OUR APPROACH

THE SITUATION

HOW ARE STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN PERCEIVED?

OUT OF PLACE

CRIMINALS

A REPRESSIVE APPROACH

Children should be removed from the street for their own protection.

The welfare and repressive approaches fail to take into account the child as a rights holder and result in forcible removal of the children from the streets, which further violates their rights.

United Nations General Comment No. 21 on Children in Street Situations (UNGC) p.5

PUSH FACTORS

Children should be removed from the street to protect others.

It is not safe on the streets. The street is like a jungle.

The most complex challenge faced by children in the streets is dealing with the perceptions of those around them and the treatment they are consequently afforded.

United Nations Study 2012 p.20

STIGMA, DISCRIMINATION, VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

Children’s rights are often distrusted of adult intervention in their lives.

As experts in their own lives, children in street situations should participate in developing and implementing strategies.

UNGC p.12

LACK OF TRUST

Community work is a distinct form of work with children because it takes place where the young person is physically, on the street. It also begins from where young people are in terms of their values, attitudes, issues and ambitions and is concerned with their personal growth and development, and addressing the stigma and discrimination they face. It is characterised by a purposeful and empowering interaction between children and street workers, founded upon a relationship of trust.

How we define street work: Street work is a four stage process, which responds in a holistic and informed way to build the capacity of children as rights-holders and the capacity of duty bearers to uphold their obligation.

UNGC p.20

WHAT IS THE REALITY FOR THESE CHILDREN?

COPING STRATEGIES

“The child’s unique vulnerabilities must be viewed in conjunction with their resilience and self-reliance.”

UNGC p.28

SOCIAL SYSTEMS

“At 11, I couldn’t connect with people my own age. I spent a lot of time with friends that had similar situations. We would sleep in various weird places and wander the streets for days.”

HOW WE DEFINE STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN

The term ‘street-connected children’ is used to comprise: Children who depend on the streets to live and/or work, whether alone, with peers or with family and a wider population of children who have formed strong connections with public spaces and for whom the street plays a vital role in their everyday lives and identity.

WHAT DO STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN FACE?

PULL FACTORS

“I was hungry at home. Now I help the women at the market and they give me food.”

“Inequalities based on economic status, race and gender are among the structural causes of the emergence and exclusion of children in street situations.”

UNGC p.8

STIGMA, DISCRIMINATION, VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

“Police! They always beat us and they think we are thieves.”

“The child is respected as a rights holder and decisions are often made with the child.”

UNGC p.5

WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN?

FIGHT TO SURVIVE

“Children in street situations are often distrusted of adult intervention in their lives.”

UNGC p.12

LACK OF TRUST

“Children in street situations should participate in developing and implementing strategies.”

UNGC p.12

Our guiding principles

Children on the street have the same rights as all other children.

We trust in street children to be experts in their own lives.

But they cannot do this alone.

WE REBUILD TRUST

HOW DOES STREETINVEST REBUILD TRUST?

RIGHTS-BASED

Contrary to welfare or repressive approaches, a rights-based approach means that...

“the child is respected as a rights holder and decisions are often made with the child.”

UNGC p.5

CHILD-CENTRED

“The process of realising children’s rights is as important as the end result.”

UNGC p.21

Being child-centred means that street workers operate at the child’s pace, in the child’s space and let them lead the intervention.

THE RESULTS

WHAT DOES STREET WORK LEAD TO?

Increased positive growth and development

“Police are not beating us anymore. They talk nicely to us.”

Without my street worker I would not be here. Now I am a football coach for street boys.

We were rejected and have found a new family with you.

HOW DO WE DEFINE OUR OUTCOMES?

Reach

Children who have received direct support

Influence

Children who have been influenced by community work

Effectiveness

Safety Children are safer in their environments

Support Children have greater access to vital services and resources

Belonging Children have a stronger sense of belonging within their community

HOW WE DEFINE STREET WORK:

Street work is a distinct form of work with children because it takes place where the young person is physically, on the street. It also begins from where young people are in terms of their values, attitudes, issues and ambitions and is concerned with their personal growth and development, and addressing the stigma and discrimination they face. It is characterised by a purposeful and empowering interaction between children and street workers, founded upon a relationship of trust.

It utilises a range of youth and community work methods to engage directly with young people and members of the communities in which they live.

Programmes can only be effective when they acknowledge the realities of street-connected children.

UNGC p.21

In order to understand our approach, you have to first understand street-connected children.