

WHAT IS VULNERABILITY AND SERVICE MAPPING (V&SM)?

While the issues faced by street-connected children on the streets of Kolkata are complex, three key issues have been highlighted as barriers to ensuring their rights are protected, and that they are supported to grow and develop to their fullest potential:

1. No widely accepted, evidence-based data exists on the number of street-connected children in Kolkata - Absent data on the number of street-connected children in Kolkata makes these children invisible, which leads to underdeveloped policies; or measures that are ad hoc, temporary or short-term.
2. Complex vulnerabilities - The Committee on the Rights of the Child has already identified street-connected children as particularly vulnerable and makes explicit that such vulnerabilities must be understood in relation to the specific situation of the child, and in conjunction with the child's self-reliance and resilience.
3. Lack of basic services and support for street-connected children - The lack of data on both the number and realities in which street-connected children live results in poor quality and coverage of service provision to meet their needs, with particular barriers to access adequate health care and health education.

The Vulnerability and Service Mapping (V&SM) research project will fill this gap for all Kolkata's

street children. Moreover, 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.

Children's rights are indivisible so the project follows a holistic approach to these children's rights. While the concept of vulnerability is directly linked to the availability of basic health care services and other social and economic support (provision rights), it cannot be fully understood without an interrogation of their risks on the street (protection rights), nor the extent to which they are actively able to participate as citizens, as rights-holders, within their communities (participation rights).

The project has three core elements:

CORE OBJECTIVE	OUTPUTS
Enumeration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A sector-endorsed quantitative headcount of street-connected children in the 5 wards, disaggregated by age, gender and activity. (due to budget constraints, for purposes of the Kolkata study, this data will be sourced from CINI City-Wide Survey data)
Vulnerability mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
Service mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk research documenting the government position in relation to street-connected children Desk research to collate a database of formal and informal services and support targeted at street-connected children across each of the 10 wards, pointing all the services committed by GOI as universalized services within Kolkata municipal corporation map. A participatory qualitative study (semi-structured interviews) with Ward Level Child Protection Committee members to provide insights into the availability, accessibility and appropriateness of support and services for street-connected children

The initial research is being conducted in 5 of Kolkata's wards identified as having a high density of street-connected young people and establishes a methodology which is replicable across all 144 wards of the city.

The findings of this exercise will:

- Inform policy by building a substantial evidence base that can inform alternative policies relating to the rights, health and wellbeing of street-connected children within Kolkata
- Inform programmes through Street Champions who will directly inform and participate in the analysis and design of interventions to respond research findings; such as those supporting children's growth and development, promotion of good health and wellbeing, and other issues which in turn will have a direct role in defining the interventions that follow.

KOLKATA SERVICE MAP

