



**CONSORTIUM FOR
STREET CHILDREN**



ADVOCACY AND ACTION GUIDE

**Making rights a reality for
street-connected children**



November 2018

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

What is this Advocacy and Action Guide about?

This Advocacy and Action Guide outlines how organisations and advocates working with street-connected children can develop advocacy strategies to make rights a reality for street-connected children, using human rights instruments, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and UN General Comment No. 21 on Children in Street Situations. This Guide includes practical tools that your organisation can use to develop an advocacy plan to use in your work.

Why do we need an Advocacy and Action Guide?

Advocacy can seem like a daunting task. Sometimes it is hard to know where to begin, or how to effect the changes that you want to see. By using this Guide, you can see that advocating for street children's rights does not have to create extra work for your organisation – rather, included in this Guide are ideas you can incorporate into the work you are already doing.

Who should use this Advocacy and Action Guide and what can it be used for?

This Guide is designed for those working in the human rights, international development and street child sector. This Guide can be used by anyone developing advocacy strategies or trying to identify strategic entry points for advocacy around the rights of children in street situations, whether at the local, national, regional, or international levels. There are ideas included in this Guide, such as CSC's '4 Steps to Equality' framework, that can help you draw attention to the issues that you are trying to highlight when talking with governments, media, civil society, and members of your community.

How to use this Advocacy and Action Guide?

It may not be necessary to read this Advocacy and Action Guide from start to finish, rather, we invite you to use it as a reference tool in your work, selecting and consulting the parts of the Guide which are of most relevance and use to you and your organisation.

What do we mean by 'street-connected children' and 'children in street situations'?

The terms 'street children', 'street-connected children' and 'children in street situations' are used interchangeably throughout this document. These terms are used to describe: (1) children who depend on the streets to live and/or work, whether alone, with peers or with family; and (2) children who have formed strong connections with public spaces and for whom the street plays a vital role in their everyday lives and identities. This is discussed in more detail on page 9 of the Guide.

It is important to understand in your own context and language which term resonates both with decision makers and with the children themselves.

Using this document online

Throughout this Advocacy and Action Guide we have included hyperlinks that provide easy access to useful further information. When you are using this guide on your computer, simply hover and click for more information. The accuracy of links and information contained on others' websites is beyond our control.

ACRONYMS

CBO	Community-based organisation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSC	Consortium for Street Children
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
FAQ	Frequently asked question
GC	General Comment
HRC	Human Rights Council
IE	Independent Expert
ILO	International Labour Organisation
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NHRI	National Human Rights Institution
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OP	Optional Protocol
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound
SR	Special Rapporteur
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
ToC	Theory of change
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
WG	Working group

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1 UNDERSTANDING ADVOCACY FOR STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN

Advocacy is a process of bringing about positive change in society.

Advocacy is the deliberate process, based on demonstrated evidence, to directly and indirectly influence decision makers, stakeholders and relevant audiences to support and implement actions that contribute to the fulfilment of children's and women's rights.

[UNICEF](#)

Advocacy for street-connected children is about...

- calling for positive change in their lives.
- demanding those in power take into consideration issues that affect you and the communities that you care about, including street-connected children.
- using your voice and the voices of street-connected children to ensure their rights are protected, and that they have access to justice and redress when violations occur.
- empowering street-connected children to defend their own rights and to hold governments to account.
- building networks and supporting each other.
- gathering evidence and demonstrating the need for change.
- influencing decision-makers to make lasting, positive change.

1.1 Advocacy in CSC

The Consortium for Street Children (CSC) aims to mobilise a global movement to realise street-connected children's rights, and envisions a world where the rights of street-connected children are universally respected, protected and fulfilled.

CSC's advocacy is therefore aimed at making the rights of street-connected children a reality. We do this primarily by promoting implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child¹ using the standards set out in General Comment No. 21 on Children in Street Situations (General Comment No. 21).

We want to make sure that:

- Street-connected children, and organisations working with them, understand the rights of street children and are able to demand for those rights.
- Governments and other decision-makers understand the duties they have to street-connected children and how to fulfil those duties

A rights-based approach to advocacy

CSC applies a rights-based approach to advocacy. Applying a rights-based approach to advocating for street children's rights, requires a good understanding of:

- the current shortfalls in rights protection that street-connected children experience
- what the underlying causes are for these shortfalls; and
- which stakeholders are responsible for these shortfalls.

In a rights-based approach, the child is respected as someone who has rights, and the child is included in making decisions about what should happen in their lives.

It also means that each child is an individual, and their diversity should be taken into account in determining what is in the best interest of each child. No one singular, uniform approach to support the needs of each individual child in street situations can exist.

1. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted in 1989 and provides the most comprehensive set of protections for children globally. The Convention has four guiding principles including non-discrimination; life, survival and development; the best interests of the child; and participation. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most widely ratified international human rights treaty, with almost all countries in the world having formally accepted its provisions.

Taking a rights-based approach means that children in street situations must be treated as active agents in their own lives and be involved in decision-making.

Rights-based approaches consider matters from two different perspectives:

A. Duty-bearers: Duty-bearers are those who have a particular obligation or responsibility to either proactively take action or refrain from taking action. They must: actively respect, protect and fulfil human rights, and abstain from committing human rights violations. Duty-bearers primarily refer to State actors. Depending on the context, individuals (e.g. parents or social workers), local organisations, schools, hospitals, private companies, etc., might also be considered duty-bearers in the responsibility towards street children.

B. Rights-holders: Rights-holders are people who have rights (e.g. street-connected children). All human beings are rights-holders. A human rights-based approach involves rights-holders as active agents in the realization of their rights.



Street-connected children should not be viewed or treated solely as victims or as delinquents, but should be seen first and foremost as rights-holders.

This means a rights-based approach aims to combine a bottom-up approach with a top-down approach, influencing change through building the capacity of both duty-bearers and rights-holders:

- Building the capacity of the duty-bearers to realise the rights of the rights-holders and strengthen their accountability.
- Building the capacity of rights-holders to claim their rights, hold duty-bearers accountable and effectively participate in decision-making processes affecting the realisation of their rights.

The PANEL principles (the core principles of human rights) is one way of breaking down what a rights-based approach means in practice:

Participation and inclusion: Ensuring participation and inclusion of those affected by the shortfall you aim to address. When advocating for the rights of street-connected children this means that street-connected children should be at the centre of your strategy, and their opinions, needs and wishes should be consulted and included in your advocacy.

Accountability and transparency: Strengthening accountability and transparency mechanisms for those who are responsible for realising the rights of street-connected children. This will enhance sustainability of your advocacy strategy and allow other actors and children themselves to hold actors accountable when they are not fulfilling their duties.

Non-discrimination and equality: Promoting the principle that all rights should apply to everyone equally to reduce discrimination and inequality. When applying a rights-based approach, your advocacy should also aim to reduce unequal power relations between duty-bearers (e.g. government officials) and rights-holders (e.g. street-connected children).

Empowerment: Ensuring that street-connected children can participate, and also building their capacity to claim their rights themselves. Empowerment not only builds the capacity of street-connected children but also of the government officials and other stakeholders responsible for the realisation of rights of street-connected children.

Legal obligations: a rights-based advocacy strategy should be founded on the legal obligations governments have towards street-connected children. The legal obligations that governments and other duty-bearers hold towards street-connected children are found in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and in the guidance set out in General Comment 21.



1.2 Who are we advocating for?

Street-connected children are at the heart of CSC's advocacy. But who are street-connected children?

The term 'street-connected' is used to describe the broad range of connections children and youth have with the streets: some live on the street; some work on the street; some street children maintain relationships with their family whereas others break all contact; some are on the streets currently and some are off the streets but could be easily drawn back there. All of them have strong connections to the street.

The terms 'street-connected children', 'children in street situations' and 'street children' are used interchangeably throughout this document. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child uses the language 'children in street situations'. The Consortium for Street Children typically uses the term 'street-connected children' (or 'street children' depending on the national or local context and language). Many organisations use the term 'street children' as it is easily understood and often translates into other languages better. All terms require us to advocate for their rights as children. What is important is to find out which term resonates best in your language, context and with the children themselves.

General Comment No. 21 uses the term 'children in street situations', which includes:

- Children who depend on the streets to live and/or work, whether alone, with peers or with family; and
- Children who have formed strong connections with public spaces and for whom the street plays a vital role in their everyday lives and identities.

(para 4 GC21)

It is important to keep in mind that street-connected children are not a homogenous group. Street-connected children differ, among others, in age, sex, ethnicity, indigenous identity, nationality, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. This results in different experiences, risks and needs for different street-connected children.

1.3 How to work with children in advocacy?

When advocating for street-connected children, it is important to **include them in your advocacy in a meaningful way**. This will ensure that advocacy strategies are grounded in the realities, needs and lived experiences of the street-connected children you are working with and for, and will help empower them to demand for their rights.

