to **slum children** as “a group of street children belonging to ‘slum families’ that live in areas of squalor. Slum children are those children whose mothers are usually domestic workers and spend long hours away from their children, who are then left to look after themselves resulting in them roaming the streets during the day” (Tsotetsi, 1998 in Tudorié-Ghemo, 2005).

**Dump children**, are defined by Keen (1988) as those children “who live on rubbish dumps and scavenge for food daily; and bush children those who live in the bush and are often from homeless families” (Keen, 1988 cited by Tudorié-Ghemo, 2005).

Those categories presented by Tudorié-Ghemo, (2005) are as well problematic, since that the differences between these categories are not clear. What is the real reason of becoming a dump, a slum, a run away or bush children? Which are the differences between all those children?

Generally Onta’s (1996:175) and Richter (1988) are similar in summarising street children in two categories as *‘Children on the Street’* and as *Children of the street’*. 
For Richter (1988) ‘children on the street’ are those children who work on the street as a way to supplement their biological family income but who return home in the evenings. As Tsotetsi, (1998) refers, the biological family encourages these children to make money by begging or prostituting themselves (Tsotetsi, 1998 in Tudorié-Ghemo, 2005).

‘Children of the Street’ are for Richter (1988), Onta (1996) in Hautaniemi (1999), and UNICEF, all those children who live and work on the street, using it as a means of food and shelter. Normally, as De Moura (2002) quoted by Tudorié-Ghemo (2005) says, those children where abandoned by their relatives or sent away by their families, and therefore live without family support. “Their family is reconstructed on the street by companions of other street children with whom they work together for the survival of their substitute family unit” (Barrette, 1995).

These definitions are designed according to children’s activities and origins and as well the time they spend on the street. In many cases, they are given specific names, as deviant individuals, as outsiders, as criminals and dangerous for the society. Barrette (1995) presents some of the designations street children receive from society as “a lost generation, hooligans, ‘good-for-nothings’, thieves, violent youngsters, nuisances and parasites” (Barrette, 1995: 4).

More recently, UNICEF has attempted to address the ‘definition problem’ by grouping all children as ‘urban youths at risk’ (Kapadia, 1997 in Tudorié-Ghemo, 2005). In this regard, they define ‘working children’ as all children who work in the city streets or elsewhere. The term ‘street children’ is addressed to a limited number of children who have been abandoned by their families and for whom the streets have become their homes (Barker & Knaul, 1991 in Tudorié-Ghemo, 2005) and includes deviant behaviour, drug abuse, theft and violence as descriptions under this classification (Cosgrove, 1990; Lusk, 1992 in Tudorié-Ghemo, 2005).

The process of defining street children is a process of reconstructing stereotypes, negative images and categories, numbering and labelling human beings. The social construction of street children, as (Payne, 1991) says is portrayed as socially unacceptable individuals. It is believed that these discourses operate to reinforce and
maintain the street children’s existence on the margins of societies even further. Moreover, street children are constructed differently in different contexts of practice.

Ennew (2003) has emphasised the importance of understanding the lives and roles of children in any cultural context where she asserts that children in different cultural contexts have different experiences of childhoods and it is necessary to understand them according to their history and culture.

Cosgrove (1990) defines street children as “any individual under the age of majority whose behaviour is predominantly at variance with ‘community norms’ for behaviour and whose primary support for his/her developmental needs is not a family or family substitute” (Cosgrove, 1990:192).

Hecht (1998) explored another level of definition by looking on how street children see themselves in relation to their families and society in general. He refers that “in many countries it is normal for children to work in the street, dance in the street, beg in the street, sleep in the street (…) the street is the venue for their actions not the essence of their character” (Hecht, 1998: 103).

Panter-Brick (2002) argues that the portrayal of street children only according to a physical and/or social dimension is just too narrow perspective (Panter-Brick, 2002). In this way, Lucchini (1997) extends the definition into further seven dimensions of a street child system, namely, dynamic behaviour (the types of activities), self-identification, motivation vis-à-vis street life, and gender-structured differential access to street environments, including spatial, temporal and social elements as well (Lucchini, 1997).

This discussion shows us that there is a variety of definitions that have been given to street children all over the world and through out the history, according to the context and to the approach each ones follow. For purposes of this study, the multifaceted nature of the concept of street children is taken in account basing my position to the fact that the concept is determined by the context in which it is used as Payne (1991) and Ennew (2003) show us in their discussion. The diversity of conceptual frames shows that precise definitions cannot be clearly demarcated. I focus my attention to street children in relation to their lifestyle which lead them as uniquely characteristic of street life. In this sense, by street children I mean those children for whom the
street more than their family has become their real “loved” home. **Street children** in this approach are children without home, who live on the street – in particular, those who are not taken care of by their parents or other adults and relatives. **Street children** for this purpose live in abandoned buildings, containers, old automobiles, parks, or on the street itself and do not have any minimal contact with their relatives and formal institutions for care.

The public view of street children in Mozambique is overwhelmingly negative; they are normally called “*molwene*” or “*marginais*”, as a way to reinforce their “dangerous”, character for the society and to show up that they are non place children with a “horrific” behaviour.

### 2.1.2 The concept of Social work practice

According to IFSW (2002) “the social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work”.

“Social work in its various forms addresses the multiple, complex transactions between people and their environments. Its mission is to enable all people to develop their full potential, enrich their lives, and prevent dysfunction. Professional social work is focused on problem solving and change. As such, social workers are change agents in society and in the lives of the individuals, families and communities they serve. Social work is an interrelated system of values, theory and practice” ([http://www.ifsw.org/en/p38000208.html](http://www.ifsw.org/en/p38000208.html)).

In the same extend, Heinonen and Spearman (2001:1/2) defines Social work in two dimensions: as **Helping profession** and as **Social change aimed profession**.

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1. *Molwene* is an expression from local language (Changana/Xichangana) and it means useless, without anything, or extremely poor.
2. *Marginal* is an out of law, outsider, under law, living on the margins of the social life.
**As a helping profession**, Social work is a problem solving process based on “a purposeful set of values and assumptions and a broad set of knowledge about human and social behaviour, the social environment, the connections between people and the environment, and methods of helping” (idem), and this is what gives a Social worker a possibility to identify a client’s problems, understand them, and then engage with the client in a process to solve the identified problems.

Since that social work practice takes place in a specific context of social policies reflected in legislation, social workers need to understand and use legal statements for their practice. “Most agencies, public and private alike, operate within a framework of social policies that refer to family, health, criminal justice, child welfare, mental health, and many other fields; social workers need to understand and analyze social policies which are relevant for their practices” (Heinonen and Spearman, 2001:2).

**As a social change aimed profession**, social work practice deals with specific policies which support its practice, but somehow, these policies must be integrated to the context of the problem and somehow be changed according to the situational practice. “The other part of social work/social policy equation involves knowing how to facilitate social change almost always involves influencing policy” (Heinonen and Spearman, 2001:2)

According to IASSW & IFSW (2004) social work, in various parts of the world, is targeted at interventions for social support and for developmental, protective, preventive and/or therapeutic purposes. In this sense the following core purposes of social work have been identified:

- Facilitate the inclusion of marginalised, socially excluded, dispossessed, vulnerable and at-risk groups of people.  

- Address and challenge barriers, inequalities and injustices that exist in society.

- Form short and longer-term working relationships with and mobilise individuals, families, groups, organisations and communities to enhance their well-being and their problem-solving capacities.

- Assist and educate people to obtain services and resources in their

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3 Such concepts lack clear definition. Persons who fall into the categories of being ‘marginalized’, ‘socially’ ‘excluded’, ‘dispossessed’, ‘vulnerable’ and/or ‘at risk’ may be so defined by individual countries and/or regions.
• Formulate and implement policies and programmes that enhance people’s well-being, promote development and human rights, and promote collective social harmony and social stability, insofar as such stability does not violate human rights.

• Encourage people to engage in advocacy with regard to pertinent local, national, regional and/or international concerns.

• Act with and/or for people to advocate the formulation and targeted implementation of policies that are consistent with the ethical principles of the profession.

• Act with and/or for people to advocate changes in those policies and structural conditions that maintain people in marginalised, dispossessed and vulnerable positions, and those that infringe the collective social harmony and stability of various ethnic groups, insofar as such stability does not violate human rights.

• Work towards the protection of people who are not in a position to do so themselves, for example children and youth in need of care and persons experiencing mental illness or mental retardation, within the parameters of accepted and ethically sound legislation.

• Engage in social and political action to impact social policy and economic development, and to effect change by critiquing and eliminating inequalities.

• Enhance stable, harmonious and mutually respectful societies that do not violate people’s human rights.

• Promote respect for traditions, cultures, ideologies, beliefs and religions amongst different ethnic groups and societies, insofar as these do not conflict with the fundamental human rights of people.

• Plan, organise, administer and manage programmes and organisations dedicated to any of the purposes delineated above (IASSW & IFSW; 2004).

### 2.1.3 The concept of Child welfare state

The concept of "welfare state" is widely used to refer to an ideal model of provision in which the state accepts the responsibility for the provision of comprehensive and universal welfare for all citizens. Welfare State can also be defined as actions and policies traced by the government to guaranty better conditions of life on its citizens
in such areas as social security, housing, health, education, etc. Child welfare is part of welfare state, focusing basically on child wellbeing.

When referring to child welfare, the concept of Child care is the central concept, to express the act of caring for and supervising minor children. It is traditional practice in most western society for children to be looked after by one or both of their parents, but the need for two-job households means that child care is often delegated, at least part of the time, to childminders. In cases where parents are missing or dead, or unable or unfit to care for children, state agencies such as social services may take on the childcare role.

However, for many the use of paid childcare is a matter of choice with arguments raging on both sides about whether children suffer or not. There is no doubt that for all children the first few years are vitally important to form a basis for good education, morality, self discipline and social integration. Consistency of approach, discipline and carer have been shown in some studies to improve the chances of a child reaching his or her full potential, but the jury is still out on whether there are demonstrable benefits of a parent or full time family carer over paid childcare.

Many organisations (in the developed world) campaign for free or subsidised childcare for all, others campaign for tax breaks or allowances to allow parents a non-finance driven choice. Most countries have laws relating to childcare, which seek to prevent and punish child abuse. In many societies, particularly in developing countries, the childcare role is taken on by the extended family. http://dictionary.laborlawtalk.com/child_care

Child protection refers to the act of preserving children from abuse (sexual, labour, domestic violence, etc) by promoting their rights and or addressing policies for their placement in order to guarantee a safe environment for them. It is not a recent issue, having a very long historical trajectory, and with deep influence of political statements. Harry Ferguson in Protecting Children in Time discusses the child protection issues in a socio-historical account of child protection practice from 1870 to the present time taking as main sources the archives of the NSPCC in Stockton in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and the child protection work carried out by social workers in Dublin in 1996.
Taking case material from these studies and using the work of modernist sociological theorists such as Giddens, Beck and Urry, Ferguson (2004) has produced a multi-dimensional account of child protection practice in different eras, with a view to developing an understanding of why this work now takes the form that it does and also why it is such a contentious area of activity for social work professionals.

According to Ferguson (2004: 18-19) “the essence of child protection practice today does not differ greatly from the work carried out by the NSPCC inspectors between 1890 and 1914. The fundamental concern to intervene in families to protect vulnerable children, either by influencing the behaviour of their parents or, in extreme circumstances, by removing them to a safer environment, remains unchanged over time. What has changed is the environment in which this practice has taken place, in terms of time, space, technology and social thinking about risk, individualism, child deaths and family politics”.

The NSPCC founded in 1875 was, according to Ferguson (2004:30-33), “a product of a need to bring greater order to urban family life, scarred and disrupted as it was by the demands of industrialization throughout most of the 19th century. Much of the work of NSPCC inspectors at this time involved visiting families who were living in grossly deprived and unsanitary conditions, cajoling and supporting mothers to be more responsible in the care of their children and encouraging fathers to be more industrious and better family providers”.

“Child deaths among the families visited were commonplace – for instance in 1912, 1255 children on NSPCC caseloads died. Ferguson notes that there was no sense at this time that professionals were to blame for not preventing these deaths. Such was the extent of deprivation that they were not considered to be preventable (Idem: 34-38).

Ferguson (2004) shows that from 1914 onwards, the improvement of social and material conditions, influenced changes on the focus of child protection work gradually, with greater emphasis being placed on helping mothers, in particular, to respond to the psychological needs of their children. “In this period and, right through to 1970, child deaths, though far less in number than in the early days, were still substantially higher than today. These deaths were not publicized as they are now and
professionals dealing with child abuse and neglect carried out their work relatively free from criticism” (opere.cite).

In the late modern era, there has been a dramatic turnaround. “The protection that professions experienced before 1970 disappeared with the ‘new’ child abuse discovered by Henry Kempe in the USA. Post-Maria Colwell, a formal, relatively elaborate framework was established to manage and control child protection work. Reliance on individual professional workers lessened” (Ibidem, 2004: 4 and 89).

Ferguson (2004) notes that professional expertise was seen as one of the causes of problems as well as a source of solutions; these developments reflected shifts in the wider society in which increased anxiety about risk seemed to grow along with technological and managerial developments designed to reduce it. In the field of child abuse, this resulted in the expectation that all children should be safe and protected. Ironically, therefore, despite the fact that they were far less frequent than in previous eras, all child deaths from abuse became unacceptable, and, where they occurred, professionals with responsibility for protecting children were much more likely to be held publicly accountable via the mechanism of the public inquiry.

In the mid 90s a sharp contrast between the practice and the mechanistic systems-dependent practice portrayed in *Messages from the Research* (Department of Health, 1995). Ferguson (2004) writes of social workers working creatively and reflexively with children and parents faced with choices about their own identities and life pathways.

In my point of view, this position seems hard to fit with some of the entrenched, disorganized and deprived families that social workers meet in child protection work, more specifically in developing countries such as Mozambique. What kind of choices of identities and pathways a social worker will enhance in a poor family where there is nothing to eat and no work to do? Where the main challenge is to wake up in the morning to and distribute children into corners to sell something in order to bring home some food for them as what happens in Mozambique? In which extend we can talk about children’s choices and paramount?

Nevertheless, social work’s commitment to anti-discriminatory practice, particularly in relation to women and children, and its pioneering, though much vilified,
contribution to raising awareness of child sexual abuse, are deservedly highlighted. Ferguson refers that it is important to develop “a psycho-social approach to child protection work, the provision of more therapeutic support for victims of child abuse and less reliance on systems and procedures”. (Ferguson, 2004:19)

3 Child welfare state in Mozambique- A historical overview

In this chapter I look forward to describe the historical overview of child welfare in Mozambique. Before going deep to the issue of child welfare in Mozambique I start by describing the general view and development of child welfare perspectives and then I integrate these perspectives alongside the history of Mozambique according to the political and economical context. Four principal child protection perspectives are described here in this chapter such as: Laissez-faire, state paternalist, the modern defence of the birth family and parent’s rights, and child rights and child defence perspectives.

