

Rural-Urban Social Empowerment Program
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Background

The Rural-Urban Social Empowerment Program is an apolitical NGO created in Kenya in 2019, approved by the Kenya Non-Governmental Organization Board registration no **OP.218/051/20-351/12039** on 29th of March 2021. The organization addresses issues of human development, security and inclusion, particularly of marginalized people. It is established to operate in Kenya with an aim to: alleviate poverty, promote human rights, protect children from assimilation in crime, provide psycho-social support and improve the welfare of refugees.

Vision

An established society with equal human development opportunities for all Kenyans, and protection for those who are vulnerable or marginalized.

Mission

Increasing the capacity of vulnerable children, women, youth and refugees towards the attainment of a social and economic inclusive society for the realization of nationwide sustainable development.

Statement

The RUSEP Institute and our Child and Youth Protection from Crime Program have amassed considerable expertise in addressing the involvement of children and youth in organized crime. Despite the absence of a universally accepted definition of organized crime, the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime offers a comprehensive delineation. According to this definition, organized crime is a group of three or more individuals that exists for a period of time and operates in concert with the aim of committing at least one serious crime in order to obtain directly or indirectly, financial or other material benefits.

A significant proportion of the population of the African continent, namely over 70%, comprises individuals who fall within the age bracket of under 30 years. This presents both an opportunity and a challenge for Africa and the entire global society. It is becoming increasingly challenging to identify a singular factor as the primary motivating factor for young people's involvement in organized crime. This has prompted an evaluation of a multiplicity of factors that can be considered drivers of global organized crime. These include the mutation and misuse of culture, corruption and other economic crimes, conflict and instability, climate change, increased global interconnectivity due to the internet, and general governance issues, which can be considered a polycrisis in its entirety.

It is irrefutable that the nexus of conflict and organized crime is a tangible phenomenon. On numerous occasions, belligerents have been observed to engage in organized crime activities for the purpose of generating personal income, as well as to sustain the conflict itself through the trade of illicit weapons, the cultivation and provision secure trade routes for narcotics, human trafficking, and the illicit trade of natural resources. Therefore, organized crime (OC) can be considered the engine that drives conflicts, with the subsequent spillover threatening the stability of relatively peaceful societies in conflict-affected regions. As an organization working to prevent the assimilation of young people into

organized crime, we continue to advocate for human security as a principal solution to addressing organized crime in Kenya and beyond. Human security calls for a "people-centered, comprehensive approach to ensuring the safety and well-being of individuals, communities, and societies" (United Nations, 2015).

In light of the aforementioned, RUSEP endorses the call for Subjective Experience and Research (S.E.R.), as outlined in the ImPact Coalition's call for implementing Reconciliation and Peace Education. This endorsement is based on our conviction that peace and organized crime cannot be addressed in isolation from one another. Furthermore, we believed that peace education will foster transformation from below, which will be a significant first step for obtaining a secure, equitable, and prosperous global society.