

# STREET CHAMPIONS AS TRAINED RESEARCHERS?

In July 2019, CINI and StreetInvest launched a participatory research project funded by Wellcome Trust. As part of this project 30 Street Champions were given additional training as peer researchers for a Vulnerability and Service Mapping study (V&SM).

The V&SM project fills the gap in data and understanding about the realities of the lives of street-connected children and families to properly understand their vulnerabilities and needs from their point of view, the availability and accessibility of existing services and how appropriate responses can be developed in their support.

The data collection and research tools have been designed to ensure that, to the fullest extent possible, street-connected children are involved in the design of the study, the collection of data, its analysis, policy and practice recommendations and advocacy for change.

Their specific responsibilities include:

- A participatory quantitative study (Rapid Situation Assessment Survey) to produce baseline data on the vulnerabilities of street-connected children within a child rights framework
- A participatory qualitative study (Focus Group Discussions) to produce rich insights into the specific experiences of vulnerability within a child rights framework.
- A participatory qualitative study (semi-

structured interviews) with Ward Level Child Protection Committee members – including Street Champions and CINI personnel – to provide insights into the availability, accessibility, and appropriateness of support and services for street-connected children across each of the 5 wards

The research has been delayed because of the Covid pandemic and Cyclone Amphan but has already revealed that:

- **57%** have been forced to move from where they live by the police or municipality in last 12 months, and only 10% among them were provided with an alternative space
- **65%** reported being treated worse than other children because of their street connections
- **81%** reported a lack of adequate protection for children who spend a lot of time on the streets and they feel “ignored” when they lodge complaints

The Street Champions and street children have explored what they want to happen next after the study and have identified the need for:

- Change at a government level to make sure people listen to them and their findings
- Training to understand government processes; to be confident being part of them
- Creative activities to engage and build the confidence of other SCC and communicate their difficult messages.

## DATA GATHERING