The historical overview of child welfare is integrated in 5 specific periods: the colonial period, the post independent period, the Economic Readjustment Program (PRE) period, the Economic and Social Readjustment period (PRES) and the post civil war period.

3.1 Describing Child protection perspectives- General overview

Harding (1997) refer that the “concepts of state’s role in relation to children hinge partly on underling values- values to do with children, with adults as parents, with family as unit, with welfare and suffering, and with the state itself” (Harding, 1997: 9).
3.1.1 Laissez-faire and patriarchy/ minimalism

Broadly identified with the 19th century but has enjoyed some renaissance in the late 20th century, is the view that power in the family should not be disturbed except in very extreme circumstances, and the role of the state should be a minimal one.

Laissez-faire/ minimalism are the views that “the role of the state in child care should be minimal one, while the privacy and sanctity of the parent-child relationship should be respected. In extreme cases of poor parental care, state intervention is not only acceptable but preferable of strong and authoritative kind, transferring the child to a secure placement with new set of parent figures. Patriarchy- is the power of adult males over women and children, particularly of the ‘private’ sort, that is in the family” (Harding, 1997: 10).

According to Harding (opera cite), the Laissez-faire perspective is fulfilled by the following elements: “State should in general keep out of certain ‘private’ areas of citizen’s lives, with restricted exceptions. Citizens have- or should have- strong rights held against the state. Domestic and family life, the home and hearth, are seen as relatively private arena which should not be invaded by agents of the state except with due cause, such cause usually being associated with criminality. Personal relationships are in general no business of the states; adults are powerful in relation to children and men in relation to women. This power is partly based on generally superior physical size and strength, but is also, clearly, socially and legally structured and determined. One aspect of such male and adult power would be the relative economic dependence of women and children; other would be legal provisions which allot children, in particular, a less independent status; and other aspects would include institutions such as labour and housing markets, political institutions, education and social security systems, as well as social norms and attitudes, and informal sanctions. A strong emphasis on the value of not intervening directly in the family via the state will mean in practice that family power will lie where it falls according to various other institutions and practices, and where it falls, on the whole, is on adults, and, particularly, on men in their role as husbands/partners and fathers/stepfathers. (Harding, 1997:10-11)
In this sense a belief in the benefits for society of a minimum state, a state which engages in only minimal intervention in families. A weaker state entails stronger families, freer individuals, and is generally advantageous, and a complementary belief in the value to all, including children, of undisturbed family life where adults can get on with bringing up their children in their chosen way. “Where extreme cases occur, the function of the state is to find a new, permanent, secure home for the child, with severance of contact with the family of origin, the state, having intervened authoritatively in this way, then withdraws, according the new home the same autonomy as the original home” (Harding 1997:12).

The idea that paternal power should not be interfered with because of its’ ‘natural’ and God-given quality, is the main link between laissez-faire perspective with patriarchy in societies where men has greater power than women. Goldstain et al (1979:3) cited by Harding (1997) note that “the law distinguishes between adults and children, with the law for adults being by and large designed to safeguard their right to order their personal affairs free of government intrusion, while for children, who are presumed to be not fully competent to safeguard their interest but dependent on adults, the state ‘seeks to assure each child membership in a family with at least one such adult whom the law designates “parent”’ (Harding, 1997). The degree of state intervention in parent-child relationships varies, but the traditional goals of such intervention have been to serve ‘the best interests of the child’.

For Goldstain et al (1979:3), while the decision-makers have recognized the need to protect the child's physical well-being, they have not understood, or have undervalued, the need to safeguard psychological well-being. They state 2 basic points for the need to safeguard child’s need for continuity, and therefore safeguard the right of parents to raise their children as they see fit, free of government intrusion except in cases of neglect and abandonment: a) the law must make the child’s needs paramount (being society’s best interest), and the value preference for privacy and minimum state intervention (Goldstain, 1973 quoted by Harding, 1997).

In this sense, Goldstain et al (1979:3) refer to 5 points decision-makers must take in account for child placement in a new family: “Placement decisions should safeguard the child’s need for continuity, placement decisions should reflect child’s, not adult’s sense of time. Speedy decision-taking is thus more important the younger the child,
placement decisions must take in account the law’s incapacity to supervise inter-personal relationship and the limits of knowledge to make long-term predictions, placement should provide at least detrimental alternative for safeguarding the child’s growth and development, the child in any contested placement should have full party status and the right to be represented by the council” (Goldstain et al 1979:3 in Harding, Op. cite).

Seven important points are to be observed in order to see if the placement is necessary:

1- Where a parent has asked the state to terminate their relation, or to determine custody;
2- Where psychological bonds existed between long-term parental caretaker and a child, and the caretaker sought to retain or to become the legal parent;
3- The death, disappearance, hospitalization or imprisonment of parents, together with their failure to make provision for the child’s care;
4- The parent’s conviction of a sexual offence against the child, also seen as a gross failure of care, producing emotional harm;
5- Serious bodily injury, interpreted narrowly. Where such harm has been inflicted by the parent, parental rights should be terminated, and the child should be placed elsewhere;
6- Failure to authorise medical care, but only where denial of such care would result in death and where supplying such care would give child chance of normal life or life worth living;
7- Where the child needs legal assistance and parents request it or there is an establishment of any of the other grounds for modifying or terminating parental relationships.

Morris et al (1980:127) evince concern for ‘parents’ civil liberties and call for less compulsory state intervention. Parental autonomy in child-rearing must be respected…there is no “proper” way to raise children.

For this statement, Morris et al (1980) in Harding (1997) propose six basic principles for intervention with non-offending children as follows: “The principle of respect for family autonomy, the principle of voluntary services. Help should be given in non compulsory basis to assist parents to keep their children, the principle of limited intervention in the lives of children and families, the principle of least restrictive alternative. Where there is a case for compulsory intervention, such intervention should minimize disruption and promote the child-family relationship, the principle of the parties’ right to legal representation (child vs. parents vs. state), and the principle of visibility and accountability of decision-making (Harding, 1997:17-18).

Taylor, Lacey and Bracken (1979:31) address that “no child should be received into care or committed to the care of local authority unless it has been previously determined that such a course of action constitutes the least restrictive, or least detrimental available alternative. (Taylor, Lacey & Bracken 1979:31 in Harding, 1997: 118-19)

Wald (1976:87) in Harding (1997) refers that “coercive societal intervention should be premised upon specific harms to a child, not on the basis of parental conduct” and it would only be permitted for specific harms such as: “injury causing disfigurement, impairment of bodily functioning or severe bodily harm, or the substantial likelihood of this, serious emotional damage where the parents are unwilling or unable to provide or permit necessary treatment, sexual abuse by member of the household, and the need for medical treatment to prevent serious physical harm where the parents are unwilling or unable to provide or permit this” (Harding,1997: 19).

This perspective is associated particularly with the 1970s, while finding expression also in the 1980s.
3.1.2 State paternalism and child protection

Associated with the growth of state intervention in welfare in the late 19th and 20th centuries; Here extensive state intervention to protect and care for children is legitimated, but state intervention itself may be authoritarian and biological family bonds undervalued. Good quality substitute care is favoured when the care of biological parents is found to be inadequate (Harding, 1997: 9).

This perspective presents as basic elements of child rights as follows: “the state not only have the duty to intervene where there is inadequate care or suspicion of it, but also the capacity to provide something better for the child. The state decision-makers (courts and social workers) are seen as able to make sound and valid assessments of what would be the best for the child. Substitute care through adoption and (secure) fostering is also positively valued. Those parents who do not bring up their children ‘well’ cannot expect to keep them. When they fail, state power should be readily and extensively used to provide something better for the children. This would be an adoptive or secure long-term foster home. The original satisfactory parents would then tend to be excluded from the child’s life and would lose their rights. The state has much broader role and would act authoritatively at much lower threshold of parental mistreatment; the focus is very much on the child as a separate individual rather than the parents or the (birth) family as a unit. Other possible terms for this position are the child Salvationist or child rescue approach” (Harding, 1997: 40-42).

3.1.3 The modern defence of the birth family and parent’s rights

Associated more with the expansion of welfare states in the post II world war period, it is to be distinguished from laissez-faire in that state intervention is legitimated, but this intervention is seen as ideally of supportive kind, helping to defend and preserve birth families. Poorer and socially deprived parents are seen as often victims of heavy-handed state action, rather than- as they should be- objects of help and support (Harding, 1997: 9).

Seen as pro-birth family perspective, encapsulates the idea that birth or biological families are important both for children and parents, and should be maintained
wherever possible; where families have to be separate, links should usually be kept out. State is seen as ideally, supportive of families, providing various services that they need to remain together. Class, poverty and deprivation are seen as important elements in child care, explaining much of what occurs in child care field (Idem, 1997:70)

The main elements of this perspective are traced by Harding (1997) as follows: the value of both biological and psychological bonds for individuals. The original biological family is perceived as being of unique value and as being, for the vast majority of children, the optimum context of their growth, upbringing and development; biological bonds are very important for child’s development as well; there is great sensitivity in this perspective to the needs of parents for their children, and to the sense of loss of parents whose children pass into the care of the state and to substitute families. There is an emphasis on parents as people in their own rights; prefers an extensive role of state, not in separating children from parents or providing substitute care, but in providing support for families so that children do not need substitute care. The state should be active in helping families and maintaining links between children with their families, so that the children can return home again. Favours extensive state intervention but nor of coercive kind; birth families should be supported in their caring role; children should not enter substitute care except as a last resort or on ‘shared care’ basis (Ibidem, 1997: 83-84).

### 3.1.4 Children’s rights and child liberation

In its extreme form, is more marginal to law and policy, but has been influential in some times and places and is apparently becoming increasingly so in the last decade of 20th century. The perspective advocates the child as a subject, as an independent person with rights which, at extreme, are similar to the rights of the adult. Children are to be freed from adult oppression by being granted a more adult status (Harding, 1997: 9).

This perspective is highlighted by the following elements: emphasis is on the child’s own viewpoint, feelings, wishes, definitions, freedoms and choices; rather than on the attribution by adults of what is best for the child; children are separate entities in their
own right, they are seen as objects rather than subjects of other’s actions and choices, as actors with ability to define their situation and arrive at independent decisions; children are competent and strength, not inferiors. They are not so different from adults and they should carry similar responsibilities about themselves. (Harding, 1997: 109-110)

The state should not distinguish between citizens on grounds of age, and children would thus be allowed to do whatever adults could legally do. Neither state nor individual adults, parents or not, would have significant special rights and powers over children, although there must still be parental responsibilities. Children should have the normal protection of the criminal and civil law like anyone else (if this perspective is implemented). It is important in this context to refer that these child protection perspectives are much more western child protection approaches, and have very little or nothing to do with Mozambican child protection perspectives. I later on use these views of child protection in analogical point of view in Mozambique, just as a tool to understand the basics of child welfare in Mozambique all over the history.

3.2 Child protection perspectives in Mozambique

Mozambique is a vast country in the Southern African situated along the Indian Ocean, with about 800,000 square kilometres region and a rich coastline of more than 2,500 kilometres.

About 70% of the country is composed by forest and woodlands. There are about 20 million inhabitants and about 70% of them are in rural areas. Half of the population is under 18 years of age. This means that the majority of population is constituted by children.

Foundling institutions for orphans and abandoned children were the earliest attempts at child care, usually under religious auspices. At first the goal was to provide minimum physical subsistence, but services have been expanded to include social and psychological help.
There are very little literatures in social work practices for child welfare in Mozambique, but looking trough the history of Mozambique in terms of social policies it is possible to identify the roots of child welfare and social work practices.

### 3.3 The colonial period

In the colonial period, the Portuguese powers took advantage of the military and technological weaknesses of Mozambique to exploit the mineral and agricultural wealth. In the process, Portugal subjected all economic, social, and political activities to their interests. Thus, as a result of the lack of political control by Mozambicans and the systematic expatriation of wealth, Mozambique became producer of an economic value that was lost to its people. As a result, Mozambique became structurally dependent and so underdeveloped (see Castel-Branco, 1994; Abrahamson & Nils, 1994 and Hanlon, 1997).

Underlying these changes in Mozambican economy was the assumption that Mozambicans and Africans in general were in a most elementary state of civilization, far below that of Europeans, under the evolutionary ladder. This assumption led to two seemingly contradictory conclusions, formalized in the infamous ideology of racism and oppression. One of the most important elements in this colonial process was that only a certain level of Mozambican development was required to benefit the supposedly more advanced Portuguese economic system. Accordingly, the colonial Portuguese regime devoted only the resources needed to provide the minimum infrastructure and social services to accomplish this end. Formal education, health assistance, and transportation system was only introduced to make Mozambicans efficient, reliable, and dedicated workers in order to satisfy the metropolis’ needs. Schooling, health, and related social services were restricted, therefore, to those segments of the population deemed potentially beneficial to the Portuguese citizens or specifically to those Mozambicans who have gained the assimilation process, acquiring the statute of Portuguese citizens.

In this way, religious education was established to improve the moral and social character of Mozambicans. As the human-development objective was by far secondary to the other, colonial objective, it was not included in any form of social
policy but left entirely to the voluntary efforts of religious organizations, and the lack of an indigenous base made their services extremely rudimentary.

Before the advent of colonialism, Mozambique was constituted by ethnic nationalities, organized around kith and kin, empires and small states (Zimbabwe empire and Gaza State), with authority exercised through a system of chieftaincy, clan elders, and heads of households. Given the mainly autarchic way of life of most people, this was generally adequate to meet most welfare requirements - from housing and the storage of food to personal support in times of bereavement - based on accepted reciprocity and equitable personal intimacies (Hodges, 1979; Newitt, 1995).

As a consequence of colonization, the social-support mechanism based on social capital and community solidarity changed radically. Many reasons can be addressed to understand this phenomenon; one of them is the fact that with the colonization there was a “promotion of money as the primary medium for exchange of goods and services and the introduction of a clear distinction between the homestead and the place of work. These developments lessened the need for reciprocity in attaining personal and family welfare” (Ouma, 1995).

Another explanation can come from the change of Mozambican political power system from local population undermined the authority of the kinship, which reduced its ability to protect its socially vulnerable members. The fact that colonial power owned at the same time the social, cultural and economic supremacy, lead Mozambique to be embedded into a Portuguese ideology of social system. As McPherson (1982) refers, “one of the most critical consequences of colonialism, crucial to explaining current social-policy patterns in Africa, was that all welfare activities were directed to meet the interests of the non indigenous population and these alone (McPherson, 1982).

One of the practical implications of this ideology was that the welfare of Mozambicans became subordinate to that of the colonialists and interpreted strictly in utilitarian terms. Education and health services were rudimentary and inferior to those available to white people. The availability of services largely followed the pattern of Portuguese settlements, which meant that they were mainly urban based, despite the fact that most of the population was rural. In contrast to black children, all white
children were guaranteed full primary and secondary schooling. Also, black families were required to pay for their children's education, whereas their white counterparts were not (Mondlane, 1976).