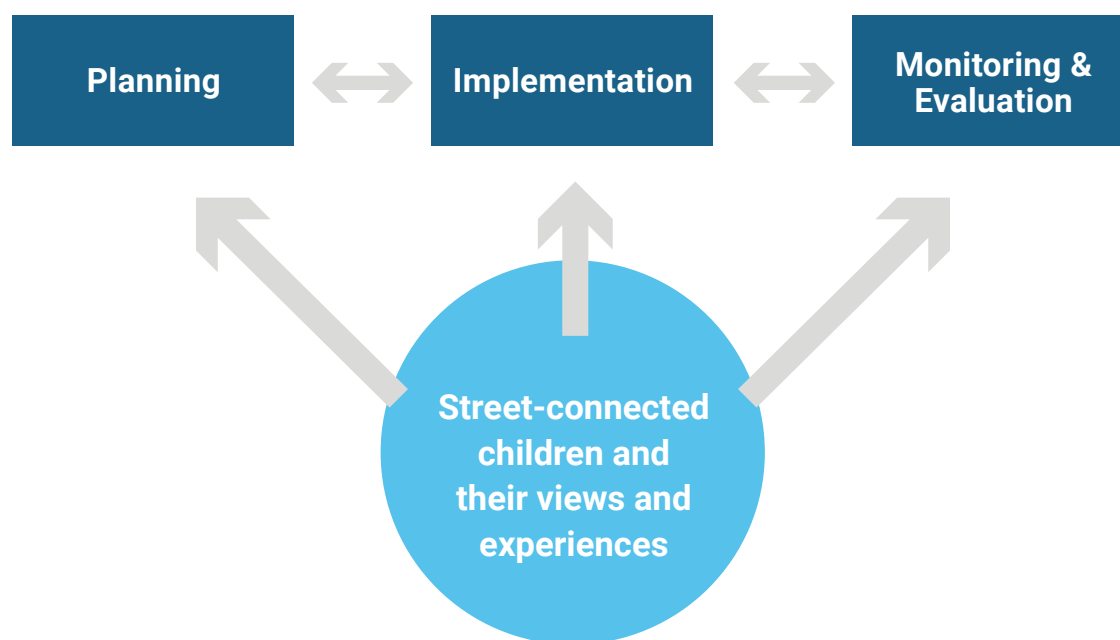
According to General Comment No. 21 on Children in Street Situations:

“Interventions are of most benefit to children in street situations when the children themselves are involved actively in assessing needs, devising solutions, shaping strategies and carrying them out, rather than being seen as objects for whom decisions are made.”

[\(para 33 GC21\)](#)

Children should be involved in all stages of advocacy, from planning and implementation to monitoring and evaluation:

- 1. Planning:** Children’s views should be incorporated in the advocacy plan, especially in identifying the problem and possible solutions.
- 2. Implementation:** Children can be involved in implementation by developing materials, including their views and experiences in materials, organising direct engagement between street-connected children and duty-bearers.
- 3. Monitoring and evaluation:** Children’s views should be consulted when monitoring the advocacy process and evaluating the advocacy impact, especially in measuring the impact on their lives.



There are three recognised options for working with children in advocacy: consultative, collaborative and child-led initiatives. Each option will be suitable in different advocacy contexts.

- **A consultative** approach will be appropriate where you wish to gather the views of children in order to inform and influence adult-led planning and decision-making. Such an approach recognises that children are experts on their own lives but does not transfer the decision-making responsibility to children².
- **Collaborative** participation allows children to engage with the design and development of a plan or programme, with shared decision-making among children and adults. This can be achieved through establishing a Child Advisory Board for your programme or organisation.
- **Child-led** participation involves children acting as independent advocates for themselves and empowers them to lead their own initiatives. This method affords a high degree of control to the children involved, with adults playing a facilitative role by providing advice and support.

2. The Inter-Agency Working Group on Children’s Participation’s Minimum Standards for Consulting with Children provide practical steps and criteria to bear in mind when preparing, carrying out and following up on child participatory consultations.



Examples of effective child participation in advocacy

Consultative: Bringing street-connected children's views into the General Comment

Prior to the publication of General Comment No.21, CSC worked to ensure that the views of street-connected children themselves were considered and included in the General Comment. CSC coordinated national, regional and multi-country consultation events with street-connected children and youth between February and April 2016. Consultations were conducted in 28 languages and in 49 countries. The participating children took part in games and workshops to share their stories of life on the street, discuss questions set by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and put forward their recommendations. As a result of the consultations, General Comment No. 21 opens with a series of direct quotes from the street-connected children consulted. CSC also published the outcomes of the consultations in its publication, *Rights of Children in Street Situations* (2017).

Collaborative: Butterflies' Bal Sabha meetings with street-connected children

Butterflies, a partner of ChildHope UK (a CSC member), engages street-connected children in the development of its programmes through regular meetings. Bal Sabha meetings (children's council meetings), held once a month, bring together child representatives from 'contact point' areas of Delhi, India, in which there are large numbers of street-connected and working children. The children elect a chairperson for each Bal Sabha meeting, and the agenda is set by the children so that the participants are able to discuss and decide on issues concerning the children in their areas. As well as deciding on the action and advocacy initiatives that the children wish to take forward themselves (or with the support of adults or civil society facilitators), the child representatives meet with the Director of Butterflies every six months to inform the design, planning, monitoring and evaluation of Butterflies programmes.

Child-led: Balaknama newspaper

Following the establishment in 2002 of Badhte Kadam, a federation of street-connected and working children in India, the street-connected child-led newspaper Balaknama was set up with the aim of "tak[ing] the voices of the street children to the government"³. It is written, edited and distributed by children who are or who have been street-connected. The editorial team works across seven districts of northern India, interacting with thousands of Badhte Kadam members to gather stories as seen from the eyes of children themselves. The newspaper is published on a monthly basis in Hindi and English and sent to NGOs, government offices, schools and colleges, as well as being sold to the public. One of Balaknama's achievements was a news report highlighting that street-connected children were being forced to retrieve dead bodies from railway tracks, triggering a public outcry that led to the National Committee for Protection of Child Rights taking disciplinary action against the police. Balaknama receives mentorship and support from CHETNA.

Find more information and examples of how you can include children's stories and experiences, as told in their own words, in Annex 5: Further Resources.



3. Quote from Shambhu, editor of Balaknama; see Sonali Verma, 'Balaknama – Enabling Street Children to Tell Their Own Stories, in Their Own Words', *The Wire* (17 October 2017), available at: <https://thewire.in/media/balaknama-street-children-newspaper>

When involving children in advocacy, it is important to keep the following in mind:⁴

1. **Information:** Provide children participating in advocacy with full information that is easy to understand on the scope, purpose and potential impact of their participation. They must understand what they are expected to do and what they are contributing to;
2. **Voluntary:** Children should never be coerced or feel pressured into participation. Always make sure children fully understand and feel that they can stop participating at any time, if they want to. Children who don't want to participate must have this choice respected;
3. **Respectful:** Children's views must be treated with respect and they should be provided with opportunities to initiate ideas and activities. Those working with children on advocacy need to have a thorough understanding of the socio-economic, environmental and cultural context of the children's lives;
4. **Relevant:** The issues on which children are being asked to express their views must be of real relevance to their lives and enable them to draw on their knowledge, skills and abilities. In addition, space needs to be created to enable children to highlight and address the issues they themselves identify as relevant and important;
5. **Child-friendly:** Environments and working methods should be adapted to children's capacities. Time and resources should be made available to ensure that children are adequately prepared and have the confidence and opportunity to contribute their views. Consideration needs to be given to the fact that children will need differing levels of support and forms of involvement according to their age and capacities.
6. **Inclusive:** Participation should be inclusive, and encourage opportunities for all types of street-connected children, including marginalised groups, to be involved. Children are not one homogenous group and participation needs to provide for equality of opportunity for all, without discrimination on any grounds;
7. **Safe and sensitive to risk:** In certain situations, expression of views may attract risks or reprisals. Adults must take every precaution to minimize the risk of any other negative consequence of children's participation. This means developing a clear child protection strategy which identifies the particular risks facing the children, and any barriers they face in obtaining help. Children must be aware of their right to be protected from harm and know where to go for help if needed;
8. **Accountable:** Children should be informed as to how their views have been interpreted and used and, where necessary, provided with the opportunity to challenge and influence the analysis of the findings. Children are also entitled to be provided with clear feedback on how their participation has influenced any outcomes.

Ensuring informed consent is vital when gathering children's views and stories!
Find an example consent form in Annex 4.



The Inter-Agency Working Group on Children's Participation's [Minimum Standards for Consulting with Children](#) provide practical steps and criteria to bear in mind when preparing, carrying out and following up on child participatory consultations.

Case study: Consultations with street-connected children on the Uruguay National Plan for Street Children



Gurises Unidos worked with the Government of Uruguay to create an open and inclusive process for building a National Plan for Street Children. Government representatives, civil society organisations and street-connected children and adolescents were all invited to participate in the planning process to ensure that the General Comment No.21 recommendations were incorporated into the Plan in a way that reflected the realities of life for street-connected children in Uruguay.

The process of child participation began with the design of participation criteria and mechanisms, which was a significant first step for a country which had previously had little involvement of children in its public policy design process. A consultation process was then held with children and adolescents, focusing on the issues they faced when accessing services and what they felt needed to be addressed in the national policy response. Their views were documented and shared with the Government of Uruguay for incorporation into their planning process, with a view to developing a cross-sector response to the children's concerns.

4. UNICEF, Advocacy Toolkit: A guide to influencing decisions that improve children's lives (UNICEF: New York, 2010) pp. 112-113.



1.4 General Comment No. 21 as a tool for advocacy

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention) should be a priority for all governments. General Comment No. 21 on Children in Street Situations (General Comment No. 21) helps to guide governments on how to implement the rights in the Convention in relation to street-connected children; and helps organisations and street children to know what to advocate for.

General Comment No. 21 provides all stakeholders, including street-connected children themselves, with a way of understanding how the rights in the Convention on the Rights of the Child apply to them. It ensures that the rights of street-connected children can be easily identified, and that street-connected children themselves, and others, can hold their government to account to address the shortfalls.

