



Newsletter 88

March 2021

EXPLAINING CAS FINDINGS and POLICIES



Dear Reader,

Although CAS is not in full operation as planned, we want to report on the activities, developments and future plans of CAS.

In December 2019, CAS published its findings in a newsletter as well as on CAS' website and face-book page. The results response was not encouraging. There were no comments, reactions or feedback.. It became clear that this method of publication is not the correct one.

Exactly one year later we re-published the findings in a different way after we had consulted some experts. Flyers were made and published on Social media. A large group of people could be reached. However, the question remains how many persons received the message? Considering the less feedback received.

In order to get to know this, we decided to select and meet certain groups in person to explain and answer questions.

We targeted church groups starting with the Catholic Church. The Archbishop was contacted by email asking permission to publish the flyers. He answered positively and he asked us to discuss them with the vicar general because the Archbishop was still recovering from a stroke.

The vicar general answered all our questions and gave us good suggestions. He emphasized that by all means we should meet the Archbishop himself. He organized a meeting for us and we had the opportunity to explain everything to the Archbishop. Suggestions were made to meet the following groups:

- The Archbishop, deans and advisors.
- National Catholic Laity Council
- National Council of Catholic Women
- Youth Council

Three members of CAS met the Archbishop, the Deans and Advisors and we had the opportunity to explain briefly how CAS organizes its activities. We explain our findings based on the social survey reports and we asked them to team up with us to prevent more children entering the streets. A lot of pastoral work has to be done to take care of children of broken families. Family counseling has to be intensified. We at CAS are of the opinion that Parish Priests and assistances can do a lot to bring these matters to the attention of Parishioners concerned.

We also met the Parish Priests of the two Parishes in which we are working; Mamprobi and Adjei Kojo (Ashaiman).

In Mamprobi Parish we were lucky to meet the Parish council and we used the same method. We briefly outlined CAS activities and its findings. The group was very interested and proposed to CAS workers to meet each parish group separately.

They also suggested to us to meet the Parishioners during church services. Of course this will be very difficult for CAS to organize. Each parish has approximately 18 groups and one Deanery has 15 Parishes. The number will be too great to handle.

Therefore, we hope that their leaders spread these messages to its members.

At the ST. AUGUSTINE'S PARISH ASHAIMAN the team met members of the Parish team responsible for Family Life Promotion in the Parish.



The team followed the same approach and after a lengthy and fruitful interaction, the Parish team expressed their willingness to take up the challenge to work hard and involve many more parishioners in disseminating information about the consequences of broken marriages and how this is linked to having more children on our streets. The team also promised to intensify marriage counseling to young couples in their parish. They would seek for help for struggling families within the Parish. They also pledged to encourage family planning among poorer families.

Plans are underway to meet the deaneries as well as some selected parishes. However, our main attention is still on the social media.

We now want to meet some experts who can advise us as to how best to use this platform. We have also contacted various groups as follows;

CAS” activities and its findings have been briefly explained. The story together with the flyers are mailed to particular groups who have a group account.

Unfortunately, up till now we have not received any reply. Social media is not working for us as we expected.

We will continue using this method as well as visiting parishes and keep you informed.

POLICIES.

We have discussed applications to a number of donors. In these applications CAS explains how we want to work in the coming years. As a result, we highlighted certain policies.



1. Recruitment of children for the apprenticeship training.

Before the pandemic, street children were received at the House of Refuge and at Hopeland center. The children took part in the activities of CAS. In the process a team of workers selected children for the sponsorship scheme. This method can no longer be used because of the pandemic. Presently, we have expanded the fieldwork team. There are now two groups who visit the streets on selected days. Street corner education is organized. We have asked the fieldworkers to select children who attend the sessions regularly as possible candidates for the apprenticeship training. We hope they will be successful.

2. FUNCTIONAL LITERACY PROGRAM.

All children who come in contact with CAS workers or visit the House of Refuge follow the functional literacy program. The urban poor children can benefit from it as well as children from the migrant and second generation groups. Although some have been in school it is necessary that they up grade themselves. At the Refuge as well as in Hopeland center, time is allocated for this training.

3. GIRLS WITH BABIES.

CAS started the skill training program because several girls who had to take care of their babies were not accepted in existing workshops.

In the Training centers now, we will accept them provided certain rules are followed:

- The baby should not interfere with the training.
- The baby is placed for a number of hours in a closed off area or bed guided by the nurse or female staff.
- As soon as the baby is 2 years old, the mother will send the child to a crèche.

- The Mother will lose the opportunity to be trained when she violates the rules.



4. SUPERVISORS AND WELFARE COMMITTEES.

CAS assigns supervisors for children in training. The supervisor tries to understand the child as best as possible. The supervisor knows the background of the child (Social Survey Report) as well as its progress and developments.

He or she informs the welfare committee when necessary and the committee can take decisions on the welfare of the child.

5. HOPELAND TRAINING CENTER.

The policy is that all children who are selected are invited to go to Hopeland centre for a few months.

The reasons are, (a) the child can prove that s(he) is willing to learn a skill or a trade, (b) the staff has the opportunity to know the child well and correct certain habits when necessary. However, there are always exceptions and some children could be advised to start the apprenticeship training immediately.

Children selected from the community (Urban-Poor) can start the training and be monitored by Hopeland staff.



6. LONG AND SHORT SPONSORSHIP TRAINING.

In the monthly reports of the departments we can read that those in charge of the training are not satisfied with the outcome.

The short sponsorship training (skill training) has proven to be too short. The plan was to train a child during an 18 months period but this is too short because street children are not punctual and often start late with the daily training. In the afternoons training often stops or slows down. At the most 5 to 6 hours of training could be booked. Therefore, we have added 6 months to the skill training program.

The skill training is mainly done in workshops established at the House of Refuge and at Hopeland.

The Long sponsorship (Trade training) program was planned for three years period. We noticed that not many children were interested. The length of training was the obstacle. Therefore, we have decided to shorten this training to two years. After two years of training the child could sit for the grade one N.V.T.I. exam.

Both skill training as well as trade training can now be done in two years time. Those children who are capable and willing are assisted to add one additional year. After the training the child could sit for the grade two N.V.T.I. exam.

We have stopped naming the departments short and long sponsorship departments. The departments are now called "Skill training" and "Trade training" departments.

7. TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT.

During the training the child will receive the necessary tools and equipment needed to learn the skill or trade. These items belong to the child. When completing they depart with it and lost or obsolete tools are replaced.

8. EXAMS AND SETTLEMENT.

CAS lays emphasis on the apprenticeship training. Those who have the ability to work with their hands and be skillful with it will be assisted. The candidate has to spend a certain number of hours to learn the skill or trade. By spending more time using their hands the ability will improve. (see above).

Those who are capable will get the opportunity to sit for the external exams. This is not for all in training because several have a very poor education background or simply, did not have the ability to write these exams..

Skill and practical trade training is very important for children of the streets.

We thank you for your interest and support.



Bro. Jos van Dinther
(Director CAS)