In sum, under colonial rule, Portuguese people received the highest priority, followed by those “black-indigenous” people immediately linked with the Portuguese economic system mainly designed as assimilated people. Problems of “indigenous and not assimilated” population were only left to the humanitarian and missionary work of volunteers. However, the church and other volunteer organizations, relying mostly on charitable funding, were usually only able to offer the most basic of services, which were thus also of low quality.

In health, for example, most Mozambicans continued to rely on traditional medicine for a substantive part of their health care. However, the contribution of traditional medicine was unacknowledged and neglected, keeping it underdeveloped by contemporary standards of medicine. During the colonial period religion has played an important role on child assistance, where ‘missionaries’ centres and catholic churches, beyond the native evangelization process, provided basic education and basic assistance (economic support, education, social integration to people with social problems, etc.) to people in difficult situation (MMCAS, 2001: 02).

3.4 The post-colonial period- 1975-1987

After 10 years of colonial war, Mozambique got its independence. At independence, nationalist government raised its attention in changing both the conditions created under colonialism and the thinking behind them. This was a period of rising expectations that, coupled with nationalist feelings, called for a parting with the past and a search for a new development ideology. Due to the fact that, the Portuguese colonial empire was directed to a Capitalist perspective and also that Mozambique’s independence was possible thanks to the support of Socialist countries, Socialism thus became a vehicle to completely eradicate the colonial economy and its related structures. Socialism in this context emphasized the equality of all people and advocated equality of access to resources, services, and opportunities. Development
efforts were thus geared toward structural transformation. Backed by rapid economic
growth and the nationalization of a foreign-dominated private sector that provided
buoyant government revenues, massive investments were made in infrastructure, from
road construction to the new import-substitution enterprises given over to the stately
sector (see Castel-Branco, 1995; Abrahamson & Nils, 1994; & Hodges, 1979).

The nationalization of private and foreign enterprises was wide in scope and included
a proactive approach to social welfare within the socialist outlook on social
development. Mozambican government embarked on a manic spree of building
schools, clinics, and other social and physical amenities, all under stringent state
control. In keeping with the past, however, personal social services and social security
remained underdeveloped. This was in part a legacy of traditions that still regarded
the family as the primary vehicle for personal security and in part due to the belief
that under a socialist system, personal needs would be a reflection of individualism
and a thing of the past (see Joseph Hanlon, 1997; FRELIMO, 1978).

Mozambique’s independence and the ascension to power of nationalist government
raised a variety of expectations of socioeconomic change to foster greater equality and
ultimately development. The newly formed political party was instrumental in
accelerating such changes as it tried to amass support to its cause. First among
FRELIMO’s promises was the guarantee of free education and health services for all,
the improvement of housing, and the provision of other services, such as electricity,
running water, and roads. Also important was the promise of popular participation in
identifying needs and developing programs to address them. This was meant to allow
people to taste political and economic powers that colonialism had denied them (See

The prospects for satisfying such yearnings were also optimistic. But as Abrahamson
& Nilson (1994) noted, it was recognized that Mozambique suffered considerable
economic backwardness, it was assumed that this was caused by decades of foreign
rule resulting in insufficient investment, dependence on single metropolitan markets,
and lack of education.

The adoption of social-sector policies as the primary instruments to create the new
social order, was the basic of Socialist perspective and the idea that this would ensure
that the necessary state resources were available to execute its policies and that the state would have sufficient control to manage society for its benefit. In the words of President Nkrumah (1967:52–53), socialism would allow governments to establish a society in which men and women will have no anxiety about work, food and shelter, where poverty and illiteracy no longer exist, and where diseases is brought under control; where our education facilities provide our children with the best possible opportunities for learning.

In terms of social welfare state, in Mozambique programs differed from those in the West, which were characterized by a central policy concern with income transfers. In Mozambique, where the economy is based on subsistence-level agriculture, a very small sector of the population had income to be transferred to others, and even fewer could contribute to building national social-insurance systems. Consequently, what social-security system existed was restricted mainly to the civil service and a few other employment-based sectors of the economy, such as manual labour. Instead, the three most important areas of investment were education, health, and price subsidies and controls. The emphasis was on social development, rather than on residualism, and consequently social assistance and other personal-welfare services remained largely underdeveloped.

Referring to child care, after the independence, child assistance centres were established to give assistance to orphan children victims of colonial war. The government adopted the policy of orphanages, where orphan children were placed and had basic assistance. These actions were under the control of the Ministry of health, by the National Direction of Social Action (Jocitala, 2002:15), which was the first institution of social work services established by the government in post-independence period. Local communities also played an important role in these targets, by providing moral and physical assistance, basic education, food and social support to these institutions and to the children in general.

Using Hardings’ denomination of child care perspectives, this was the so called State Paternalist and Child Care Perspective, where the state was playing the central role on caring for children and any other issues related to child care. Health care, education, food, etc. was entirely states’ responsibilities and parents had a singular role.
This situation of expectation and future development were challenged by the civil war which has already started after the independence, leaded by the RENAMO, the pressure from apartheid in South Africa, and the Ian Smith de-stabilization war (Newit, 1995). National economy started to experience deep, pervasive, and continuing economic crises, with zero or insignificant growth and high inflation. This led to rising foreign and domestic debts, increased unemployment, shortages of consumer goods, and deteriorating social infrastructures.

According to Abrahamson & Nilson (1994), South African Apartheid, the civil war, the natural disasters and the national incapacity in producing enough to satisfy Mozambican people entirely, obligated the Mozambican government to negotiate with the “Bretton Woods” institutions in order to face the crises situation. These negotiations lead the government to adopt new liberal policies on national economy. This was the end of Socialist period and the beginning of the era of structural adjustment.

3.5 The period of Economic Structural Reforms (PRE) - 1987-1990

The essence of the IMF's approach to structural adjustment is the neo-liberal notion that the state must divest itself of direct participation in the economy and the provision of social services to make way for free-market exchange. Unfortunately however, the mechanisms introduced to reach this end, such as tightening the money supply and reducing public expenditure, compounded the already precarious economic status of most consumers (See Castel-Branco, 1994; Kassotche, 1997, and Abrahamson & Nils, 1994).

In a short period of time, it became increasingly clear that alternatives were needed to fill the gap left by the state. In the case of the satisfaction of basic needs, other bodies would have to step in, thus paving the road again for the volunteer sector to become the major provider of social services. Structural adjustment in Mozambique rested on two economic objectives: changes in the foundations of the economy and the achievement of equilibrium in external and internal monetary balances. Therefore, as
stated by Castel-Branco (1994, 11), the PRE involved a comprehensive set of economic measures designed to achieve macro-economic goals, such as improvement in the balance of payments, a more efficient use of the productive potential, an increase in the long-term rate of economic growth, and low inflation.

One of the strongly held assumptions underlying PRE was that only efficiency in resource allocation and economic equilibrium can cause long-term growth. This meant that PRE measures were usually geared toward price mechanisms designed to induce substitutions in consumption and production. Thus, PRE recommendations were aimed in:

• Removing or reducing price distortions and subsidies;

• Increasing depressed producer prices;

• Increasing domestic interest rates to promote saving and the efficiency of financial institutions;

• Promoting quick-yielding productive sectors;

• Restraining wages;

• Opening trade and capital markets to competition; and managing external debts (Gobe, 1994, 4 e 5 In Castel-Branco, 1994; Hanlon, 1997: 117).

In short, the primary aim of structural adjustment was to allow increased intervention of market forces in the control of the economy, thus reversing the ideological basis of government for Mozambique before the PRE.

In terms of child care, government was no longer able to support orphanages and public institutions related to child care. Privatization of these institutions took place and many institutions were closed. The responsibilities to guaranty child health care, education and other responsibilities were given to parents and state no longer intervened on family lives. It is the period of Laissez-faire and minimalism if we use Hardings’ definition of child care perspectives.
3.6 The period of Social and Structural Reform (PRE'S) - 1990-2006

Because one of the primary aims of structural adjustment has been to liberate the economy from social and political influences, a major emphasis of PRE to date has been on privatization (See Hanlon, 1997: 117). To this end, governments have implemented several interrelated measures. First, governments devalued exchange rates artificially overvalued to boost exports. Second, governments removed most price controls on basic commodities like the staple maize meal. In addition to reducing public deficits, this was also meant to stimulate the agricultural sector by increasing the price farmers receive for their products and thereby putting a halt to a serious social side effect: the rural–urban migration that was reaching untenable proportions (See Castel-Branco, 1994).

Although the effectiveness of these measures over time remains subject to debate (Demery and Squire 1996; Hope 1997), it is generally acknowledged that over the short term they have brought a traumatic experience to much of the population. At the macroeconomic level, “GDP” per capita in Mozambique as a whole declined in real terms between 1988 and 1990. It is, however, at the micro, that is to say more personal, level that PRE have had its most direct social impact (See Hanlon, 1997:119).

Finally, even the mean years of schooling, in which governments invested the most, had fallen (UNDP 1992). In Mozambique, for example, the divestiture by the government of its publicly owned businesses, such as industries, chemistries, textiles, etc, left more than 50% of the population unemployed. Further, although many workers were willing to take retrenchment packages, their employers' cash flows were too meagre to pay them (See Hanlon, 1997:119).

In the education sector, for example, many students have been forced to drop out of school because of their inability to pay higher schools fees. Owing to cultural factors, the most direct effects of these measures have been felt by girls. Users fees in education also contribute to increased urban–rural disparities, as the urban schools' constituencies are better placed to pay higher fees and more able to pay higher teachers' salaries, thus depleting rural schools of qualified teachers. The health sector
has been equally affected. User fees in health were already a common practice, except for the poorest sector of the population. However, devaluation and budget cuts led to increases in the cost of drugs, which in turn led to a drastic reduction in the availability of drugs at clinics and hospitals.

In some cases, the only safety net was food rations for the destitute and minimal cash-for-work or food-for-work programs (MMAS, 2005) intended to provide their recipients with just enough to sustain their physical health. In Mozambique, the food package originally meant for a single person was provided to feed the entire family. The same applies to the cash-for-work program ("drought relief"), in which participation was also restricted. In some cases, public assistance was so small that recipients were paid only once every 3 months because the amounts on their social-assistance cheques would be otherwise less than their transportation costs for collecting those (MMAS, 2005).

Under these conditions, the government has been forced to revise its set of social policies. From using its limited resources to promote social welfare across society, it has had to begin using them residually as a corrective tool to manage the social dysfunction of the market economy in order to cope with the economic malfunction and instability on welfare.

All this took place at a time when the sick in hospitals already had to rely on relatives for a change of bedding; schools were operating without books or desks; and people were going back to using unsafe water sources as taps ran dry. This is the so called, new colonialism, as Hanlon (1997:117) notes, the inequalities rose up, poverty situation rose up and only few of the new bourgeoisie got advantages of this neo-liberal policy.

Recognizing that some of the direct social-reform measures and the trigger-off impacts of PRE would aggravate an already difficult situation and aware of the probable political effects, introduced some cushioning mechanisms aimed to help the most vulnerable groups: the Programme for Alleviation of Absolute Poverty and Social Cost of Adjustment (PARPA), was the new cover of PRE, assuming the name of PRES in 1990 (Castel-Branco, 1994).
Very early in the process, some of this program began to encounter serious obstacles. Arriving at a definition of *vulnerable groups*, HIV/AIDS dilemmas, Orphans victims of war and AIDS, and so on, were concepts that were challenging this program. The number homeless people (children, elderly, women, and mental disorder people) rose up and rural-urban exodus was common. Urban areas were getting full of people running away from war, looking for better conditions of life and fighting against starvation. The State did not have resources and power to support this population, and their places were streets.

Stating Ferguson (2004: 35) citing Davin (1988:3) “‘cruelties of the street’ and ‘neglect’ were different matters. By the 1880s, philanthropic and political concern for the vagrant and street child were familiar motifs of respectable society. Such children provoked fear as well as pity. Middle-class sensibilities regarded such children as ‘Arabs’, ‘urchins’, ‘guttersnips’, as a ‘wild race’, ‘nomadic’, ‘a multitude of untutored savages’- labels which identified them as heathen and uncivilized, alien to order and progress”... “The street stood for danger and corruption”. This statement is very similar to this period of Mozambique child care situation, and street children began to be called “moluenes” or “bandits” and for them no any assistance was allowed due to their low economical situation.

**3.7 The post civil war period and the context of peace- 1992-2006**

In Mozambique, declining employment led rapidly to the growth of the informal sector, already widespread because of wages being literally at starvation levels. In the social sphere, the virtual collapse of the welfare state stimulated the role of private enterprises in providing key social services and encouraged the reintroduction of the volunteer sector, now under the banner of NGOs which in other hand have been affecting positively social policy reforms.

In **October 4th, 1992**, the Peace Agreement was signed between President Chissano and RENAMO leader Afonso Dhlakama. The agreement called for an immediate
cease-fire; demobilization of the militaries; creation of new and national military; and multiparty elections in 1994.

The process of recovering from a weak economy, which was characterized by remarkable annual economic growth rates in the 1990s, is marked by many and different kind of social problems: rising crime rates; corruption; major shipment point for drugs to South Africa; armed banditry; unemployment as consequence of privatizations and increasing living costs; an extremely slow-growing tourism sector; prawn and shrimps as the largest export; and the massive debt of a country that remains dependent upon international donor assistance. Additionally, the economic development was slowed at the beginning of 2000, because of cyclones and the most severe floods ever reported in Mozambique.

With the signing of peace accord in 1992, political stability with multiparty was established and with this a rapid economic growth started to be a positive sign for Mozambique. “The politically stable climate during the past decade has been conducive to improving the well-being of children and women. The proportion of people living below the poverty line decreased from 69 per cent in 1997 to 54 per cent in 2003, exceeding the target set out in the country first Absolute Poverty Relief Strategy (PARPA). This decline led to a considerable reduction in child mortality, better immunisation coverage, increased access to primary education and decreased illiteracy” (UNICEF 2004).

Even with such an economical and political progress, Mozambique continues being one of poorest countries in the world with “gross national income of US$250 per capita”, the level of child poverty is still high, with “58% of children living below the poverty line” (idem). Child well-being varies to a great extent athwart the country, with severe disparities in provinces, region of habitation, gender and family circle level of poverty and dispossession. The country still relies critically on foreign assistance. “Foreign aid represents 15 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product and about half the annual State Budget” (idem). The core dispute to development is the exposure of the country to the joint effects of the ‘Triple Threat’: long-drawn-out drought, HIV/AIDS and destabilized capacities.
Mozambican financial system is deeply influenced negatively by recurrent drought, particularly in semi-arid areas, which has led to pockets of food and nutrition insecurity and compact access to safe water and sanitation. The country is also prone to impulsive emergencies, such as cyclones and floods and nowadays with earthquakes. Nevertheless, HIV/AIDS is the most serious intimidation facing Mozambique. The pandemic is intimidating to reverse the development gains of recent years. The rate of HIV/AIDS prevalence among adults aged 15-49 has been steadily increasing over the past few years, from 12.2 per cent in 2000 to 16.2 per cent in 2004 with about 14.9% HIV prevalence in pregnant women (MISAU 2004). In 2006, an estimated 1.7 million people are living with HIV or AIDS and the disease is claiming over 120,000 lives each year. The pandemic continues to compound the crisis of increasing numbers of orphaned and vulnerable children. Of 1.6 million orphans, 20 per cent are due to AIDS (UNICEF; 2005).