General Comment No. 21 can be used as a tool to advocate for the realisation of the rights of street-connected children as:

1. **It explains the rights of street-connected children** – this can be used to identify where the shortfalls are in realising rights for street-connected children in your country, and which problems particularly need to be addressed by your government;
2. **It provides standards for the realisation of rights** – this can be used to identify goals and solutions for the identified shortfalls, as well as monitoring and evaluating progress for the advocacy strategy and governments' steps towards implementation.
3. **It indicates who is responsible for realising the rights of street-connected children** – this can be used to conduct a stakeholder analysis and identify actors to target with advocacy messages.
4. **It clarifies the obligations of governments and other duty-bearers** – this can be used in developing advocacy messages and holding duty-bearers accountable.

In Annex 1 you will find frequently asked questions (FAQs) that further explain the General Comment No. 21, the Convention and related institutions.



4 Steps to Equality

The Consortium for Street Children has summarised the obligations governments have towards street-connected children into a set of clear, actionable steps for implementing General Comment No. 21. All four steps are equally important and urgent.

The four steps to be undertaken to ensure equality for street children are:

EQUALITY FOR STREET CHILDREN STARTS HERE

STEP ONE COMMIT TO EQUALITY
RECOGNISE STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS AS EVERY OTHER CHILD – AND REFLECT THAT IN LAW AND POLICY.

STEP TWO PROTECT EVERY CHILD
PROTECT STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN FROM VIOLENCE, ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION AND ENSURE THEY HAVE ACCESS TO JUSTICE WHEN THEY ARE HARMED OR IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW.

STEP THREE PROVIDE ACCESS TO SERVICES
ENABLE STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO THE SAME ESSENTIAL SERVICES AS EVERY OTHER CHILD SO THEY CAN REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL.

STEP FOUR CREATE SPECIALISED SOLUTIONS
DEVELOP AND DELIVER SPECIALISED SERVICES AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT TUNE INTO THE UNIQUE NEEDS AND CHALLENGES OF LIFE FOR STREET-CONNECTED CHILDREN.

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STEP ONE

Commit to Equality

To realise equality for street-connected children, it is important that governments recognise that street-connected children have the same rights as every other child – and reflect that in law and policy.

- This means that governments must end all forms of direct and indirect discrimination against street-connected children immediately, including by reviewing and amending existing laws and policy that directly or indirectly discriminate on grounds of street situations (e.g. allowing or supporting removal of children and their families from public spaces; and criminalizing loitering, vagrancy and moral offences).
- In addition to removing discriminatory provisions from laws and policies, governments should also put in place appropriate proactive measures and laws for child protection that specifically address children in street situations and ensure effective equal opportunities for all children to enjoy the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- To address discrimination and stigmatisation of children in street situations further, governments should address misconceptions and transform attitudes of the public towards children in street situations.
- Special attention should be paid to protection of street-connected children from harassment and discrimination by authorities, and ensuring their rights to freedoms of association and peaceful assembly, especially to make use of public spaces and not to be removed from those spaces without a lawful reason, are fully respected by law enforcement officials.
- Finally, committing to equality requires governments to adopt and apply a child rights approach in all government policy concerning children in street situations to ensure a child is respected as a rights-holder, decisions are made with the child, and are in the best interest of the child.

STEP TWO

Protect Every Child

Violence and abuse is a fundamental cause and consequence of children living or working on the streets. To address the vulnerability of street-connected children to violence and abuse, it is important that governments put in place protection mechanisms and ensure children have access to justice if they are harmed.

- Governments should ensure street-connected children are protected from acts and omissions (including by third parties) that cause unnatural or premature death and to ensure that street-connected children can fulfil their potential and live a life with dignity.
- To ensure children are protected under the law, governments should ensure that all children possess legal identity documents, and that free, accessible, simple and expeditious birth registration is available to all children at all ages.
- Governments have an obligation to protect children in street situations from all forms of violence, abuse, trafficking and exploitation, and ensure accountability and gender- and child-sensitive responses where abuse, exploitation or trafficking does occur.
- For these purposes, governments must put in place or strengthen comprehensive child protection systems, based on a child rights approach, and information on these systems should be made available in a child-friendly and accessible format.
- If street-connected children do become victims of human rights violations, they should be able to access justice and remedies. For this purpose, children must receive quality legal or other appropriate assistance and information or guidance to complain and find solutions. When everything possible has been tried – within the country to get justice and compensation without success, children in street situations should be able to use international human rights processes.

STEP THREE

Provide Access to Services

To ensure children can reach their full potential, governments should enable access to the same essential services as every other child, such as socio-economic safety nets for an adequate standard of living, hospitals and schools.

- To protect children from the vulnerabilities of street situations, governments have an obligation to support parents and caregivers to secure living conditions necessary for the child's development, establish comprehensive economic and social safety nets, and improve access to adequate housing, among others.
- Governments should make sure that street-connected children can access free basic health-care services through universal health coverage or social protection schemes. Health education and services should include



sexual and reproductive health, and be tailored to the specific needs of street-connected children.

- Governments should make sure that street-connected children can access free, safe, relevant and quality education, including second-chance education, catch-up classes, mobile schools, vocational training and pathways into formal education.
- Special attention should be paid to children with disabilities to ensure they are able to access services, including inclusive education.

STEP FOUR

Create Specialised Solutions

To tune into the unique needs and challenges of life for street-connected children, it is important that governments develop and deliver specialised services and opportunities for them.

- To inform such specialised services, states should develop systematic, rights-respecting, participatory mechanisms to collect and share disaggregated data on street-connected children periodically.
- Based on this data, governments should develop and adopt holistic and long-term strategies as well as make the necessary budget allocations for street-connected children. These strategies should be developed and implemented with the participation of children themselves, as well as other non-state actors (e.g. NGOs, companies and academia).
- Strategies should include specialised services on the street through trained social workers with good knowledge of local street connections who can help children reconnect with family, local community services and wider society.
- For children in street situations without caregivers, the State is the de facto caregiver and therefore obliged to ensure alternative care. It is important that a child rights approach is applied in developing and implementing alternative care, and that children are not forced to accept placements against their will.

Each of these steps should be implemented with the effective participation of street-connected children, where they are respected and involved in all decision-making affecting their lives in a meaningful way.

1.5 Creating your advocacy strategy for street-connected children

You can create your own advocacy strategy for the realisation of street-connected children's rights through work that you are already doing, or work that you want to do.

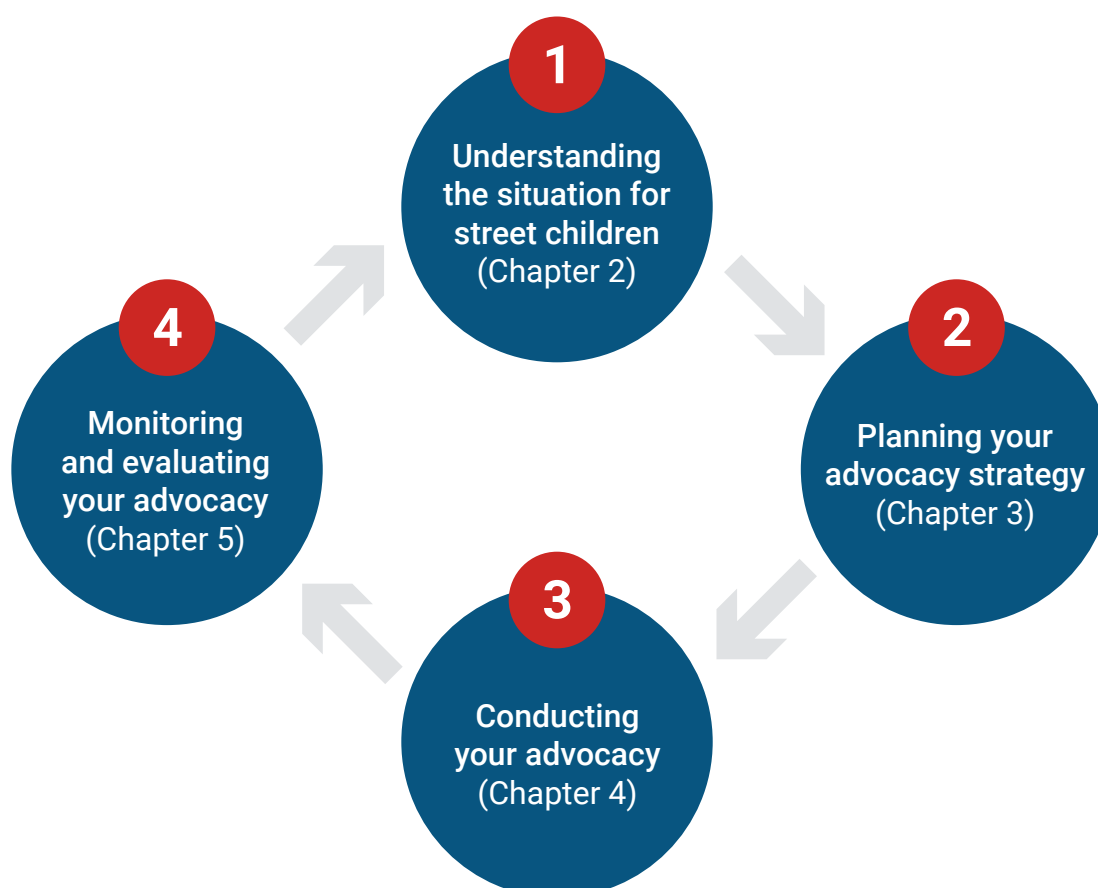
Whether your work involves helping to provide access to services for street-connected children, or ensuring commitment to the rights of every child, the ideas and issues outlined in this Advocacy and Action Guide give you the information needed to plan an effective advocacy strategy.

