

WHAT NEXT?

CINI and StreetInvest are now seeking funding to expand the research project and advocate for policy and practice change based on our learning to date.

This project will build the capacity of 100 Street Champions to understand and articulate their rights and support needs and develop the knowledge and skills they need to engage with duty bearers, policymakers and service providers effectively. Their confidence, communication, team work and facilitation skills will be developed, equipping them to represent their peers and gain access to policy platforms usually reserved for adults.

Findings of the original participatory Vulnerability and Service Mapping study will provide a solid evidence base for the advocacy strategy the children will develop and implement.

SCC have explored what they want to happen next after the study. They 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

The project will contribute to sustainable change at a systemic level: making currently inadequate support services for street children available, accessible and appropriate by changing the way that policies and services are developed, strengthening SCC's voices and holding government to account for the way they are supported.

The project aims to be a catalyst for:

Long term change:

- Street children in Kolkata, who as result of the discrimination they face are historically excluded from mainstream service provision, will have access to the support & services they need to maximise their positive growth and development & realise their right to Life, Survival & Development (Art. 6 of UNCRC) and right to Health (Art. 24)

Medium term change in policy processes:

- Street children's participation will be institutionalised within policy and programming processes which affect them

- Organisations working with street children in Kolkata are better informed and equipped to support child-led advocacy for effective service responses

Short term change in attitude and practice:

- A formalized mechanism for regularly including the voices of street-connected children is established with the five key government departments and service providers
- Street children are empowered with the confidence and skills to advocate for the services they require, are able to represent and empower their peers and are given the platforms they need for their voices to be heard
- Organisations in Kolkata are networked and have a greater capacity to support child-led advocacy and rights-based approaches

The project will amplify children's voices on multiple platforms, including through child-led, public-facing creative and media projects and high profile conferences and events, reflecting their realities within public discourse from which they have been excluded.