General poverty and the HIV/AIDS epidemic are leaving many Mozambican children underprivileged and weak to abuse. Four million out of the roughly 10 million children and adolescents under 18 years of age are considered vulnerable. Many of them find themselves working in unfair situations. The 1997 population census estimated that 388,000 children below the age of 15 were subjected to child labour (INE, 1997).

Domestic labour, child prostitution and informal farming child work are some of most problematic issues on child situation in Mozambique. Orphaned children are especially susceptible to these abuses. There are about 1.6 million orphans in the country with 325,000 of them having lost their mother, father or both parents due to AIDS (MISAU: 2004). Many orphaned children make a great effort to survive on their own, often caring for younger siblings, and a growing number is forced to live on the streets or to earn an income as mercantile sex workers in urban areas.

Other statistics tell a depressing story, too, that there are 300 children living on Maputo city streets identified and up to a quarter of those in prisons are younger than 18 years. More than 100,000 children with disabilities are not receiving education or rehabilitative and therapeutic support within the country (UNICEF; 2004).
Somehow, this period can be referenced as an important period due to its peace context and social stability. New child care systems appear where the state, communities and families all together play an important role on child wellbeing in general, specially for those children in difficult situations such as: street children, child labour, child prostitution, vulnerable children and absolute poverty (MMCAS, 2000: 14).

Actually, it is difficult to place child care in Mozambique into a specific child care perspective. Nowadays, there are many and different institutions of child care such as NGOs, religious institutions, child and youth associations, etc. All these institutions are striving to defend a certain child care perspective:

For example, NGOs’ like Save the Children, UNICEF, Children Net, are actually trying to promote children’s rights and “advocate the children as a subject, as an independent person with rights which, at extreme, are similar to the rights of the adult” (Harding, 1997: 9). According to these institutions, children have the right for education, health, protection from hazardous and sexual abuse, from child labour and so on. They refer to the parent’s responsibilities and to community responsibilities to protect children from this hazardous situation and to contribute for child wellbeing.

“All children are entitled to protection and care under a broad range of international, regional and national instruments. Of particular relevance for separated children are: the right to a name, legal identity and birth registration; the right to physical and legal protection; the right not to be separated from their parents; the right to provisions for their basic subsistence; the right to care and assistance appropriate to their age and developmental needs; the right to participate in decisions about their future” (UNHCR, 2005:104)

Expressions like these are the main discourse in Mozambique and this means in terms of Harding a Children’s rights and child liberation perspective.
4 Theoretical approach: Structuration and Social Praxis approach

Social sciences use theories in order to explain, predict or master specific phenomena. Theories can be seen as models of reality. A theory makes generalizations about observations and consists of an interrelated, coherent set of ideas and models. Theories are the lens from which we see the reality. In this chapter I look forward to match Giddens perspective of Structuration and social praxis in order to facilitate analysis of the phenomena of street children.

Between the end of 1970’s and beginning of 1980’s, Anthony Giddens, incorporated in the context of redefining the space of reflection of social theory of the Unite States around Europe, activated some critical assessments on the dominant traditional consensus of 1970’s correlated to “human behaviour as a result of forces that the social actors do not control nor understand” (Giddens, 1984: xvi)

In his conjectural program reflected on his effort: “The constitution of society: outline of the theory of Structuration (1984)” he shows the pioneering input of Structuration premise which is translated onto the retranslation and reinterpretation of a classic problem of sociological research: the relation between “individual and Society”.

Using the concept of Structuration, Giddens substitutes the dichotomist pair individual/society by the dynamistic pair agency/structure. The innermost idea is to revolutionize the image that individuals action under the control of the structures’ coercive power with the reality that the action itself conforms and confirms the structures, this means that there are external powers which constrains individuals to act in a certain way, however, they are not passive to this process, in view of the fact that in their action, they bear out the norms which act on them and at the same time they perform a pressure to the values and norms which act on them. Structure is not outside social action, but exists only because of social action; it is a consequence of social action.

For Giddens, human agency and social structure are not two disconnected concepts or constructs, but are two ways of taking into consideration social action. There is a duality of structures so that on one side it is composed of situated actors who embark on social action and interaction, and their knowledgeable activities in various
situations. Simultaneously, there are also rules, resources, and social relationships that are produced and reproduced as a consequence of social interaction.

Structuration means in this sense, studying ways in which social systems are produced and reproduced in social interaction (Giddens, 1984:25-6). Giddens defines Structuration as "the structuring of social relations across time and space, in virtue of the duality of structure" (1984: 376). Giddens makes time and space two major aspects of his conjectural perspective. Giddens remarks how time and space, or at least our concepts and understanding of these, as well as their material implications, have changed dramatically in recent years, and the relation of people to these in the contemporary social world differs from that of earlier societies.

At the same time, Giddens also notes how practices are continued or enduring, and how they are reproduced. As a result, social action and interaction as "tacitly enacted practices" become "institutions or routines" and "reproduce familiar forms of social life" (idem: 131). Giddens makes this point as follows: “The basic domain of study of the social sciences, according to the theory of Structuration, is neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of social totality, but social practices ordered across space and time. Human social activities, like some self-reproducing items in nature, are recursive. That is to say, they are not brought into being by social actors but continually recreated by them via the very means whereby they express themselves as actors; in and through their activities, agents reproduce the conditions that make these activities possible” (Giddens, 1984: 2).

This argument permits Giddens to integrate individual social action with the larger systems, structures, and institutions in which we are a part of. It is the persistent repetition of social action and interaction in reasonably regular and habitual forms that constitute what may appear to be the larger social forms.

In summary, Giddens’s approach to social action is that of praxis, or as he refers to it, social praxis, which are regular patterns of enacted conduct by active actors who interact with each other in situations in habitual, reflexive, reflective, and more conscious ways. It is the reproduction of social life. In theory of Structuration two closely related concepts are Systems and Structures, but at the same time distinguished by Giddens as follows:
Systems are "patterns of relations in groupings of all kinds, from small, intimate groups, to social networks, to large organizations" (Giddens 1984: 131). This means that it is the patterns of enacted conduct, the repeated forms of social action and interaction, or the "enduring cycles of reproduced relations" (idem) that form social systems. These could be systems such as families, groups, associations, communitarian organizations, group of street children, communities, or cities, either at the face-to-face level or existing via networks over space and time. In any case, it is the patterns of relationships and frequent forms of interaction themselves that form the systems for Giddens.

The worth of Giddens’s systems and structures is to provide a means of bridging the structure-agency gap, focusing on systems and structures as patterns of enacted conduct. At some level we may consider these as existing apart from the individual, but if social action and interaction were to end, it is clear that social structures would no longer exist. In Giddens, praxis does not exist apart from structure, and structure is lasting patterns of action guided by rules and resources.

For our approach, this theory is framed in the following sense:

1. If structures are elements with an internal and immutable existence, “structural properties” using Giddens’s expressions, they serve as symbolic references which have “effects on people when structures are produced and reproduced on what people do” (Giddens, 1984: 77). These structures are for us the social policies, institutions, action plans from the government and projects related to child welfare and which rule and influence the social work practice in general.

2. It is a central point on Structuration theory of Giddens the social praxis as the process of social life reproduction and on its context brings to us the possibility to analyze the time-space dimension of social work practice in Mozambique.

In Giddens we find that all those actions which constitute and are constituted by the social system produce the space in which the social practice takes place which means that social systems are temporarily and spatially determinants and they both constitute the space-time. This approach gives us a possibility to understand and analyse the context in which social policies, plans of action and strategies related to child welfare introduced by Mozambican government take place, and as well the reaction of social
work practice institutions to them. Giddens’s approach of Structuration and social praxis, criticizes the linear evolutionism and he details his discussion of social change using five (5) parameters to contextualize the social change process as follows:

- **Structural principles** ➔ Structural principles of each society and the way they are influenced by social changes (in our case the Mozambican society);
- **Periodic characterizations** ➔ to distinguish the level of change, differentiating the transformations in a society from one term to another. (In our case we refer to the contextual framing of public policies for child welfare and their implications on social work practice);
- **Inter-societal systems** ➔ referring to the imperatives on studying the changes in a particular society, not in an isolated point of view, but always having in reference other social systems. (in our approach we refer the fact that there are social policies, plans and projects of child welfare being implemented in Mozambique and many other societies)
- **Time-space frames** ➔ this variable shows the connections between different kinds of societies and gives us opportunity to elucidate the co-existence between time and space and its influence on social changes. (in our approach we refer to this in the sense that the social policies being implemented in the actual context can influence to practice of social work and its perspectives according to the contextual political environment)
- **World time — "conjuncture exam according to the reflexive monitored history** (Giddens, 1984: 244) (and here we analyse the social work practice in the international economic and social conjuncture in order to find out in which context these policies and practices are integrated on world wellbeing perspectives).

Combining these five variables, it is possible to draw the dynamic of social work practice in a diachronic point of view preserving the particular aspects of the context in which the study is outlined.

In this sense, integrating Giddens perspective of social structuration in the Human Agency thinking, I can simplify my analyses in this way:
Looking to this scheme in the social work practice point of view, which is our target in this discussion we have the following scheme:
In this analytical framework, I refer to Socialist perspective as the post colonial period, discussed beforehand in chapter 3. In this period, Mozambican government based on Marxist-Socialist perspective, emphasized the equality of all people and advocated equality of access to resources, services, and opportunities. Development efforts were thus geared toward structural transformation. In this period, political, social and economical issues were centrally defined by the government and private sector was inexistent. When thinking on child welfare perspective, this period can be referred as **State Paternalist and Child Care Perspective**, where the state was playing the central role on caring for children and any other issues related to child care. Health care, education, food, etc. was entirely states’ responsibilities and parents had a singular role.

The PRE/PRE’S in the framework represents the period of transition from socialist to new liberal period under the support (or pressure of IMF and World Bank). In this period, as we discussed in chapter 3, New Liberal perspectives take place, there is a large process of privatization and it is verified an immediate take off of government hand on economical issues and in main decision making. This process developed very deep transformations in the structure of the society, in this case to issues related to child welfare, where government was no longer able to support orphanages and public institutions related to child care. Privatization of these institutions took place and many institutions were closed. The responsibilities to guaranty child health care, education and other responsibilities were given to parents and state no longer intervened on family lives. It is the period of **Laissez-faire and minimalism**.

The New liberal Perspective, presented in the framework represents the period after the introduction of structural reforms (PRE/PRE’S) under the auspices of IFM and World Bank. This period is also characterized by a context of peace, after 16 years of civil war, in which deep structural transformations continue to take place, political stability and economic growth. This is what I call as **Children’s rights and child liberation** perspective period in chapter 3.

By integrating Giddens’s Structuration theory, it is possible to analyze the process of social change on social work practice for child welfare, by analysing the influence of policies and economic statement that Mozambique has been facing, and how this influences the social work practice. From this it is also possible to analyze the actual
situation of street children in Mozambique and as well to understand its historical overview, in how structural changes have influenced the actual street children and how this is influencing social work practitioners to provide basic services for street children in general.

5 Research methodological overview- the qualitative perspective

In this chapter I discuss methodological issues, where I present the main methods used to make this research possible, my limitations and ethical issues related to a research on street children.

5.1 Methodological overview

Blaikie (1993:7) in D’Cruz & Jones (2004:59) defines the concept of methods as being “the actual techniques and procedures used to gather and analyse data related to some research question or hypothesis”.

The main aim of this study is to understand the actual situation of social work practice for child welfare. From this aim I look forward to analyse the trends of Social policies and social work practice in Mozambique throughout the history; to analyse the role of social work practice for child welfare; to find out the main factors which lead children to live in streets and what has been done by formal institutions to provide street children’s welfare. In order to make these goals achievable, I use in this research a set of methodologies based on qualitative approach where the ethnographic methods are the main paramount of research practice.

A question that could be raised in a critical view for such a decision may be why did I choose qualitative methods instead of quantitative methods? Why the preference on ethnographic methods instead of any other methods? Related to this kind of questioning many other important questions have been posed about the scientific level of social sciences when reflecting on the plausibility in treating a reality in which researchers and researched are both actors such as in qualitative methods. The main
question is rather there is objectivity in such research and in which extend can we approve such approach?

These questions have been posed in bias between quantitative and qualitative methodologies. To give answer to such question, Durkheim (1978) presents two arguments: a) it is possible to find uniformities and regularities in human behaviour; b) predicable regularities exist in any human behaviour and can be studied without taking in account their individual motivations. This is a positivist perspective in analysing social realities.

By other side, there are those social scientists who preferred to look to the comprehension of social reality based on individuals motivations and understanding of that reality. In this sense, Weber (1970) refers that it is social science’s duty to comprehend the meaning of human action, and not only to describe their behaviours. He also affirms that the central element in the interpretation of social action is the dimension of the subjective meaning of those who participate in the action. In the same extend, William Thomas (1970) refers that it is essential in the study of human beings, “to discover how do they define the situation in which they are and why do they define these situations as real if they do so” (Thomas, 1970: 246-247).

Thomas and Weber address the comprehensive perspective, where the context is base of understanding reality and the use of qualitative methods as a way to comprehend human activities and relations. Qualitative approach makes a fundamental approximation between the research subject and the researcher and since that they both have similar nature; it requires empathy with the motivations, feelings, intentions, projects, values, etc from which social actions, structures and social relations become meaningful.

With this I don’t mean that research is only about the process of comprehension of the other and the reality in an introspective way, it is as Bruyne et al (1991) refer, a dialectic interaction between three basic aspects namely: the concrete movement, natural and social historic of the studied reality (objective sense); the subjective sense of internal logic of knowledge and the relation with the object studied and constructed by science and the method used to study it (methodological sense). This means that in a qualitative approach, the dialectic view acts in the level of meanings and structures,
where structures are understood as objective human actions full of meanings. Research in this sense is a complex process in which all stages of searching for the reality and its analysis are in permanent interaction with the researcher. For me those methods should be seen not as better or not, but according to their complementarities and diverse possibilities in understanding a certain phenomena in study.

It is therefore, a hard task to define qualitative research since it doesn't involve a universal terminology as ordinary science. The simplest definition is to say it involves methods of data collection and analysis that are not quantitative. Another way of defining it is to say that it focuses on quality, a term referring to the essence or ambience of something. Others would say it involves a subjective methodology and yourself as the research instrument (Adler & Adler 1987). Everyone have their favourite definition. Historical-comparative researchers would say it always involves the historical context, and sometimes a critique of the "front" being put on to get at the "deep structure" of social relations.