The advocacy cycle

The figure below shows the different phases of an advocacy cycle:

1. The first step is to **understand the situation** for street-connected children by conducting research on the situation and the challenges of street-connected children. This will help you determine the issue(s) you want to address in line with your organisation's vision and mission (Chapter 2).
2. Based on the situation and challenges that exist for street-connected children, you can **develop your advocacy strategy** (Chapter 3).
3. Once your strategy is in place, you can start **conducting your advocacy**. Chapter 4 will provide you with information and tools for engaging with different stakeholders at local, national, regional and international level.
4. The final phase of the advocacy cycle involves **monitoring and evaluating the impact of your advocacy** on the situation for street-connected children (Chapter 5).

This brings us back to the first phase, whereby we now have a new situation for street-connected children, based upon which you are able to develop a new advocacy strategy for those challenges still remaining or new challenges that have emerged.





2 RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Before planning your advocacy strategy it is important to have a thorough understanding of the context in which you want to carry out your advocacy.

What is/are the main issue(s) you want to address? What are the underlying causes? Who is responsible for addressing these issues? Do they have the capacity to resolve the issue(s)?

What laws and policies are in place that address the issue(s)? What is the political, economic and social context in which the issue(s) exist?



2.1 Context analysis

A general context analysis is crucial for determining the challenges that exist for street-connected children and the political, economic, social and legal context in which these challenges exist.

Analyse the political, economic and social context

If you intend to carry out advocacy, it will be necessary to assess the political context you are acting in. What is the government's approach to street-connected children? For example, is the government in favour of, indifferent to or hostile to the change you are advocating for? In a hostile political space, you may encounter opposition to your activities or face restrictions on the activities you are permitted to carry out. (This should factor into your risk assessment.) On the other hand, if you are faced with an indifferent government or one not recognising street-connected children as a priority, you may find it difficult to persuade political actors to make the efforts necessary to effect real change. This does not mean you should restrict your advocacy to favourable political environments; rather, you should plan and prepare for the different challenges you will face in the political space.

Equally, the economic context may influence the approach you take to your advocacy. To what extent does poverty drive street-connectedness? What poverty reduction strategies are in place? Does the national budget include adequate budget to address welfare challenges affecting street-connected children?

Though most governments have committed to fulfilling all the rights in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a State which is facing severe economic pressure due to conflict, famine or a disease outbreak will struggle to implement all of the Convention rights at the same pace as an economically stable State; this may influence how you approach your advocacy.

There are many factors in the social context that could influence the lives of street-connected children live and your best advocacy approach. What is the public attitude towards street-connected children? Are there cultural or religious traditions and practices that help or harm street-connected children? For instance, there may be cultural or religious traditions that make children more vulnerable to becoming a street-connected, or more vulnerable once they are on the streets.

Analyse the legal and policy context

In addition to assessing the political, economic and social context, it is key to have a thorough understanding of the legal and policy context you are working in before starting your advocacy. As a starting point to your legal and policy context analysis, you should clarify whether or not your government has both signed and ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and therefore recognises and has committed to realising the rights of all children, including street-connected children. Also identify whether your government has ratified the three related Optional Protocols on the sale of children, children in armed conflict, and a communications procedure. If they have ratified the Convention and its Optional Protocols, do they have any reservations?

You can find information on the status of ratification and reservations at: <http://indicators.ohchr.org/>

If your government has not yet ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and/or the related Optional Protocols:

- What are the processes required to do this?
- What guidance is provided in the Constitution and other legislation regarding ratification of international treaties?
- Who are the key decision-makers (including officials, departments, ministries and other authorities whose approval is needed for ratification)?
- How can your organisation participate or influence this process?

Not only is it important to research whether or not the Convention and its Optional Protocols have been ratified, but it is also important to research what national and local laws, policies, procedures and actions currently exist to protect children in street situations. This will help you to identify gaps that need to be redressed, or policies or laws which run counter to the protections provided in the Convention. For example, has your government already enacted laws to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and specific laws to comply with the standards set out in General Comment No. 21?

If you are unable to conduct an analysis of the national and local laws, policies, procedures and actions (perhaps you do not have access to the necessary documents or do not have the capacity for this) consider collaborating with organisations who focus on legal advocacy or legal aid, they may be able to support you.

Applying the 4 Steps to Equality framework
Ask yourself, what steps is the government taking or failing to take to commit to equality?



When using General Comment No. 21 as a guide to assist decision-makers in determining how to realize the rights in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, you must first figure out what is already being done to implement the Convention in relation to street-connected children. Are these steps adequate? What needs to be further addressed? Do some laws and policies need to be changed? Are there laws and policies which need to be replaced with new ones that are more compliant with the Convention as understood through General Comment No. 21? Are the laws good but the implementation or enforcement poor? Do those responsible for implementing or enforcing the law have the knowledge and capacity to do so?

Including street-connected children in your context analysis

It is important to include consultations with street-connected children in your context analysis. Laws and policies may be in place, but to what extent do the prescribed services/mechanisms reach street-connected children? When they do reach street-connected children do they have the intended result? Do they make street-connected children's lives better?

You can only answer these questions by consulting street-connected children themselves on the enjoyment of their rights. When consulting street-connected children make sure they understand the purpose and information required from them, feel safe and secure and are able to express their views and opinions freely.

You can find more guidance around consulting with and involving street-connected children in your planning and analysis at How to work with children in advocacy, above.



When involving children in research, you need to follow ethical guidelines and respond appropriately to any ethical issues that arise. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children's (NSPCC) research ethics policy sets out 5 key principles for conducting ethical research:

1. Children's participation should be voluntary and based on valid informed consent;
2. Participation should be facilitated where possible (e.g. through translation tools and supporting documents) and the systematic exclusion of particular sections of society should be avoided;
3. Personal and social harm to participants and researchers must be avoided;
4. Researchers should ensure the non-disclosure of identity and personal information by maintaining confidentiality⁵ and upholding data security;
5. Researchers must apply research methods ethically and be accountable for doing so, including by having a robust complaints procedure.



Remember to disaggregate the information you gather during your context analysis, to ensure you have a full picture of how gender, age, disability and other factors play a role in the challenges faced by street-connected children

2.2 Identify the issue(s) you want to address

Once you have completed your context analysis and have a good idea of the challenges faced by street-connected children and the context in which these challenges exist, it is now time to identify the issue(s) you want to advocate for. What are the issues that you want to work on? What are the issues you are most passionate about? What are the issue(s) street-connected children themselves are most interested in? What issues are most in line with the mission of your organisation? On what issues are you confident your organisation can make a difference?

Choose an issue that you are passionate about, that drives you, your organisation and the children you work with! Your advocacy campaign will be much more compelling.



You can use the 4 Steps to Equality framework to identify possible themes or topics to focus on (see Annex 3).

Tool: Criteria Matrix

You can use a criteria matrix to assess which issue(s) to focus on or prioritise:

Issue 1 Issue 2 Issue 3

Are you passionate about the issue?			
Are street-connected children interested in addressing this issue?			
Is the issue in line with your organisation's mission and values?			
Can you make a difference on this issue?			
...			
Total			

0 = not at all

1 = not very strongly

2 = moderately

3 = strongly

Score each issue between 0 and 3 for the provided questions, add questions as necessary.

Add columns for additional issues that came out of your context analysis. Add additional rows for additional criteria you want to include.

5. Confidentiality protocols should be established so that researchers are alert to any responsibilities they may have to break confidentiality in order to report child protection concerns to relevant authorities upon receiving a disclosure. Mandatory reporting of child abuse is a legal requirement in some States.



2.3 What are the underlying causes behind the issue?

Now that you have identified the issue(s) you want to work on, it is important to analyse the underlying causes behind each of the issues. This is important to ensure we don't just treat the symptoms, but address the root causes behind the problem for more effective and long-lasting solutions.

In a causality analysis we typically look at the immediate, underlying and root causes:

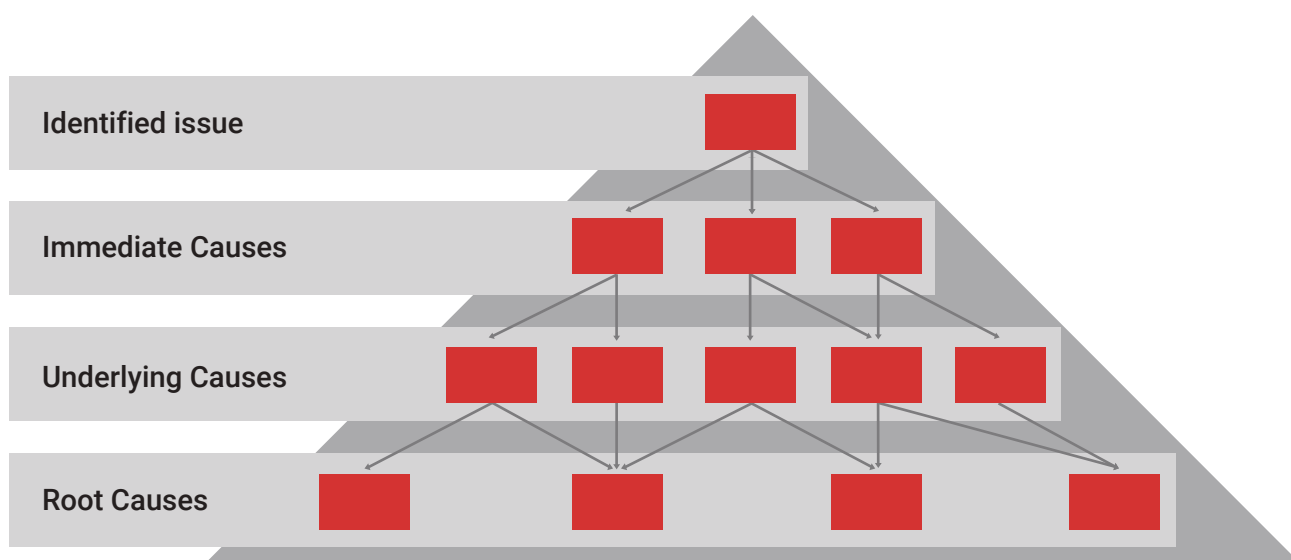
- Immediate causes: the direct cause to the issue – often an unsafe act or condition
- Underlying causes: the events and conditions that allow the immediate causes to develop. The legal and policy analysis carried out in the earlier stage of the context analysis will be useful when thinking about underlying causes.
- Root causes: the events and conditions that allow the underlying causes to develop. These are often engrained in societal norms and values.

