

Preface

The present study was undertaken within the framework of a multi-focussed programme aimed to reduce violence against children in two areas of Kenya. It is a trendsetter, not only because of its focus on a less researched yet highly acute social problem, but also because it provides inside knowledge by giving the children a voice. For this study, we indeed applied a novel research method: the participatory multi-stakeholder analysis. The methodology developed and designed by adult scholars, but based on the direct involvement of children in peer research, will provide crucial inside information on the world of children. Child researchers fully participated in collecting a variety of information, through questionnaires, interviews, essays, and focus group discussions. They could express themselves in anonymity, or, if they so wished, in a conversation with the research staff. All children have consented to be interviewed and have been promised absolute anonymity. Hence, all names in the report are fictive names.

This book covers the wide range of all forms of violence at home, at school, and within communities. It examines how the experience with violence may affect and endanger their education as well as their general well-being. It provides relevant ethnographic data on the open and hidden lives of children so as to get a better understanding of the parameters of childhood in the selected areas in Kenya.

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The field work was coordinated and supervised by Nanna Baum and Katlin Gál. They also co-authored provisional reports. I am extremely thankful for their contribution. I apologize if my line of building up the argument should deviate from their perspectives, which I hope it does not. The socio-economic survey by a team of Kenyan data collectors was supervised and aggregated by my colleague professor Ratan Khasnabis of the University of Kolkata.

Constant support from my beloved partner, Micky Piller, has been of invaluable value. Her growing interest in the plight of marginalized and disenfranchised children all over the world, including Kenya, sustained my interest in research in a big way.

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