Qualitative research most often is built from the ground up, looking to singular aspects of social action, or to the singular aspects of particular social issue or social problem, which can be analysed and in a very deep perspective. In general we can refer that qualitative research is based on a contextual, singular, specific and local issue. It focuses the analytical perspective on the description, comprehension and explanation of the reality looking basically to the symbolic, historic, local, contextual and cultural aspects being analysed. This approach looks forward in comprehending the reality in a much more deep perspective, focusing particular facts and phenomena in a limited extension in order to understand them more intensely. That is why my approach for this research is based on qualitative methods and more particularly on Ethnographic perspective.

According to Hammersley & Atkinson (1995:1), ethnography is a particular method or a set of methods, which involve the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly, in people’s daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions- in fact collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research. For them ethnography is the most basic form of social research. It bears a close resemblance to the routine ways in which people make sense of the world everyday life. (idem : 2)
As we can see from Hammersley & Atkinson (1995:1), in ethnography we use a variety of methods or techniques to achieve the objectives of our research or to give answer to our research questions. For this case, in my ethnographic method I used a combination of qualifying research techniques such as: participant observation, interviews, life stories and or narrated experiences from street children and formal institutions workers for child welfare. To have the historical overview of Mozambican child welfare, I use the literature review.

5.1.1 Researching street children’s experiences

In order to understand the daily lives, experiences, dreams, hopes and the relation between these aspects with social work practice and social policies being implemented by the government in Mozambique I needed to immerse myself into street children’s everyday lives. As Greene & Hogan (2005) refer ethnographic methods can often be well suited to capturing the ongoing flow and complexities of children’s daily lives. They involve spending extended time with children in their everyday environments, such as a school or play space (Christensen, 2004; James, 1993; Moore, 1986 in Greene & Hill cited by Greene& Hogan, 2005). They often combine participant observation with key informant interviews, informal group discussions and creative exercises (Greene & Hogan, 2005:15).

Participant observation as an ethnographic technique is the most paramount of this research and it is was implemented by a process of immersion in the study of street children environment. A participant observation is almost always done covertly, with the researcher never revealing their true purpose or identity. If it's a group that the researcher already know a lot about, he needs to step back and take the perspective of a "Martian", as if he was from a different planet and seeing things in a fresh light. If it's a group he knows nothing about, he needs to become a "convert" and really get committed and involved. The more secretive and amorphous the group, the more he needs participation. The more localized and turf-conscious the group, the more he needs observation. It's customary in the literature to describe four roles:

Complete participation - the researcher participates in all activities and goes on to actively influence the direction of the group;
**Participant as observer** - the researcher participates in activities but does not try to influence the direction of the group;

**Observer as participant** - the researcher participates in a one-time in a certain activity but then takes a back seat to any further activities and keeps observing the development of activities and actions;

**Complete observation** - the researcher is a member of the group but does not participate in any activity. The researcher is a passive actor.

The key point behind all of them is that the researcher must operate on two levels: becoming an insider while remaining an outsider. In this case I use complete observation participation in order to have a deeper understanding of reality. The process of **immersing myself on street children’s life** was not an easy task, although I was lucky to have some experiences on life in the streets, and that was really helpful, I needed to have trust from street children, to hear from street children in their real environment, to understand their motivations and to let them share their feelings about their situation as street children.

First of all, street children have their particularities, they do not open themselves so easily, they do not let anybody go inside their lives without knowing them; they have their own protective actions and understanding of the world. To make possible my integration to street children’s world I firstly had to become a street boy, a bit older, but a really street boy, living, eating, working and sleeping where they used to sleep. This was not easy. My skills in speaking “street language” or slang language was a big tool. This process started by making friends, I was coming from nowhere, and looking as somebody who is looking for place and company. This was my first task. The process of social integration took me 5 days, where I used to stay during day time with street children until very late time eating what they ate with them, working as they worked, listening their funny stories and tales, smoking their cigarettes and drugs. It was a hard period and experience. These 5 days where only an integration period, nothing special regarding to interviews happened, only observing what was going on, what happens, how it happens and which is the strategy they use to survive in such environment. I had the opportunity to know each one of those belonging to the
group, what is the practical issues of staying with them and how do they get what they want.

In many cases to ask questions about somebody’s life is not an easy issue. Street children are very sensible individuals, difficult to penetrate their lives and to integrate their community. I had shared my life story as well, about my childhood, about conflicts I had to face and how I ended in the street. I shared with them a piece of my life, my experiences of street life and they became my friends and answered my question according to the circumstances of conversation.

Taking notes now and then was possible, but in much hidden place, so that nobody could notice that I’m writing anything about what they tell. The most difficult is to find an opportunity to talk with each one, to tell me what happened to end up on the street, and how does he survive all day after day. I succeeded to have my interviews during our talking times, where in groups, we talked about our past experiences, each one telling his own story, sharing what he feels about it and his dream. This was normally during night, around a fire, between many funny stories and sad stories about our lives. Moments of tears took place sometimes, and after now and then moments of funny and laughs also took place. Sad and happy songs where also invited to cover the long and cold nights. After lot of alcohol, especially the called “tentação” everybody fall asleep, and the day to come will tell its reality. Present was the moment to live, future is matter of time in the street. We never know what comes then. It is a permanent moment of uncertainty, full of surprises and perspectives.

During this period, I had also opportunity to talk with each one individually and occasionally, according to the circumstances. Mostly during day time, where each one is in his own, looking forward to find a way to survive the long day, with his own hunger and thirsty.

Most of my interviews took place during the next 5 days, since that I was already their friend and communication was easy and clear between me and them. In these

4 Tentação is the name of alchool produced in Mozambique, sold in smal botles of 250ml, with 43% alchool. This alcohol can be found with different tastes such as Gin, Rum, Cane, etc. It is the most common drink, since that it is cheaper and easy to get it from local shops during day time. As alternative, when there is no enough money to buy this, traditional alcohol was possible to find from the ladies who use to sell during day time in the local market.
According to Jerome Kagan (1984:279) in Greene & Hogan (2005:2) “the person’s interpretation of experience is simultaneously the most significant product of an encounter and the spur to the next”. It can be argued that without some kind of access to the content of person’s experience, we have a very incomplete account, from a scientific perspective, of what it is that any causes person, adult or child, to act as they do (Greene & Hogan, 2005:2). A researcher who values children’s perspective and wishes to understand their lived experience will be motivated to find out more about how children understand and interpret, negotiate and feel about their daily lives. If we accept a view of children as persons, the nature of children’s experiential life becomes of central interest” (Greene & Hogan, 2005:3). “The voice of children as been of central interest in most recent approach on child rights” (child rights convention, 1989; Children act, 1989 and Greene & Hogan, 2005:3) as the paramount of children research ethics.

“Setting out to children’s experience implies a respect for each child as a unique and valued ‘experiencer’ of his or her world. It also demands the use of methods that can capture the nature of children’s lives as lived rather than those that rely on taking children out of their everyday lives into a professional’s office or ‘lab’. The richness of an individual’s life is very often not to be found in the surface, but in how it is lived, in the person’s experiences and reactions to the world” (Greene & Hogan, 2005:4). Based on these assumptions, my research on street children’s experiences was basically the only way for me to understand to real environment, and the real factors which lead them to end up on the streets. This because I believe that it is possible to learn from street children, from their experiences by active engagement with their material and social worlds, whether the focus is on actions or words, and from their own reports on their subjective world. At the same time I wanted to let the children tell what they feel and think about their situation themselves. My participant observation gave me an entrée into street children’s experience since that I could see the ways in which street children make efforts to understand and negotiate their worlds and also I had a unique opportunity to listen and share their lives in a deeper point of view. My participant observation took place from 10th July to 25th July 2006.
5.1.2 Researching child welfare situation in formal institutions

Open and semi-structured interviews where the basic techniques to comprehend the real social work practice for child welfare from the social workers in formal institutions in Maputo city. This gave me a deeper comprehension of facts, experiences, feelings, sentiments and opinions about the role played by social work for child welfare. These interviews where specifically directed to professionals working at the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs (MMAS), National Institute of Social Action, Provincial Direction of Education and Culture of Maputo, Provincial Direction of Health of Maputo city, General Hospital José Macamo of Maputo city, Police station nr. 1 (‘baixa’) and nr. 5 (‘Alto Maé’). In these institutions, and based on what street children referred about their daily lives, I looked forward in understanding what kind of issues do they develop to provide street children welfare and which are the main challenges do they face in achieving child welfare, specially for street children.

5.1.3 Literature review

The literature review permitted me to collect general information regarding to child welfare and child protection policies in Mozambique throughout the history. Using this technique it was possible to understand the historical evolution of child welfare and child protection in Mozambique and the different perspectives used for child protection in different historical contexts. Literature review obeyed the following steps: Identification and selection of literature regarding to child welfare policies and social work practice in Mozambique (books, legislations and reports); readings; literature analysis and synthesis.

During this stage of research activity, there was a big challenge for me, since that there are very little documents referring to the action of the government on child welfare. Very few information about the topic can be found regarding to social work and social welfare state for child welfare in Mozambique. This made me revisit in most cases, documents about some neighbouring countries, which are as well scarce.
5.1.4 Ethical Considerations

“Since the question of ethics is a question of knowing and thinking as well as choosing an everyday action, our subject matter concerns the ways by which we customarily establish bodies of knowledge and patterns of reflections, our way of producing and maintaining certainty, and our styles of good sense” (Scott 1990: 5).

Ethic issues are understood by Scott (1990) as the need to learn to name things anew, the need to be alert to exclusions and to forgotten aspects in a people’s history, to listen in what is usually drown out by the predominant values, to think what is generally taken for granted, to find out how to hold itself in quest (idem, 1990: 7-8).

In this extend, Lincoln (1995) discusses several issues in qualitative research that enlarge the debate about ethic standards in researching people’s lives such as: problems of the face to face encounter, the virtual impossibility of maintaining anonymity under some circumstances, selecting and excluding material to be included in case study, open and honest negotiations around data collection, analysis and presentation (Lincoln, 1995: 287).

Looking on my research in terms of ethical considerations standards presented by Lincoln, the following ethical issues were considered:

→ The face-to-face encounters, relationships began by establishing an atmosphere of egalitarianism with the participants (in this case street children) by strongly respect their view and their values without judgements on their understanding to the reality of life. In this issue, the ideal of acknowledging street children’s contribution to the research process was not taken as important, since that in the context of the research activity could not permit me to show my own identity at the beginning, street children in many cases reject researchers, because they believe these people are making a lot of money using their names. This feeling was very clear in the end, when we had the last day of my participant observation, where some shouted with me telling that I will be rich using their stories after I have e told them my real identity. In some children, the hope of being taken by me with them became greater and cried loud to go with me.

One of the most important responsibilities of the researcher in the face-to-face encounters is to be a good listener. Through consideration and commitment, I was talented to actively inspire in the interviewees (street children) a sense of well being. This was not very difficult thanks to the ability I have in communicating using their own expressions.

The ideal of total anonymity often presents difficulties in many narrated experiences. In this research, none of the names presented as interviewees are original, using some pseudonyms to report street children’s stories and public workers as well. Somehow, the question remains, as Hollway & Jefferson (2000:91) refer “whether it is meaningful, or in a single participant’s interest, to show him or her an analysis based on his or her single case in debatable”. To this question Fischer-Rosenthal in Chamberlayne et al (2000: 121) refers that “It is not sufficient, and may even be harmful, for the professional simply to confront the client with the stark results of the biographical analysis”. There are situations during people’s lives research, when some sensitive points may guide to possible volatile interpretations during analyse process by different approaches. Should my conclusions and interpretations be presented for verification by interviewees? Do I have the right to publish such conclusions without their consent, knowledge and feedback? It is very difficult to answer such a question, but in this research, I preserved street children’s stories as they where told, without much modifications, except identities.

About questions of honesty and sincerity in negotiations, the following points were considered:

1) Collection of data: Interviewees from institutions were informed of the research process and the stated purpose. For the case of street children this point was not taken in account, due to factors referred before.

2) Data analyses: During the data analyses I decided to maintain the original expressions as they where told, in narratives and without much intervening on interviewees opinions and expressions. Possibly, there might be some nuances to be reconsidered since that translation from slang language of the street might have been detoured according to my understanding.
3) Some possible of my own opinion might have influenced the organization of research results, due to my own experiences on the street life. The presentation of results is deeply influenced somewhat from being written in probably non scientific perspective, when active voice and first person is used in the majority of chapters.

In narrative research under the auspices of ethnographic approach, to ask somebody to tell about his/her story or life is not the end of research activity; it is just a starting point. By undertaking this issue, we are at least starting by knowing the person in his/her world, his/her expectations, successes, failures and dreams, hopes and desires, past and present, challenges and opportunities, etc. It is with a thrilled shape of suspense that these stories of ‘street children’ I care in this research will be now stretched out.

It is also important to maintain in mind that issues related to ethical are in permanent unsolved conflict, depending on what is ethic for whom and where. Researching people’s lives is an issue which contextualise the idea of ethics in social sciences research. I think there is no Universal ethic approach for all kind of social research, and when reflecting on ethical views of social research, it is always to think on the context, type and objectives of research.

5.1.5 Methodological limitations

The first and most important limitation of this study is related to the fact that it does not provide a gender view of street children’s situation in Mozambique. This because the sample used in this study is only based on 15 boys living on the street and no girl. I do not discuss on this study the situation of girls living on the street, a topic commonly reported on news as a fact which exists.

Many other factors have constituted barriers for the research process such as: the lack of information in public institutions about child welfare and street children in Mozambique and in Maputo; the fact that most of public institutions did not accept to be open minded with me, referring that they were not allowed to talk about internal issues to strange people. Many other institutions such as INAS, asked me credentials for my authorization to continue with my research using internal database, this was
not possible due to the fact that I did not have the credentials from Tampere University, my student card was not enough to convince them to open doors for me and let me in for their database.

Being with street children was not an easy task, first it was important to understand their language, which is not Portuguese, but some sort of slang language derived from “xichangana”, one of local language. Somehow, this language has its derivations and meanings in street life context. I was lucky in terms of communication skills, since that I could speak fluently their specific expressions. During night times the cold weather and humidity did not help enough to establish long time conversations, but it was also good for me since that I could understand the real feeling of living on the streets.

Financial resources were scarce, and in many occasions I had to buy food, and alcohol as my contribution for the theme of debate in that night. They were very long nights, if thinking in the environment they sleep and stay all time.

On the 9th day I revealed my identity to them and of course, it was not easy for them to speak to me anymore, since that they were not interested in talking to researchers referring that many had already gone there and nothing changed and that I will earn a lot of money using their names. I prepared a small party with them, we ate some food and we spoke in group…it was a confident time…I still remember. Many cried when I said that I was going and I would not comeback soon, some wanted to come with me and some insulted me telling that I will be rich by using their names.

Corruption in public institutions was another major obstacle. Some public institutions workers were asking for money in order to provide information. This was a really big task, to make them understand that I had not any money with me. To get access to a certain person in a public institution was very difficult, and sometimes, those ladies who attended me where asking, “Will you pay me a cold drink then?” or “what will I win if I let you in?” Only after offering something I could be more confident and easily get in contact with the person who could offer an interview or provide basic information about what I wanted. It was very hard, but that was the context.