To get from the issue to each level of causes below, it is important to ask why it is happening. Why is the issue happening? Why are the immediate causes occurring? Why are the underlying causes occurring?

Causality analysis

Issue What is happening, to whom and where?	
Immediate causes Why is this issue happening?	
Underlying causes Why are the immediate causes happening	
Root causes Why are the underlying causes happening?	

To create an overview of how the causes related to the identified issue, and with each other, it can be helpful to create a problem tree or triangle.



Adapted from: UNFPA, *A Human Rights-Based Approach to Programming*

2.4 Who are the rights-holders and duty-bearers?

Linking the issues to the legal obligations

In order to link the issues that we are concerned about to the legal obligations that governments are required to fulfil, we must research how the Convention on the Rights of the Child (and other national, regional and international law) protects these rights in relation to street-connected children.

Both the Convention on the Rights of the Child and General Comment No. 21 help to explain which rights street-connected children are entitled to enjoy, and which duty-bearers, such as governments, are responsible for implementing.

The table in Annex 2 identifies and explains the key rights contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the discussion about the fulfilment of those rights by the Committee in General Comment No. 21. This can be useful to identify the relevant rights and obligations.



Researching and identifying the relevant human rights is useful as it enhances your advocacy 'ask' to back this up with legal standards and legal obligations that your government (and others) have committed to respecting and implementing. This makes it clear that the rights you are advocating for are not simply aspirational goals or charitable desires. It can also empower those doing the advocacy and those who are the subject of your advocacy campaign.

For example, if you are working on advocating to protect the rights of street-connected children to use public spaces and exercise their rights to freedom of association and assembly in such public spaces, you can use the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and its protection of freedom of association and assembly contained in article 15. To understand in more detail how these rights apply in relation to street-connected children, we can look at how the Committee on the Rights of the Child elaborates these rights in paragraphs 36-40 of General Comment No. 21.

Identifying the duty-bearers and rights-holders

Once you have linked the issue with the legal obligations, you can identify and create an overview of the key duty-bearers at all levels with their respective obligations.

- **National level:** Ministers, Members of Parliament, government officials, NGOs
- **Regional / district level:** Local government officials, municipal officers
- **Community level:** Health providers, teachers, elders, religious leaders, community-based organisations
- **Household level:** Parents or caregivers

In most of our work, the rights-holders will be street-connected children. However, different issues affect different street-connected children differently. The issue may, for example, primarily affect girls, or children with disabilities. You may want to focus on those children who do not have legal identity documents, or street-connected children begging on the streets. Be as specific as possible when identifying your rights-holders.

It can be helpful to compare the claims of the rights-holders with the corresponding obligations of the duty-bearers, and create an overview of the most important rights/obligations relationships.



2.5 What do they need to address the issue?

The final step of this phase of the advocacy cycle is to identify what rights-holders need in order to claim their rights, and what duty-bearers need to fulfil their obligations. It is important to assess what capacity they already have, and what capacity they are missing to identify opportunities for capacity development.

These are some capacities **rights-holders** may need in order to claim their rights:

- Awareness of their rights and corresponding obligations of duty-bearers
- Awareness of government action and inaction
- Confidence and skills to voice their views, needs and concerns
- Access to platforms and mechanisms to participate in decision-making
- Knowledge of and access to mechanisms to hold government accountable



These are some capacities **duty-bearers** may need in order to fulfil their obligations:

- Awareness of their obligations and the rights of rights-holders
- Thorough understanding of the circumstances, challenges and needs of street-connected children in their country or local area
- Knowledge on how to apply and integrate a child rights approach in government strategy
- Resources needed to provide necessary services for street-connected children



Make sure that the capacity needs and capacity development you identify are grounded in the legal obligations that duty-bearers have.



3 PLANNING YOUR ADVOCACY STRATEGY

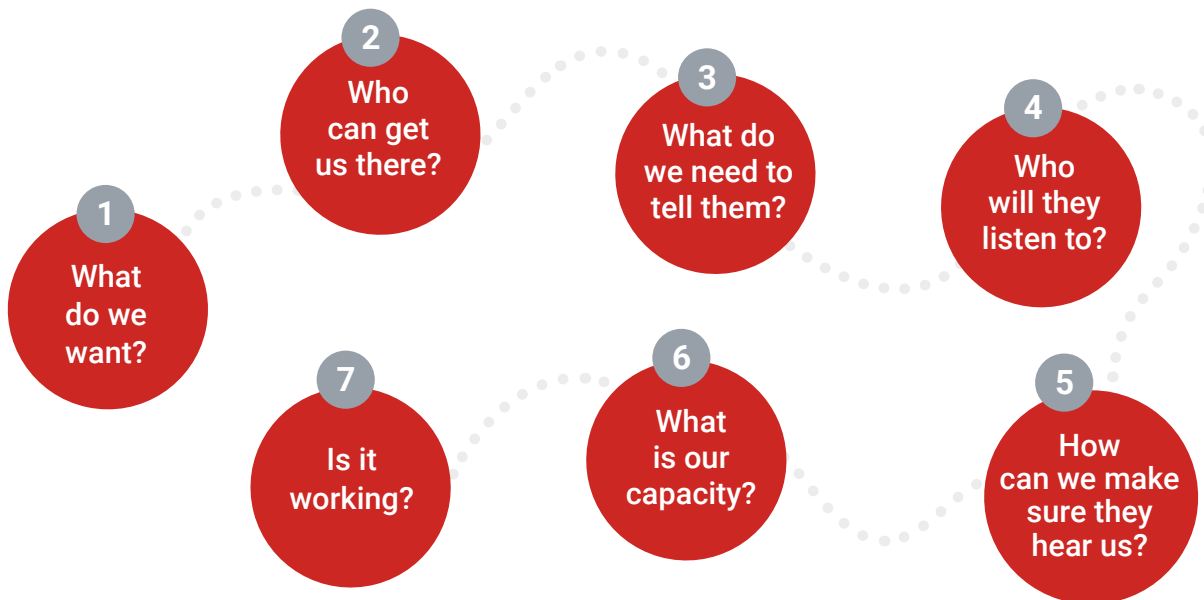
To conduct effective advocacy it is important to develop an advocacy strategy.

This will help you determine what the issues are you want to focus on, the goals and objectives you want to achieve, map out your target audience, your message, the best methods for the situation, and track progress towards the change you want to see.



7 Questions to ask when developing your advocacy plan

Asking the following seven simple questions when creating an advocacy plan will not only minimise costs and risks, but will most importantly maximise impact and ensure that you are delivering the right message.



- 1. What do we want?** Capture the issue(s) faced by street-connected that you identified through your research and analysis, including the underlying causes. What does the solution to the issue(s) look like? What is the ideal situation?
- 2. Who can get us there?** Who do you need to engage with to create the change you want to see? Conduct a stakeholder analysis, mapping their influence and interest.
- 3. What do we need to tell them?** Develop your evidence-based message(s) that will convince the stakeholders in question 2 to create the change you want to see.
- 4. Who will they listen to?** Identify the right person(s) to deliver the message(s).
- 5. How can we make sure they hear us?** Identify the best advocacy method(s) and channels to deliver your message(s).
- 6. What is our capacity?** Assess the capacity of your organisation, and identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- 7. Is it working?** Develop a monitoring plan with goals, outcomes, outputs and inputs. These need to be measurable and realistic.



When developing your advocacy plan, consider how you can include children's stories and experiences, as told in their own words, and with their informed consent, as much as possible!

Stage 1

What do we want? Identifying the goals, solutions and objectives

Based on the research and analysis conducted in the previous chapter – the first stage in planning your advocacy strategy is turning the issues and causes into goals and solutions.

What is your goal? What do the solutions to the issue and causes look like? What are your advocacy objectives?

Identifying the goal and solutions

To identify what your advocacy objectives should be – what you want to achieve through your advocacy strategy – a first step is to identify the goal for each issue. For instance, if your issue is “police’s approach to working with street children is to round them up and place them either in detention or institutions”. Your goal could be “police use a child rights approach to protecting street children”.

Once you have identified the issue at hand, and the goal you want to achieve, you have to determine what can transform the situation considered an issue into the situation considered the goal. For this, the causes to the issue should be turned into solutions. This can be done, for instance, by using problem and solution trees (see next pages).

The 4 Steps to Equality and General Comment No. 21 standards can help you identify possible solutions.



Deciding on priorities

Completing the solution tree gives you a series of steps leading up to your goal. Starting every single step at the same time may not be possible or advisable. Instead, it may be helpful to prioritise the causes / solutions you want to address.