5 Xichangana is one African language, commonly spoken by Changana people in Sothern Mozambique and northern South Africa.
6 Presentation and discussion of research results

This chapter is the main core of the field work, where I present results from interviews and from my participant observations. In this section, the real situation of street children, their challenges in their everyday lives and the main solutions they have to solve these challenges are presented. Here I give priority to street children’s deployment, looking forward to describe in the most precise way what they say without much intervention from my side. It is my opinion to let street children say what they feel and how they understand their situation in relation to their environment.

6.1 The life in the streets of Maputo- “Baixa”

It was very hard to go out there and find children sleeping on the streets living there, eating from trash boxes covering themselves with paper bags and working hard to survive on their everyday life. These children are people with dreams, with hopes, with desires, with life. Society has given them many and different pejorative names such as “Molwenes”, “Marginais”, “bandidos” and so on.

In many occasions, what society thinks about street children is not the real fact of what they really are. They are human beings, they have feelings, they have dreams, and they have wishes and desires. As any human being over the world, street children should have the same human rights. But, unfortunately, according to what I found as reality on the streets of “Baixa”, street children do not have access to any of their human rights. The only right they have is to survive, not to live as human beings. I hereby present what street children refer to be the main factors for their living in the streets.

In this study, I look for an explanation of child welfare in Mozambique, directly from the children, from their practice, from their everyday life, from their feelings, from their thoughts, from their dreams.

My preference in understanding child welfare beginning from what street children say is related to the fact that in most cases their feelings are not taken in account in many

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6 Local expressions meaning bandits, under law, outsiders, and many other negative connotations.
researches and to the fact that policies are defined in a top/down perspective without taking into account the principal features of those for whom these policies will serve.

It is in this perspective that I firstly present what those children tell about their real situation, finding out why do they live in the streets, what are their feelings, how do they live in the streets and which are their real dreams. Secondly I discuss social policies defined by the government looking out in which way those policies meet street children’s needs. In this way I intend to make this research a down/top approach, instead of looking to the reality in a top/down perspective.

### 6.1.1 Factors which lead children to live in the streets

It is a very difficult task to find out which factors lead children to live in the street, since that each child has his or her history, and has his or her own cause for such a situation. It is important to find out from the context which influences children to live on the street.

Powers, Jaklitsch & Eckenrode (1990) in their study about the factors which lead children to live on the streets found that in most cases maltreatment at home caused many of the children to go and live on the streets. According to them, about 60% of the children where exposed to physical abuse, 42% to emotional abuse, 48% to neglect, and 21% to sexual abuse. In this study, they refer that more than 1/3 children were ‘pushed out’. They refer that most of those children who suffered physical abuse had been severely beaten with cords, belt buckles and broom sticks, or had been kicked, slapped or punched. In other hand, they found that negligence and abandonment have been commonly associated to the family failure in providing food, cloths and medical assistance.

### 6.1.2 Domestic violence

One of the principal factors I could identify during my fieldwork and from children’s deployments was the domestic violence due to the orphan situation they are. Normally, these children when they lose their parents or one of them they become vulnerable to be labour force for their relatives. De Moura (2002) refers that the
causality of street children can be linked to adverse factors in the child’s immediate experience within the family system as we can see below.

"I live here about five years ago. My mother is still alive but she's staying in Beira, where I was born. My father is dead. I never knew him. My mother is living with her guy (boyfriend) and he doesn't like me at all. He always beats me without any reason. They made me leave my home because of that. When I left home, I went to find a job to sustain myself, because my mother’s husband used to say that I eat a lot and I don’t do anything, then I started loading people from Beira to Maputo in some buses at “Manga” (a cottage in Beira city- Mozambique). Then the guy who was collecting money asked me if I would like to work with him travelling. I said yes. But when we got here, at Maputo, his boss didn’t like the idea, and they left me her. I don’t have money to return home, and even if I had, I couldn’t go back there, because I suffer more there than here. I think it is better for me to stay here and live my lives, as well as I wish to.”(Joao-15 years)

“My mother is dead. She had a bad case of fever. My father died in a car accident. After my parents died, my aunt made me come to work for her in her house. She would beat me every day for no reason at all. She would hit me with sticks and boards and work me to death until I couldn't take it anymore, so I ran away into the streets. I've been out here for so long, I don't even know for how long I've been out here. You think maybe I could go with you?” (Andre 10 years)

"I'm not living with my father because of his girlfriend. She used to beat me up very badly and had me do all the chores and work that had to done anywhere in or around the house. She has a son also that doesn't do anything at all. Sometimes she would make me take off my pants and have him watch while she was beating me and he would laugh. She even let him do it a few times. I mean she was mistreating me. I've been on the street for one year now”. (Timoteo, 11 years)
"When I was just a little boy my mother broke up with my father. While living with my mother, she always beat me for no reason what so ever. Sometimes she would strip me down to bare skin and beat me with an electric cord. She didn't want the neighbours to know what she was doing to me in the house. She told me the best thing I could do is leave her house. I couldn't take it anymore, so I ran away, looking for my father’s house somewhere here in Maputo, but I don’t know where it is. From that time up to now I've been on the street for 3 years now. I think life here is better than to be beaten everyday, sometimes she beat me until I get sick. Here I do what I want, when I want. Of course I have to obey some rules from my friends here. But I'm never beaten by anybody."(Genito/Geraldo-12 years)

As Cosgrove (1990) refers, family has the main role in providing care and protection to child’s most basic needs in the extent that the level of family involvement in providing such will influence the quality of the child’s social environment (Cosgrove, 1990). In the same extend, Daly (1993) defends that the degree to which a child experiences positive and fulfilling interactions with the family and immediate environment will influence the child’s feelings about its’ family and role orientation ,[reducing in this case the tendency in leaving from home to stay in the streets]. Looking to these deployments from children, I agree with Powers, Jaklitsch & Eckenrode when they refer that maltreatment including verbal abuse is one of the most common factors for children’s decision in living on the street (Powers, Jaklitsch & Eckenrode, 1990).

6.1.3 Orphaned children

Domestic violence in children is in most cases related to their orphan status. The simple fact that a child loses one or both of his or her parents makes them vulnerable to be abused by their relatives and this fact contributes for their decision in living on the streets. The death of one or both parents makes the child much poorer in the whole community in which he or her lives. The obligation of support is mainly imposed
upon parents or grandparents. Somehow, no such obligation upon any other relative is practised effectively.

"After my father died, I was living only with my stepmother. She wouldn't always let me stay with her sometimes when she would get mad. The house burned down, and after that she disappeared and I never saw her again. I had nowhere to go because there was no house anymore and I don't really know anyone else. All I could do was walk around on the streets and stay around the other kids that live out there” (Jaimito- 12 years).

“My mother is dead as well as my father. I've been on the streets for about 4 years, I think. I don't have any place to go to, so I'm living on the street” (Danito-14 years).

"Both of my parents are dead. I use to stay with my uncle. Then a lady came and took me from my uncle and ever since, I've been living as in hell. She used to put me on my knees with a big rock on my head and one in each hand. Sometime, she put hot gravel under my knees to make me kneel on. At other times, she beats me with the Chicave\(^7\). My real father died of tuberculosis, and just a little while later, my mother died in a car accident going to Swaziland to buy something she uses to sell, she was mukerista\(^8\)” (Samito, 11 years).

"My father died first and then my mother. After my mother died, there was no one left at home so I had to go. I remembered by father had a friend that has sort of a farm outside of Xitevela\(^9\) in the country not too far from us. He grows things on there. I went there and asked if could help me. He said I could stay there if I worked. After about 2 months, I was doing all of the work. I had to work from before the sun comes up until after dark. The only time I could eat was once at night. He beat me like a dog almost all the time like when he said I wasn't doing something right or when he was in

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\(^7\) Ribose in chichangana, an African language  
\(^8\) People who go (normally wemen) to South Africa and Swaziland to buy products and re-sell in Mozambique in an informal market.  
\(^9\) Xitevela is a name of a rural area in the north-west of Maputo province.
a bad mood. He would hit me with anything he finds close to him. I ran away to the city here to see if I could live here, but I've been on the street every since. That was about 2 years ago when I came here” (Pedro, 13 years).

“My mother is dead. She had a bad case of fever. My father died in a car accident. After my parents died, my aunt made me come to work for her in her house. She would beat me every day for no reason at all. She would hit me with sticks and boards and work me until I get crazy, so I ran away into the streets. I've been out here for so long, I don't even know for how long I've been out here. You think maybe I could go with you?” (Andre 10 years).

“My mother is dead. She was very sick since the time I was born. My father did not accept her pregnancy until I was born. When she died, I stayed with my grandmother who died some years later” (Vasquinho-15 years).

As we can see from these deployments, in many cases, an orphan is more vulnerable to domestic abuse, child labour and domestic violence, since that the natural sympathy is not the centre of relationship between him and his caregivers. However, willingness to bear a distributed burden for the common good, rather than to enforce an individual one, should contribute to the acceptance of the care of orphans as a public duty.

6.1.4 Labour force

In most cases, due to the fact that children are orphan and without protection, most of those relatives who take care of them, have the duty to take care, use them as labour forces in domestic and farming activities as we can see from the following deployments. The issue is not only a case of labour force; mostly it is at the same time related to physical violence to orphan children.
"When my mother stopped me from breastfeeding, she broke up with my father and disappeared. Before my father died, he took me to my aunt’s house because he was going to South Africa to get a job in there. Then my aunt got married with her new husband. He was very bad person. He used to make me working with him at his “officine” where I was learning to fix cars. But he didn’t let me go to school and used to beat me a lot. One day, one of those boys who were working there with us took one car’s brake and sold it to a client. Them my uncle thought that it was me who took it. He bet me and sent me out of his wife’s house. My aunt didn’t do anything. Since that time I’m living here, with my friends. At least here, there is nobody to shout with me and to beat me all the time, I’m free. That is why I prefer to stay here. I’m living here 3 years ago” (Pedrito-13 years).

“Then I my uncle took me to live with him, but life was very hard in his house, I had to go everyday to the farm, cutting wood for fire, clean the house and when I do not finish all the work I was beaten so much. My cousins, my uncle’s children where free from work, only me had to work hard for them. Then I decided to leave my uncles house, I don’t remember when and came to stay here. I really don’t know if my father’s alive or where he is now. I don’t know how long I’ve been on the street. So if you can help me, please help me” (Vasquinho-15 years).

“I’m not living with my aunt anymore because she was abusing me too much. She has a daughter and every chore or anything else in the house for anyone is my responsibility. She tells her kids to do something and they would yell to make me do it instead. My aunt says I have to do whatever anyone in her family says, including her kids. If I try to tell about something one of her kids or relatives do to me, I get a beating. If her kids do something they tell her I was the one who did it. Then she beats me. I’ve been on the streets now for more than two years” (Gildo, 15 years).
6.1.5 Abandonment

In some cases these children where abandoned by their relatives due to many different factors, the core argument presented by these children is the economic weakness of their families or relatives.

According to Peacock (1994) there is a direct link between family stress in the lives of children and them adopting street life as an alternative. He mentions that 80% of street children had experienced parental rejection, 65% had overly strict parental discipline, 75% experienced parental alcohol abuse and 100% of the sample were exposed to poverty within the family (Peacock, 1994).

"I have no mother or father. I got lost a long time ago, I can’t say exactly when, because I don’t remember. I was going with my mother to my uncle’s house and when we got here at the city, I got lost at the bus station. I’m not able to find my parents. I went from police station to police station, and some polices began to bother with me telling that I wasn’t any lost children; I’m probably a robber. From that time I started to live here. I’m living here about 4 years ago” (Estevão - 9 years).

"I've been on the streets for four years. I make my living by washing cars and loading them up or sometimes begging. I'm not living with my parents because they told me to leave a long time ago, then they moved away somewhere, I don’t know where to. They have many other kids and said they can't afford me. They said I should be able to make my own living without bothering them. Here I have a new family, my friends” (Gito-12 years).

“’I’ve been on the street for 2 years. I'm not staying with my mother because of her boyfriend, and my real father is dead. Her boyfriend always beats me for no reason. He beats me with a wire and also with a pipe sometimes. He told me he can't take care of someone else’s kid. They wanted me to leave, so I did’” (Betinho, 8 years).
"When my mother stopped me from breastfeeding, she broke up with my father and disappeared. Before my father died, he took me to my aunt’s house because he was going to South Africa to get a job in there. Then my aunt got married with her new husband. He was very bad person. He used to make me working with him at his “officine” where I was learning to fix cars. But he didn’t let me go to school and used to beat me a lot. One day, one of those boys who were working there with us took one car’s brake and sold it to a client. Them my uncle thought that it was me who took it. He bet me and sent me out of his wife’s house. My aunt didn’t do anything. Since that time I’m living here, with my friends. At least here, there is nobody to shout with me and to beat me all the time, I’m free. That is why I prefer to stay here. I’m living here 3 years ago” (Pedrito-13 years).

"I’m not living with my mother because she ran off to South Africa with her friend and left me with a lady she said was my "aunt". My father has been dead for a long time” (Gildo, 15 years).

6.1.6 Mental sickness of their relatives

In most cases, if a child is under the care of a mentally disorder person, easily this child can be lead to difficult situation, since that nobody will care about it. The case of Jonas, whose father had mental disorders, his luck was to end on the streets.

“I can't live with my father because he is very crazy (mentally ill) and very dangerous. The police took him away and beat him up a lot of times for doing very crazy things” (Jonas 14 years).

In sum, and as we can find out from these deployments, factors which lead children to be living on streets are many and multifaceted. In this case, the orphaned situation is the core and with this situation, children become vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.
Family desegregation can be seen as the main factor for street children in Mozambique, particularly those to whom we have been talking with. As in many cases mentioned, children have the basic need for food, clothing, shelter, etc in which the family is the most appropriate provider as Cosgrove (1990) refers. In case the child do not receive this from the family, he will then rely on his own resourcefulness in order to meet his needs, which in turn will expose him to live on the street (Cosgrove, 1990).

These deployments show in clearly the real picture which leads children to live on streets, which are the main factors for this kind of situations. Actually, my questions are addressed to those who are responsible in child care in Mozambique, which is their responsibility? Can we talk about child rights and child protection in this kind of situations? In which extend can I refer to child integrity as human being? Before I go into details I prefer to present how is street children’s day after day of life, what kind of issues they find out there on the street.

6.2 The day after day of street children: what a life style!!!

To understand the day after day life of street children I looked out some basic needs for all human beings such as: food, habitation, work, protection, and health care. This does not mean that people’s wellbeing is based in only on these five points, there are many other elements. I believe that by describing these elements we can easily understand how life in the street is.

6.2.1 Street children’s source of food

Alimentation is an important element for all human beings to maintain a good physical and mental status. Food for street children come from many and different sources, as a result of hard work as they describe here: from helping people, especially tourists, with their bags, shining cars, carrying heavy boxes, cleaning the
market, loading cars (chapas\textsuperscript{10}), and selling products for a certain person who might have products to sell, principally those ladies from local markets, etc.