Some aspects to keep in mind when deciding on priorities:

Importance of the cause / solution:

- Scale of the cause: how wide is the population affected
- Influence on the main issue
- Considered a priority by street children
- Allows street children to participate
- Addresses the most vulnerable street children (e.g. girls, disabled children)

Facilitating circumstances

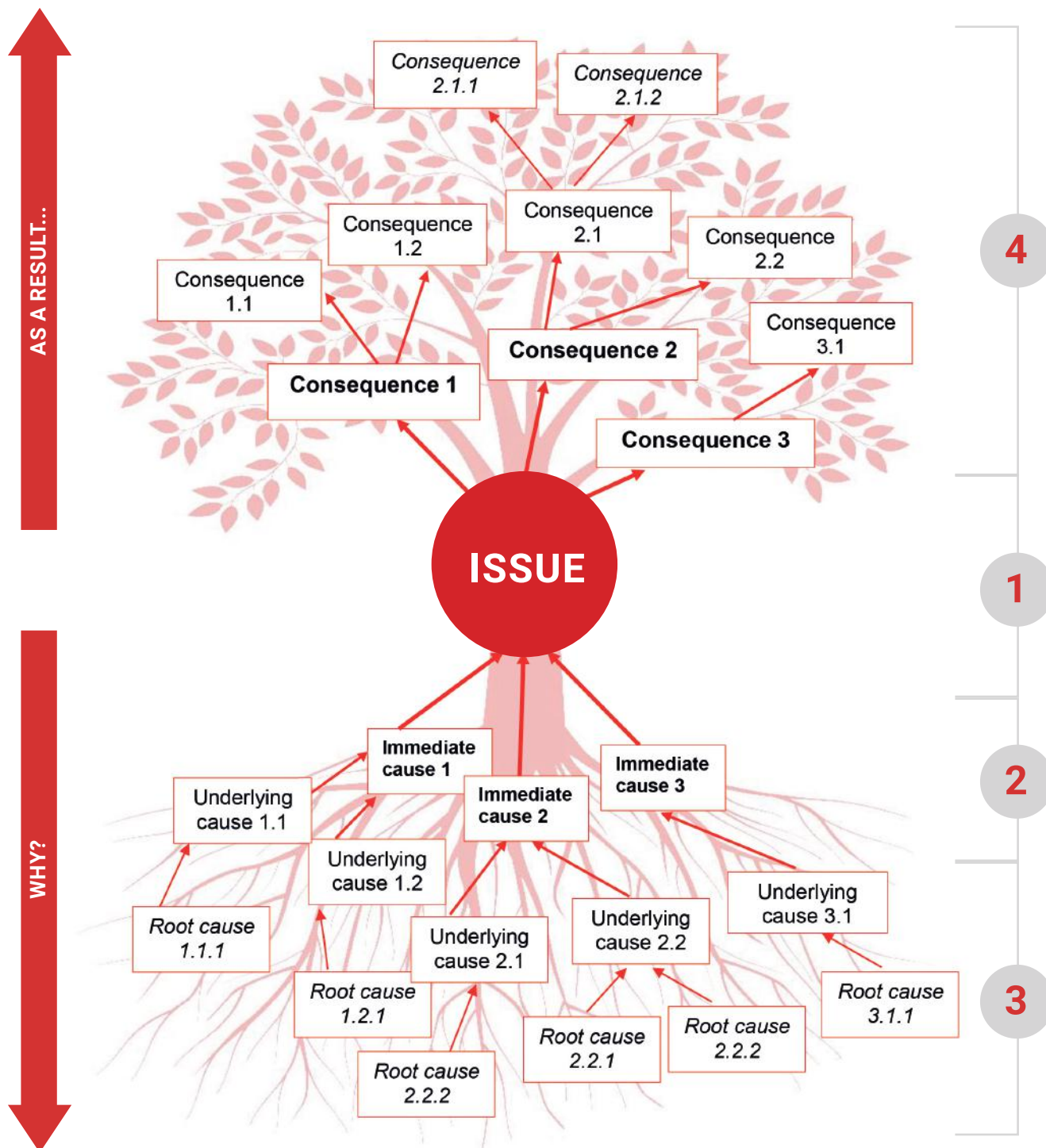
- Pre-existing interest of civil society or policy-makers on the activity or issue
- Pre-existing evidence and expertise within your organisation
- Added value of your organisation engaging on this issue (what do you bring others are not already addressing?)
- Entry points for advocacy to influence policies

Practical considerations

- Likelihood of success
- Achievability in timeframe
- Cost

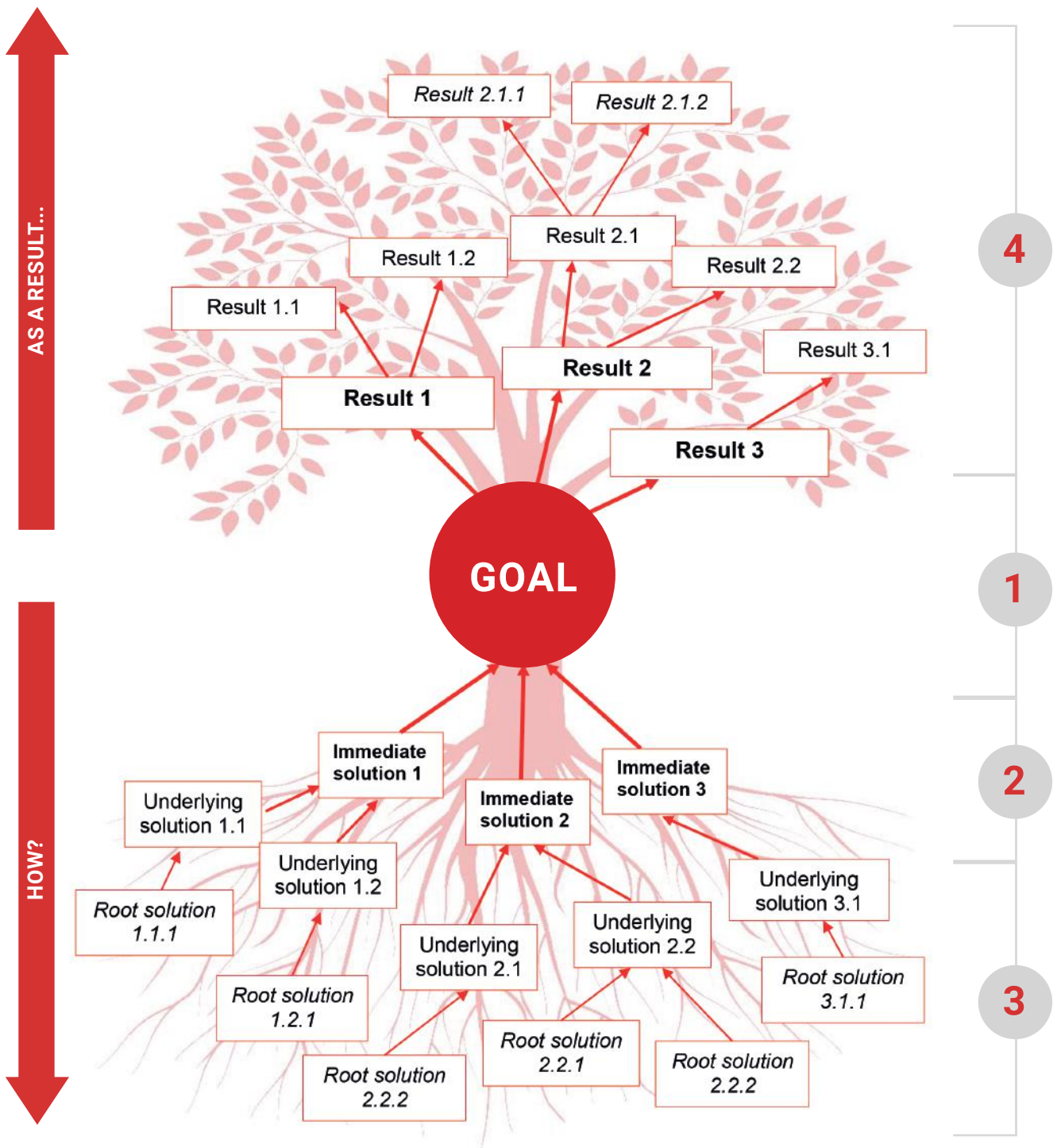
Highlight the causes and solutions in your problem tree that you want to prioritise.

Problem tree



- 1 Write the **ISSUE** in the trunk of the tree
- 2 Write the immediate causes (Chapter 2) below the issue, forming the roots of the tree
- 3 Using the “Why” approach (Chapter 2), capture the underlying and root causes
- 4 Use the same approach to identify the **direct and indirect consequences** of the issue, and place them above the issue, as the branches and leaves of the tree

Solution tree



- 1 Replace the ISSUE with the **GOAL**, the ideal situation
- 2 For each immediate cause that had been identified find a **solution**
- 3 Use a "How" approach for each solution, in order to identify the solutions to the underlying and root causes
- 4 Change the negative consequences to **positive results**



Setting objectives

Reflecting on your problem and solutions trees, you can set the objectives for your advocacy strategy. Whereas your goal or aim relates to your aspirations – the ideal situation you want to see; your objectives are the specific, concrete achievements you want to attain to get to your goal. Each goal usually has multiples objectives.

Good practice says that your advocacy objectives should be **SMART**:

Specific

- ✓ Well-defined
- ✓ Clear to anyone with a basic knowledge of the project

Measurable

- ✓ Know if the goal is obtainable and how far away completion is
- ✓ Find out when you have achieved your goal

Achievable

- ✓ The goals and activities should fall within the capacity of your organisation

Realistic

- ✓ What can you realistically achieve within the available resources, knowledge and time

Time-bound

- ✓ Specify the timeframe in which you aspire to achieve the activities and goals

Stage 2 **Who can get us there?** Identifying the stakeholders that are interested and influential to create the change you want to see

When you have captured the change you want to achieve, the next stage is to assess who can create that change. Who do you need to speak to? Who are the stakeholders you can engage with? Who is interested in the issue? Who is influential on the issue? Who is it that you are trying to influence? Who are the decision-makers? Who is opposed to the change you want to create?