“To get food for me I go around here and help people caring their baggage, sometimes they give me some money, sometimes not. Other people buy me bread. All what I earn from a day is about 25 to 30 000 Mt\textsuperscript{11}, it is enough to buy food. I sleep under that branch and when it is raining I cover it with some plastics I use to get here” (Jaimito- 12 years).

Somewhere, it is not every days that street children have a lucky day to find out somebody to help and get something from that. In certain cases sleeping without eating anything is the only alternative they have as Pedrito says:

“Life is difficult here, sometimes we sleep without food, sometimes it is cold, and sometimes it is raining. But it is always better here than my aunt’s home” (Pedrito-13 years).

In certain cases begging is the other alternative; local transportation finds street children also as cheap labour forces, using them to load their “chapas” with people. This loading process is not a simple fact of loading, it is a long process of standing in the entrance of the car and keep calling people telling them where does the transportation goes, this process takes sometimes 20, 30 minutes or even 1 hour. Jonas tells about his experience:

“I've been on the street for 3 years. I make my living by loading cars, washing them and begging when I have to. My mother died a long time ago” (Jonas 14 years).

\textsuperscript{10} Semi-collective private transportation used in Maputo as public transports. Children wake up in the Morning and they keep at the bus station calling people to go to ones bus and after that they get some coins.

\textsuperscript{11} During this period 1 euro was 33000Mt
Street children in certain cases become retailers of market sellers giving them their products to sell for them. This has been one of the practices to get money in order to buy food for them. If none of the elements mentioned above, street children seem to have an alternative always, to get food from the trash container and to eat from rest of food offered from those ladies who use to sell food in the markets and in exchange they have to wash the dirty pots and plates for them.

“Everyday, when I wake up, I go and try to find some water to wash my face. Then I go to the people on the streets who sell plastics and I take some to sell for them. I use to earn about 20 or 30000 M$ per day. It is enough to find something to eat. When I don’t find any money, I use to eat food people throw away in the boxes in here, sometimes is not good food, but it can kill my hunger, that is enough. Other times I go to the people who sell cooked foods at the street kitchens and ask them to let me have something to eat. If they are in a good mood, they let you have something to eat. They often let you have the crust of the cooked food instead of giving you a normal plate of food” (Pedrito-13).

6.2.2 Hard Work

Work is an important resource for surviving in the streets. Street children have to work themselves in order to maintain their everyday life.

The “street law” is based in the selvage law where the strongest person can survive and those who do not have power must rely on someone’s protection or he will suffer certain buries. To live on the street it is necessary to be hard worker, to have dedication and establish good relationships within the members of the group.

Some activities become their principal profession, day after day, such as shining cars, loading public transportation, transporting baggage, selling some products from someone in the market as we saw in deployments above. Money earned from this hard work is used for many issues, such as buying cigarettes, drugs, food and in many cases alcohol.
“My job here is to guard cars, clean them and make sure no one stills any part of it. Normally I can find about 50000 per day; I buy food, drug and some drinks to relax when I’m tired. Everyday we drink here; there is no weekend for us” (Geraldo-12 years).

Tourists, semi-collective transportation drivers and money collectors are in many occasions the principal font of income for street children:

“There are days that we have many tourists here in the city, and in those days I make my money by wiping down cars or loading the “chapas”(semi collective public transportation used in Mozambique) up with passengers at the bus station. They give us 5 or 10000 Mt then you help them out. Of course we have to pay our “fees” to older guys who uses to protect us, 5 000 is enough to buy protection from them” (Pedrito-13 years).

As we can see from deployments above, shining cars (cleaning cars in the parking point) is one of the occupation street children have as the main source of income.

“I make my living by washing and loading cars and sometimes resort to begging” (Timóteo, 11 years).

“I’ve been on the street since November 2000 and I sleep in broke down cars. I make my living by wiping down car windows as they pass and sometime I beg in front of the store for a little change. When my folks died, I was just a little boy” (Samito, 11 years).

6.2.3 Health care

Health care for street children is still a myth, something which exists in imagination, in legislation and not in practice. Their basic source of health care is their knowledge of natural herb they can use in certain kind of headaches, or stomach aches. When they try to access to formal health care institutions, they are at first time discriminated
and rejected by health care workers. As these children report, they smell bad, they stink, so they can’t get health care, nurses mistreat them in all levels.

There is no any right for diagnose in case for street children, medication is given to them just to feel free from them. One extreme point to mention is the fact that they do not have the right to be buried as human beings; they have a called “common valley” (a big hole made for those who do not have family to care about the expenses of their burying) where these children are thrown when they die.

“When we are sick, we help each other, in the hospital, they don’t care of us many times. When we go there for help, they don’t even ask us what we feel; they give us some tablets if we have luck and send us out. Mostly, when we go to hospital, the nurses say that we stink, and she sends us out. Since I’m living here, I saw 3 of my friends dying here, I think they had malaria, and we couldn’t do anything, we hadn’t any money to take them to hospital. They dyed and police came to pick them out from here. When we dye we are thrown at the common place, since that we have no family” (Jaimito- 12 years).

Sometimes, street children die in the street due to malaria and other serious diseases, since that for them, the right for medical assistance is based on the presence of an adult and on being clean and well dressed, and their future is the death.

The help provided by some religious institutions has been the only source of support for these children, but not enough at all.

“Now I have been sick, I have headaches almost everyday now. I went to the hospital and the lady there who was attending told me to go home and come back clean with my mother, I told her that I have no home, nor mother. She refused to give me medicines and sent me out. Now I’m drinking “cacana’s” boiled water, which relieves my headaches. I’m afraid to get to be seriously sick, because I saw many of my friends here dying from malaria, since that we do not have treatment. Tomorrow

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12 Cacana, is the name of a herb, one of the most important traditional medicines used in Mozambique to cure head aches, stomach aches. It is also used as one of most nutritious food when cooked with peanuts.
those guys from the church, who use to come here and pray with us will be here and I want to ask them some help” (Joao-15 years).

6.2.4 Protection

In Mozambique is difficult to reflect on child protection, on child support and respect to child rights, and to basic human rights. Street children report some deep contradictions with what is stated on child rights convention which Mozambican government has ratified in 1999. The disrespect to the basic rights of human beings is extremely shown in these reports presented by street children.

It is supposed that the role of police and legal institutions is to provide protection for all citizens, promoting human rights and granting stability for everybody. This idea is utopia for street children who have different stories about their relation with the police.

“I went from police station to police station, and some polices began to bother with me telling that I wasn’t any lost children, I’m probably a robber. From that time I started to live here. I’m living here about 4 years ago” (Estevão- 9 years).

“Sometimes the police come here and start bothering with us; they can beat us sometimes without any reason” (Joao-15 years).

In other cases between them there are situations of extreme violence. Street is not a pacific place and to be physical strong and to be able to fight against each others is an important tool, if not the solution is to buy security from those who are strong enough.

“My friends sometimes get drunk and start beating me a lot, sometimes they take my food. Only Jaimito is my best friend, he uses to protect me from others, but sometimes he is beaten” (Jaimito-9-years).
Even in such a context of violence, streets seem to be much secure for street children than to be in a house where your own parents bit you everyday. There are situations of collective reaction for their own protection.

“Sometimes I get beat up pretty badly by the other kids but that doesn't matter, because I have to be with them to stay alive. They protect me at times as well”
(Danito-14 years).

6.3 Street children’s dreams

6.3.1 The dream for a school

Street children are human beings as any other person everywhere. They have dreams, for going to school and learn as all children learn, for a better home, for having family one day and for a better life. Somehow, their dreams are reduced to nothing due to the hard situation they are immersed. They wish to be someone as everybody else. Somehow, the government refers to right for a name, for education, for home, for protection, for support to all children. This is not the reality street children report in their day after day lives. Some religious organizations have been helping these children to make their dream real, by teaching them some basic features like reading bible.

“I can’t read nor to write my name. But now, there is a group of people from a church, they use to come here and teach me writing my name and reading a bible. They give us food all Thursdays and keep talking with us. They are from Community of Sant’egidio” (Estevão- 9 years).

“I can read something and write my name, but not too much. Some people from a church use to come here to teach us some bible, to give us food and help us when we are sick. They are from Ministério do Arco Iris or something like that, I don’t know them very well and others from Sant’egidio Community” (Geraldo-12 years).
It is hard to see other children going to school, and they even wishing to, they can’t, their environment and social conditions do not give them such luck.

“My dream is to have a possibility to get to school, to learn writing and reading. To find a job and have a family which can take care of me. I appreciate other children walking with there parents, but my destiny was to stay her. One thing I know, I will not stay here forever” (Pedrito-13 years).

Street children do not like to be in the street as it is thought in many occasions, they which to be like every children who have families and homes.

“I really don’t like living the way I do. It’s not really the way I am. I want to go to school and be normal” (Jonas, 14 years).

6.3.2 The dream to have family

Family is one of the most important elements in everybody’s life. In the family, children get protected, loved, and may have basic assistance. Street children also wish to have family as they report bellow. It is not just a matter of wishing to go home or to live in the street. These children do not have any other choice.

“I would like to have a home, family, mother and father like other children. If it was possible, to remember my home I could go on foot. I just know it is in Gaza province, but where I don’t know” (Estevão- 9 years).

The fear of dying in the street is strong; the need of having a family and somebody to take care of them is a common feeling. The main question is why did this happen to them?

“I just keep wondering why my father had to dye and where is my mother; I wouldn’t like to dye here. My dream is to grow up and one day find a job, have my house and my family, I want to be happy one day, as other children do” (Jaimito- 12 years).
“After I get better, I would like to find a really job on “chapas” as a collector, then I will rent a house, buy some clothes and live there with some of my best friends. I don’t like to stay here, it really difficult, but I don’t have any choice” (Joao-15 years).

The feeling of hate to some of their parents is very strong; sometimes the level of mistreatment is too deep that causes strong marks in children’s hearts.

“I don’t want to see my mother never again, she is my mother, I love her, but she made me this, a bad boy. Now I just keep looking to other kids walking with their parents. I would like to be in the same situation, but my destiny is here, on the streets” (Genito-12 years).

For some children, their parents just forgot them; they have no meaning for their parents.

“I don’t know where my father is, I have never got back there to ask for him, I think he forgot me” (Pedrito-13 years).

What I have presented here are just examples of street children’s hopes among thousands of them. In which extend can we refer to child welfare in a context of totally deprivation of basic child rights as these of street children?

7 Child welfare policies and institutional practice in Mozambique

In this section I present the results from interviews to workers in public institution who are direct or indirectly related to child welfare in general. I also discuss the legal framework of child welfare in Mozambique, how children are seen in terms of
policies, and how these policies can be found in practice. This section highlights the relation between institutional social work practice and social policies in use.

7.1 A legal and institutional overview on child welfare in actual context

In 1990 was adopted the African Charter on the Rights and welfare of the child by Organization of African Unity (OAU) actually named African Union (AU). The Charter defines a “child” as “a complete human being less than 18 years old” (OAU, 1990). It recognises the child's unique and privileged place in African society and that African children need protection and special care. It also acknowledges that children are entitled to the enjoyment of freedom of expression, association, peaceful assembly, thought, religion, and conscience. It aims to protect the private life of the child and safeguard the child against all forms of economic exploitation and against work that is hazardous, interferes with the child's education, or compromises his or her health or physical, social, mental, spiritual, and moral development. It calls for protection against abuse and bad treatment, negative social and cultural practices, all forms of exploitation or sexual abuse, including commercial sexual abuse, and illegal drug use. It aims to prevent the sale and trafficking of children, kidnapping, and begging of children. (OAU: 1990)

It provides for the protection of children against harmful and potentially exploitative cultural practices with an emphasis on "customs and practices prejudicial to the health or life of the child and those customs and practices discriminatory to the child on the grounds of sex and others status" (Article 21.1). This could address the situations in which what elsewhere would be seen as the abuse of children is justified on the basis of "culture". The Convention also obliges States to establish 18 as the minimum age for marriage and to make registration of all marriages compulsory, and thus aims to combat early marriage and forced child marriage.

Even with much policies and achievements there still much of non application of child rights in many African countries, and specifically in Mozambique where activities like: helping in the parents' business or having one's own small “business”, like cleaning car windows, shining shoes, selling small items such as cigarettes, etc; some
children work as a guide for tourists, also there still a child prostitution and illegal drug trade, illegal trade involving tapes, CD, DVDs, and other kind of products.

Children labour is considered as a human rights violation, and outlawed. In many African countries, such as Mozambique this is allowed, under the cover of poverty and culture since that families often rely on the labours of their children for survival and sometimes they are the only source of income for the whole family. This type of work is often hidden away because it is not in employment but in subsistence agriculture, in the household or in the urban informal sector.

In 1999 Mozambican government ratified the adhesion to the Children Rights Convention, where it recognizes the right to the children to have a better standard of life by providing health assistance, education, justice, protection against sexual abuse and child labour. The convention states on its structure that children have all rights due to their statutes of human beings. The convention's child rights are based on human rights which are universal and equal to all human beings all over the world.

This convention presents a number of statements for the countries which have ratified such as: the definition of child (at civil law, criminal law, constitutional law, employment law, rights to know biological parents, access to education, sexual consent and marriage, voluntary and freed conscription to armed forces, religious freedom, and the use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and other controlled substances).

In this study I concentrate my attention to these elements to discuss the children's situation in Mozambique, comparing the statements from the Child rights convention with the social polices and Mozambican constitution, contrasting these statements to the day after day life of street children in Maputo.

7.1.1 The definition of Child

The convention sets a precedent in attempting to set a definition of childhood. The League of Nations Declaration on the Rights of the child in 1923, the International Union for Child Welfare Declaration in 1948 and the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959 avoided tying themselves to a particular chronological age. This
was due to the major differences in national legislation and the variations in cultural expectations and norms (IFSW, 2002 P.16).

According to the Conventions statements, children are all individuals who are under the age 18 (art.1). Using this assumption, Mozambican law determines the children’s rights in many ways.

### 7.1.2 Infancy

The national law refers that all children have the right to have family, society and State's protection in order to provide his or her integral development; that children, particularly orphans, disabled and abandoned have the protection of the family, of the society and of the State against any kind of discrimination, mistreatments and against abusive use of authority in the family and any other institution; that children can not be discriminated due to his or her birth place and not to be subjected to mistreatments. It is forbidden in law to a child labour. (Art.121 constitution of the Republic of Mozambique)

The art.47 of the constitution refers the children's rights in the following statements: “Children have the right to protection and to necessary care for their wellbeing; Children can express freely their opinion on issues related to their lives according to their age and maturity; All acts related to the children, held public institutions or private must have in account the superior interest of the child.”

At legal point of view, Mozambique is integrated to the Child Rights Convention, to the Child Labour Convention stated by International Labour Organization in 1999. But a question arise from all these statements and conventions ratified by Mozambican government, such as in which way are children's rights achieved? In which we can refer to children's rights when thinking about the street children's lives? How can we refer to the children's wellbeing in Mozambique from these statements? Before I go through these questions I would like to have a look to what Mozambican social policies state for children's wellbeing. I discuss this point in five basic topics: **Children's Maternity and Paternity status; Education, Health, Environment, and Housing.**
7.1.3 Children's maternity and Paternity right

According to the Constitution of the republic (Art. 120), maternity and paternity are dignified and protected; the family is responsible for the child's harmonious growth and educates the new generations on moral, ethics and social values; the family and the State assure the child's education, forming him or her to the love of the Fatherland, equity between women and men, respect and social solidarity; and the fathers and mothers must give assistance to their children born inside and out of the marriage. This means that the law defends the family integrity, the family responsibility to children's wellbeing and that the family is a unique institution with authority and rights to promote children's rights. The family is seen as a partner of the State in providing children's wellbeing. In Mozambique, family is a very important institution for child's wellbeing in all levels.

7.1.4 Education

The art. 88 of the national constitution refer that: “at the Republic of Mozambique, Education constitutes a right and duty of all citizens, the State promotes the education extension to a continuous professional training and equal access of all citizens for this right”.

In this sense the National Education System (NES) presents as some objectives defined by the republic constitution for education which are:

a) To eradicate the illiteracy in order to provide to all people the access to the scientific knowledge and to their capacities development;

b) to warranty the basic education to all citizens according to the country's development by the progressive introduction of obligatory schooling;

c) To assure to all Mozambicans the access to a professional training. (see Education law, Series I, nr.41, October 1995)

The same document predicts the financial support for those children coming from poor families, especially girls.
Referring to the informal education, the NES refers to the possibility of offering to the street children opportunities of diversified education and to a technical professional orientation. The question is in which extend do we refer to the right of education for all citizens? What kind of issues do the Ministry of education develop to put these objectives in practice? How does the government promote this training and integration for street children?

These questions were posed to some professionals of the Ministry of education. Mostly I can refer that none of these goals are achieved entirely due to many factors indicated by my interviewers such as Lack of resources (economical problems), infrastructural problems, and lack of professionals to work with street children.

“The government has the aim to integrate street children to the national education system, but there are no enough resources to cover all the street children existing in the country” (Z.N- DECC- Maputo city).

Some interviewers’ referred to some actions held by the Ministry of education and NGOs to promote street children's wellbeing such as:

“There are some projects held by NGOs under Ministry of Education partnership to promote street children's integration and education, but it has been hard, since that there are no enough financial resources. We have so many projects held by NGOs such as 'project hope' held by the Ministry and NGOs such as FDC, Save the children and other companies such as EDM and TDM” (P.M- Ministry of Education).

The government of Mozambique have been doing its best to guarantee education for all, schools have been being built and the number of access to school has increased.

“The Ministry of education is doing the best, under the international support we have built many schools over the country and the number of people going to school has increased in about 83%, this means that the educations' goals will be achieved in long term depending of course in the political and economical stability we have now” (G.P- Ministry of Education).
One of my interviewers referred to the existence of institutions working together with the ministry of education and to the existence of orphanages working to help orphaned children and to integrate them to the institutional and social level:

“Here in Maputo we have many NGOs, some are Arco Iris Ministry, ADPP, FDC, Save the children and UNICEF which are some principal partners of the Ministry of education and are helping in the process of child integration in the society. The 1 de Maio orphanage centre for example, is working and helping children who are orphans and abandoned children as well. These institutions work together with the government to promote children's wellbeing. It is not true that the Government do not do anything to help children, the principal problem is the lack of financial resources since that he country is big and the income is very low” (S.L DECC- Maputo City).

7.1.5 Health care

The constitution of Republic on its Art. 89 refer to the right of medical and sanitary assistance for all citizens and to the duty to promote and defend the public health. Children are Mozambican citizens and it is stated in health law that “it is a priority of health sector policy to provide health care to the vulnerable populations, particularly to families and individuals in absolute poverty situation” and that “the public health sector is constituted by a National Health Service for the entire population ...” (Health policy, Resolution nr. 4/95 of 11th June)

The question is that, do street children have access to health care as it is stated in this policy? How do Health care institutions find street children's needs and assistance? In which extend can we refer that street children have access to health care? Is it worth to refer to the general health care access for street children?

All my interviewers were not able to give me answers concerning to the access of health care services of street children due to the lack of information concerning to that issue.

“According to the law, it is a right of all citizens to have access to health care in all levels, it is difficult for me to refer how many street children do we attend or did we
attend, because we do not have any discrimination, if it is or not a street children” (S.P- Jose Macamo Hospital- Maputo city).

The process of integration of street children to access health assistance and basic social assistance is also referred as an inter-institutional issue, since that street children are not a simple issue, it is seen as a whole body of national problem.

“The problem of street children can not be seen as a single issue, there are institutions which deal with them, such as the Ministry of women and social affairs (MMAS) and National Institute of Social Action (INAS). I think they can give you a deeper understanding of the problem, what is done and what is being done for street children. I can't tell you how many street children do health institutions attend and how are they attended in there. The law refers to the right of all citizens to access health care; that is all I can tell you” (P.M- Provincial direction of health).

7.1.6 Housing

The art.91 of the national constitution determines as a right for all citizens to have a place to live, and to have basic protection in all level as follows:

1. All citizens have the right to a condign housing and it is States' duty to create adequate institutional conditions, norms and infrastructures according to the national economic development.

2. I also State's duty to foment and support local community, local autarchies and population's initiatives, stimulating private and cooperative constructions, and as well the access to own housing.

Thinking on all these statements and comparing them with street children’s deployments, what can we say about street children? What kind of issues can we refer to street children's situation? Is it true that all citizens have the right for housing? Aren't street children Mozambican citizens?

Tudorié-Ghemo (2005) refers that “emphasis on children's rights in general results in emphasis on the rights of all youths, regardless of what their circumstances are. By
government policies addressing the social, economic, cultural and educational needs of the community in general, supports youths becoming independent and responsible members of society” (Tudorié-Ghemo, 2005).

As Shanahan (1999) points out that “the most important right of the child is to be a child, to have adults take responsibility for you until you can reasonably take it for yourself” (Shanahan, 1999: 13 in Tudorié-Ghemo, 2005: 25).

There is lack of institutional practice to integrate street children’s needs, and in this sense, I can’t refer to child welfare in Mozambique. These findings do not give me the freedom to think about the existence or not of child welfare at all.

8 Conclusions

The basic goal of this study was to understand the actual situation of social work practice for child welfare and the reality of this social work practice concerning to street children in Mozambique. This meant before hand to find a definition of social work and street children, concepts which are not universal and with much contextual character. This particularity makes these concepts very sensible while working with them and may not be taken for granted; they have different meanings according to the place and reality in which they are being used. Social work as a concept addresses multiple and complex transactions between people and their environments and it is an interrelated system of values, theory and practice.

In one hand, the task of reflecting on social work for child welfare in Mozambique is not easy, first because social work practice is still in a very beginning phase and second because it is still in a very low level of research in a scientific perspective. In the other hand to analyze factors which lead street children live on streets is not also a simple target, since that there are multifaceted factors influencing their decision to live on streets.

Historically, there are 6 (six) principal phases of child welfare practices in Mozambique according to its contextual political and economical reality. These phases are: the colonial period, the post independent period, the Economic
Readjustment Program (PRE) period, the Economic and Social Readjustment period (PRES) and the post civil war period.

Anthony Giddens constituted the principal source of lens to read and understand this historical overview of Mozambican child welfare and the reality of social work practice using his theory of Structuration and Social praxis. In this approach I find that all actions which constitute and are constituted by the social system produce the space in which the social practice takes place. This means that social systems are temporarily and spatially determinants and they both constitute the space-time of social action. This approach gives a clear understanding and analyse of the context in which social policies, plans of action and strategies related to child welfare introduced by Mozambican government took place, and as well the reaction of social work practice institutions to them. Using this approach, it was possible to draw the dynamic of social work practice in a diachronic point of view preserving the particular aspects of the context in which the study is outlined.

Since that it the main aim to understand the actual situation of street children’s life in relation to social work practice, according to children’s experiences and point of view, or in other words from down/top perspective, qualitative methods where used, basically the Ethnographic perspective where I looked forward to understand the daily lives, experiences, dreams, hopes and the relation between these aspects with social work practice and social policies being implemented by the government in Mozambique. Open and semi-structured interviews where the basic techniques to comprehend the real social work practice for child welfare from the social workers in formal institutions in Maputo city. This gave me a deeper comprehension of facts, experiences, feelings, sentiments and opinions about the role played by social work for child welfare. Children’s experiences permeates this study, due to the fact that in most cases their feelings are not taken in account in many researches and to the fact that policies are defined in a top/down perspective without taking in account the principal features of those for whom these policies will serve.

This study shows that one of the most common factors influencing children to live on streets is domestic violence associated to the fact that those children are orphans of one or both parents. These factors are deeply associated to other co-related factors
such as the situation of poverty of their families, the increasing number of poverty, the institutional incapacity to provide basic services and support to families, etc.

This study outlines the legal overview of social policies which show clearly that there is a legal and institutional practice in providing child welfare in Mozambique. Somehow, there is a gap between legislation and institutional commitment in providing such child protection. Social work practice in Mozambique is still in a very premature phase, it is something that is to be planned and reorganized. I’m afraid at certain point of view, to say that there is a social work practice for street children if reflecting on the reality street children report about their daily life. The lack of financial resources, human resources and institutional capacity are, in many points of view the main factors to this situation. Social work training, institutional commitment and practical actions need to be developed in order to provide better life for street children and to reduce their tendency of living on the streets.

Many factors may be addressed as possible weakness of this study, such as the fact that it does not have a gender equity approach, since that it focuses simply a sample of boys during the research period. The lack of information in public institutions about child welfare and street children in Mozambique, corruption in public institutions and many other factors made this research much limited.

9 Addressing community based social work for child protection

In a study conducted by Maphatane (1994) it was found that the general attitude towards street children in South Africa was one of indifference and their presence was often accepted as the ‘norm’. This unconcerned attitude was manifest, not only by the community in general, but particularly by family members themselves, which was further compounded by the fact that there was no pressure being exerted by the community on the family either. As a result, an apathetic attitude by family members to discipline or regulate the behaviour of their children was maintained (Maphatane, 1994).
This attitude is common in most developing countries and especially in Mozambique, where the situation of street children is getting worst. Although, it would be interesting to address the question why do society become apathetic and with apathy to this situation? Which might be the factors which support such behaviour?

In my understanding, this kind of problems is also related to social welfare infrastructures, and to the situation of poverty devastating the country. Social work as a helping profession and a social policy change aimed activity can address better features in these situations by promoting a community based social work practice, where education in formal and informal perspective is the most important tool.

### 9.1.1 Community based social work

The concept of community is defined by Tönnies (1855-1936) as “the permanent and real form of living together”, and “community should be seen as a living organism” (Tönnies, 1887). In this concept, the central essence is the social capital, where people develop the ideal of living together in an empathic point of view, sharing, trusting, exchanging and supporting each other.

If referring to community social work practice, it means that Social workers concentrate their activities at local level, looking forward for the local or community based development and well-being.

McLeod (2003) refers that “there is now broad agreement that community-based social service interventions can have sustainable and effective outcomes. Evidence also suggests that community-based projects are cost-effective, not least because they make maximum use of volunteerism and informal, community-based safety nets – resources that are hard to mobilize at the macro-level” (McLeod, 2003:6).

Community based social work practice is needed where there can not be provided social services by well established institutions and where there is not enough financial capacity available to provide it on an individual basis as the case of Mozambique.
Mozambique is considered one of the poorest countries on the world, and as my findings referred from interviews, there are no enough resources (financial and institutional resources) to give answer to the increasing situation of street children.

Tobis (2000) refers that “a multipronged public information campaign could be developed to change the attitudes of the public, policymakers, administrators, and the line staff of residential institutions” (Tobis, 2000:2).

For the case of Mozambique, it is important to make human rights and child rights conventions known by the whole society in a local level, according to their values and cultural trends. This can contribute for a changing of public opinion and the attitude of policymakers on children’s rights.

Social work training in Mozambique is still a new fact, starting the first social work training course at University level in February 2007. Due to the lack of professionals, Mozambican social work training should concentrate in training staff, local social assistance offices, new community-based social service programs, and in promoting community empowerment, so that in a close future, where there are only one or two highly trained professional social workers for a large population, involving several communities, social work interventions will reach the majority of the population.

Tobis (2000) refers that in recent years basic social work programs have been created in many transition economies, with some success. Many programs could benefit, however, from additional study tours, technical assistance, and training in basic social work skills and specific service modalities. They could also benefit from collaborating to provide training or conduct research to create new social service programs (...) expanding the role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and their cooperation with the public sector are important elements of the social welfare infrastructure that should be strengthened (Tobis, 2000: 3).

In this perspective McLeod (2003) and Tobis (2000) propose the community based pilot projects as a starting point to develop community based social work and community empowerment, where, according to him, there are several advantages such as:
“The flexibility to test a wide range of approaches—service modalities, organizational auspices, geographic locations.

Opportunities to identify and correct inappropriate approaches and mistakes made on a small scale.

Time and data to gain popular support to carry out the project on a larger scale.

Limited investment and risk by donors.

The opportunity to initiate a dialogue on policy. Each pilot project could operate as a joint effort by the government, municipalities, donors, and NGOs, with cost sharing for investment funds, training, and recurrent costs. The most effective and sustainable service programs are based on citizen participation, including family members, direct consumers of service, and professionals” (Tobis, 2000:53).

So long as there is enough funding available for a professional social worker to supervise the community based work, keeping it up to required standards, the community itself can supply the energy, time and interest in making it work.

As a closing point, McLeod (2003) present several advantages of the use of community based social work practice as follows:

“**Good development outcomes.** While buildings and other infrastructure are important, focusing on the services provided within that infrastructure are necessary to achieve lasting development outcomes

**Cost effectiveness.** The marginal cost of providing social services in a “traditional” way can be extremely high for the service provided. Community participation can also help reduce “leakages” and ensure more efficient use of resources. When a community is responsible for supporting a portion of the project costs, it is more likely to make sure that project investments from other sources are well managed. Community-based care services are also quicker to implement than “traditional” forms of lending. The way in which a service is provided has a great influence over the price and impact of the service.

**Activities that fit the users:** A community-based approach to social services provision, in which communities are empowered to establish priorities and manage
resources, helps to ensure that services are appropriate for the local context and suit local preferences.

**Opening the door to include vulnerable groups:** including social service components in community-based projects can help increase the likelihood of the project, targeting the poorest and most vulnerable groups *within* a community.

**Growing demand:** Tragically, demand for social care services is being driven by growth in the number of people who need such services, particularly due to the ravages of AIDS” (McLeod, 2003:8-10).

Those institutions which were supposed to work and to promote child welfare, should work in an integrated perspective, where policies and actions are addressed at general level to all institutions and are implemented in the same level by all formal institutions.
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