Identifying stakeholders

Before starting your advocacy it is important to identify your target audience. Who are you trying to reach with your advocacy message? Who do you want to influence? Who can help you create the change you want to see?

When identifying stakeholders, keep the duty-bearers and rights-holders you have identified through your context analysis in mind. Think about who has an obligation to do something about the issue; who is influential.

A stakeholder is any individual, group or organisation with a positive or negative interest in the outcome of the project, whether they are needed in the decision making process or not. They are affected by what you are trying to achieve and can influence the outcome: positively or negatively

Identifying stakeholders can be as simple as thinking about who you are already in contact with!

- Who is your liaison point when it comes to dealing with local or national governments? Are there other entry points that might be useful – i.e. your local representative?
- Or the relevant minister or member of parliament who holds the portfolio for children or housing or both?
- Would it be useful to identify contacts in other political parties?
- Is there a parliamentary committee that is responsible for reviewing the implementation of international treaties, which you could approach to discuss General Comment No. 21? Or perhaps a parliamentary body targeting children’s issues.
- If you are working in another country, are there diplomats and staff at other country’s missions and embassies who may have insights into who are the relevant local decision-makers?
- Who are the other community leaders working on this or related issues?
- Who in the media might be interested in helping share information about this issue?
- Which businesses are relevant to talk to about your work?
- Who are the children and young people who are stakeholders in your work?

Creating a stakeholder matrix

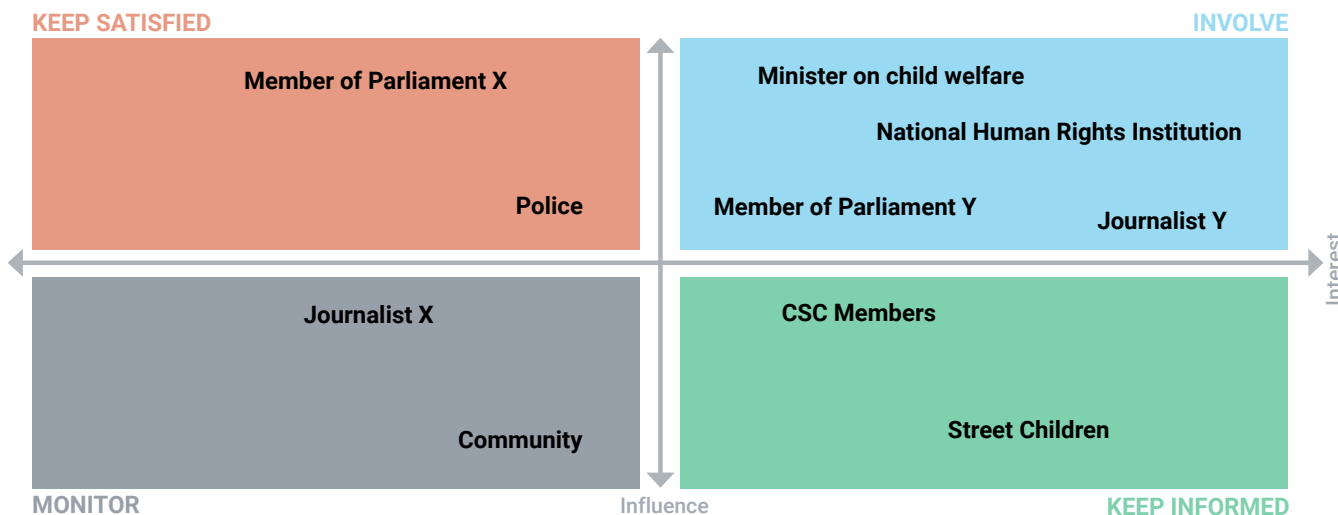
Once you have identified the stakeholders you want to engage, a stakeholder matrix allows you to assess who to involve, and how to interact with each of them. Ask yourself two questions for each stakeholder:

- **What is their influence for the change you want to create?**
 How much power do they hold? How much could they hypothetically impact the issue, in a positive or negative manner? A member of parliament or minister will often rank high on this scale; street-connected children will be lower.
- **What is their interest in your campaign?**
 How much interest do they have in the issue? How much are they likely to want to help? Street children and NGOs working with street children will likely rank high on this scale, communities or police may rank lower.

This allows you to place your stakeholders in Stakeholder Matrix.



Once you have placed them in the Matrix according to their level of interest and influence, you can group them in four categories:



Each group of stakeholder requires a different type of interaction:

- **Involve:** They are likely to lose or gain significantly from your project, and can help or hinder you reaching your goal > Must be represented, heard, and you must keep good relationships with them
- **Keep informed:** May lose or gain from your campaign, but without the means to really affect > Must be diligently informed, and represented in your campaign
- **Keep satisfied:** They do not have a specific interest in your campaign and will not gain or lose from it, but have the ability to influence it positively or negatively > must be managed and monitored since they can be a source of risk if their interest changes
- **Monitor:** Are not likely to gain or lose a lot from your advocacy campaign, and cannot affect your campaign > Only require minimum monitoring and informing

Stakeholder Register

Now that you have identified and classified your stakeholder, you can create a Stakeholder Register based on your Stakeholder Matrix. The goal of a Stakeholder Register is to keep track of all your stakeholders, make sure you are always up to date on your interactions with them, and use the proper way to communicate with each of them.

Stakeholder	Position / Role	Organisation	Supports/ Neutral/ Resists	Expectations	Contacts + favored means of communication
National Human Rights Institution					
Minister on child welfare					
Journalist Y					
Member of parliament Y					
CSC Member					
Street children					
Member of parliament X					
Police					
Journalist X					
Community					

You can add to this table depending on your needs and what is relevant to your campaign: Date of the last meeting, last topic discussed, specific person in your organisation in charge of interacting with them, etc.

WHO SHOULD WE ENGAGE WITH?

Governments

Engage your community

To build the capacity of the public to speak out against human rights violations and abuses against street-connected children, it is also important to raise public awareness.

Media

Newspapers Journals Magazines
TV Blogs

Social Media

Twitter Facebook Instagram YouTube
Engage with people who have a large social media following

Public events

Public Forums
Talks

Petitions

Street Connected Children & Young People

At the very heart of everything we do

Other parts of civil society

Companies and Private Sector

Raise awareness of their corporate responsibility to respect the rights of street-connected children

Encourage companies to adopt ethical business practices that fully respect and promote the rights of street-connected children

Encourage companies to provide pro bono services for the realisation of the rights of street-connected children

Think-Tanks and Academics

Partner with academics and think tanks to carry out research to strengthen evidence

Lawyers

Provide legal advice and assistance for street-connected children and their families

Review and analyse laws to ensure compliance with international standards

Conduct strategic litigation to improve the laws, policy and practice for street-connected children

Train lawyers, judges and legal aid providers on the application of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

United Nations

Stage 3

What do we need to tell them? Identifying the message you want to use

To deliver your advocacy effectively, you will need to carefully consider the message you want to send and who you are sending it to.

Consider what will motivate your audience to listen to you and take the actions you want them to take. How is your issue relevant to your audience's values and interests? Do they have a legal obligation to do what you are asking them to do?

Crafting an effective advocacy message

The following steps can help you create strong, compelling advocacy messages for your stakeholders⁶.

1. **Open with a statement that engages your audience** – Grab your audience's attention by invoking emotion (e.g. using a dramatic fact). This should not be more than one or two sentences.
2. **Present the problem** – Describe the issue you want to address, who are affected by it and how it affects them.
3. **Provide evidence about the problem** – It is important to support the issue you are raising and your position on this with evidence. Keep the evidence you provide simple and jargon-free.
4. **Share a story, testimony or example** – This can put a human face to the issue, and often makes it more relatable, memorable and compelling.
5. **Connect the issue to the audience's values, concerns or self-interest** – your audience will be more likely to gain interest in your message if it fits with what they care about, want or need. For this purpose it is important to study your audience well, and know what drives them.
6. **Present the solution** – Clearly stipulate the change you want to create, and the reason why this change is important. It can also be helpful to include a deadline for when you want to realise the change.
7. **Make your request (the 'advocacy ask')** – Clearly state the actions you want your audience to take in order to achieve the solution to the problem.

Tailor your message to the people you want to influence. Who are your key stakeholders? What is their level of knowledge on the issue? What interests them?



It can be useful to create primary and secondary messages.

Primary messages include the main information you want all stakeholders to know, such as the goal, the reason why this is important, key evidence that supports why this is important, and the action you want stakeholders to take. You could also include an example or testimony from a street-connected child to make your message more relatable. Your primary message should be no longer than one page.

Secondary messages support the primary message with additional evidence, and set out how the goal can be achieved in more detail. Secondary messages are therefore often longer and more tailored to specific audiences, while the primary message may be more universal.

Mode of communication

You need to consider what will make your message accessible for your audience. Some audiences will value a short, direct communication via email or telephone. If this is the case, think about how you can get your message across briefly and whether your audience would be able to meet with you to learn about the issue you are raising in greater depth.

Find tips on writing to and speaking to governments and a model letter to government in Chapter 4 (page 51)



Other audiences will prefer to read a detailed report containing case studies and analysis, but it is still a good idea to think about how you can summarise what you need them to know in brief. Sometimes your audience will include children – you can ensure that your message is equally accessible to them through the use of plain language, clear signposting and photos or illustrations (these techniques are often just as useful for communicating with adults!).

6. Adapted from 'Crafting an Effective Advocacy Message', published by The Consumer Voice, accessed from: http://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/files/issues/Crafting_an_Effective_Advocacy_Message_han.pdf

Stage 4

Who will they listen to? Identifying the most suitable messenger to deliver your message

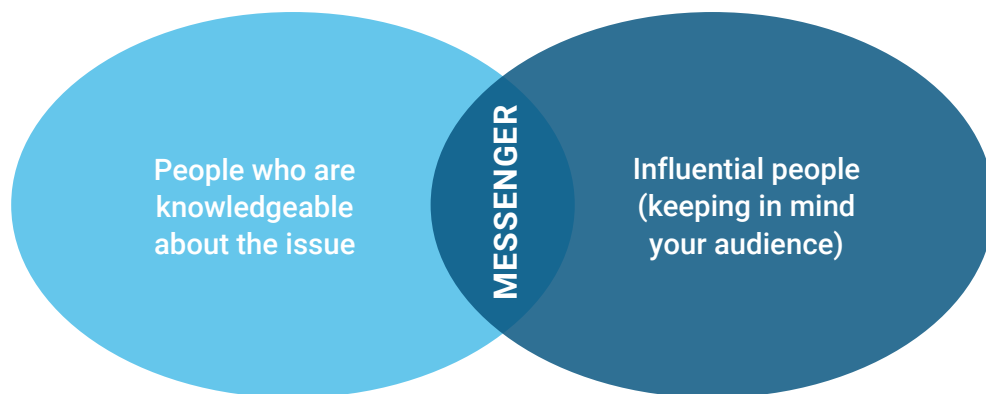
The impact your message has will in part be determined by who delivers the message. For certain audiences the message may be most compelling coming from a street-connected child speaking about their own experience, whereas other audiences may be more easily persuaded by a person or organisation with technical or legal expertise.

Identifying your messenger

You should be looking for a messenger that is both well-placed to speak about the issue and influential. This may be a person, an organisation or a coalition. There is no 'one size fits all' approach; you will need to tailor your messaging strategy to your audience. For example, if you are asking a Minister of Finance to allocate a portion of the national budget to a child rights initiative, they may be more easily persuaded if the message comes from a leading economist, businessperson or corresponding Minister of Finance from another country.

Different messengers bring different advocacy challenges.

If you have mobilised the public to deliver your message, the message will have a higher profile and democratic legitimacy, but you will have a lower degree of control over its tone and content. If you know someone who is already connected to your audience ("an insider"), your message can be delivered in a more direct and personal way, but the messenger may lose credibility if they don't have the technical knowledge to support the argument.



Empowering children to deliver their own messages directly to the influencers can be a powerful method of advocacy, and ensures that the children are directly involved in decisions being taken about their lives.



You should ask the following questions when deciding who should deliver your message:

- **Who would be considered a credible messenger?** Who has the expertise, experience or respected reputation needed to bolster the impact of your message?
- **Who is most knowledgeable about the issue being raised?** These individuals are best placed to inform your audience, and their high level of knowledge can in itself make them influential. When street-connected children speak up on their own behalf, this makes the message more authentic and powerful.
- **Who is likely to have the greatest influence upon your target audience?** Think widely and consider local contexts – celebrities, community leaders and religious organisations can all be highly influential messengers.
- **What actions can be taken to ensure the messenger is confident and informed enough to deliver the message persuasively?** It is always a good idea to brief your messenger on any specific points you want to be raised, and some messengers may appreciate additional support or resources.
- **What risks might the messenger face?** Advocacy can give rise to risks, such as reputational harm, damage to relationships (with partners, governments or other stakeholders) or even risks to personal safety in the event of a backlash. This is a particularly important consideration if your messenger is a child or group of children.

Stage 5

How can we make sure they hear us? Identifying the right advocacy method for the cause

Now that we have a clear message, messenger and audience, it is time to think about how we are going to deliver our message.

What is the right advocacy method to influence our key stakeholders? How can we incorporate children in our advocacy methods? What are the risks associated with these methods and how can we manage those?

Selecting the right advocacy method

There are many ways to conduct advocacy. This section sets out some of the key advocacy methods you could use. Chapter 4 will go into further detail of how you can conduct your advocacy, looking at different entry points at local, national, regional and international level and how to engage key stakeholders.

Commonly used advocacy methods:

1. **Lobbying and negotiating:** One-on-one discussions with decision-makers to influence them to change policy, practice or behaviour.
2. **Raising public awareness:** Delivering persuasive, evidence-based and solution-oriented messages to the public, decision-makers and other stakeholders on the advocacy issues.
3. **Publishing research and evidence:** Illustrating the underlying causes and solutions to the advocacy issue, and drawing recommendations that can be addressed by decision-makers and other stakeholders.
4. **Social mobilisation and engagement:** Engaging multiple levels of society, as allies and partners in realising rights, and facilitating platforms for the public's voices to be heard and acted on by decision-makers and other stakeholders.
5. **Campaigning:** An overarching strategy that often encompasses most of the above strategies by mobilising the public through raising awareness on the advocacy issue, aimed at changing public perception and building support to influence decision-makers and other stakeholders.



Street-connected children are experts on their own lives and they can take part in all of these different advocacy methods!

Of course, these are **not the only forms of advocacy that we can employ!** Others include: strategic litigation; budget monitoring; protesting; using the media (including radio, print and social media); using partnerships and alliances; and any number of combinations of all of these.

Which advocacy methods we decide to use will depend on:

- the issues we are working on;
- what kind of change we are wanting to create (i.e. our advocacy goal);
- who the stakeholders are that we are trying to influence; and
- the best entry points to leverage for creating change.

Another aspect to consider is **what specific opportunities or leverage points could impact upon your advocacy?** For instance, are there upcoming political or legal developments, appointments to public offices, national events, national days of remembrance or international awareness days, elections, referendums, legal reforms, court cases likely to be resolved in the coming months with potential for setting precedents or bringing attention to related human rights violations?

What is going on in the broader context that your stakeholders operate in that may impact upon your advocacy asks or that you may be able to use as advocacy opportunities?



Don't forget to think about how to incorporate the PANEL principles in your advocacy methods. These form the heart of the human rights-based approach to advocacy.

Insider versus outsider advocacy

Advocacy methods are often divided into insider and outsider advocacy. Insider advocacy takes a collaborative approach, working closely with the stakeholders you want to influence. This requires direct contact with the stakeholders you want to influence, and interest from those stakeholders to collaborate on the issue at hand. In outsider advocacy you take a more confrontational approach, often mobilising the general public to hold the stakeholders you want to influence to account. Both have advantages and disadvantages.

	Insider advocacy	Outsider advocacy
Advantages	Duty-bearers will be more likely to respond positively when you approach them from a collaborative approach, rather than a confrontational. It can lead to new opportunities and collaborations that can take your work to the next level – you can influence from within.	Empowerment of the rights-holders and public to speak out about their rights and hold duty-bearers accountable. Raising awareness on misconduct by duty-bearers
Disadvantages	May make it difficult to speak out about misconduct by the stakeholders you collaborate with. It may also give a false impression that the stakeholders are listening, while in fact it is only for show. Finally, by focussing on the duty-bearers you may risk losing touch with the beneficiaries / rights-holders on whose behalf you are advocating.	This form of advocacy may lead to tensions between the duty-bearers targeted and rights-holders speaking out about issues. The duty-bearers may feel threatened by this confrontational approach and feel stronger opposition to the change you want to create. You may miss opportunities by not collaborating with the duty-bearers you want to influence.

Adjusted from: Plan International's Youth advocacy toolkit: The Education We Want

A combination of the two approaches to advocacy is in many cases the best solution, identifying circumstances in which collaboration will work best, and where confrontation is necessary and desirable.

ADVOCACY METHODS SOME EXAMPLES

1

Lobbying and negotiating

One-on-one discussions with decision-makers to influence them to change policy, practice or behaviour.

2

Raising public awareness

Delivering persuasive, evidence-based and solution-oriented messages to the public, decision-makers and other stakeholders on the advocacy issues.

3

Publishing research and evidence

Illustrating the underlying causes and solutions to the advocacy issue, & drawing recommendations that can be addressed by decision-makers and other stakeholders.

4

Social mobilisation & engagement

Engaging multiple levels of society, as allies and partners in realising rights, and facilitating platforms for the public's voices to be heard and acted on by decision-makers.

5

Campaigning

An overarching strategy that often encompasses most of the above strategies by mobilising the public through raising awareness on the advocacy issue, aimed at changing public perception and building support to influence decision-makers and other stakeholders.

Risk management

All advocacy methods can give rise to risks, whether for yourself or others, and it is important to be well-prepared to deal with risks as they arise, especially when working with children. There is no way to eliminate all risk from your work, but through conducting risk assessments and making plans to prevent or reduce risks, you can improve the safety and quality of your work.

Types of risk that you may encounter include:

Personal	Harm to any person - staff, volunteers, partners, children and other beneficiaries - is an important risk to safeguard against. Special measures will be necessary where your work involves children or other vulnerable people.
Reputational	Reputational risk can cause loss of credibility within the sector and loss of trust from beneficiaries, resulting in negative impacts on project delivery and funding relationships.
Financial	Major financial risks can include termination of funding from donors, contract sustainability risks, inadequate or fluctuating investments, financial mismanagement and insufficient financial records. Financial risks can be external, such as a recession, or can be incurred as a result of other types of internal risk.
Property	Loss or damage to property can slow down project progress and incur unexpected costs.
Governance	Inappropriate organisational structure, a deficit of relevant skills or commitment at the trustee level and conflicts of interest are all examples of governance risks that can impact upon delivery of your advocacy.
Political	Changes in government policy or approach, political instability and corruption can all change the dynamics of advocacy work, particularly where your advocacy efforts involve influencing the legislative and policy agenda in-country. There are severe risks in humanitarian settings and it is important to consider risks such as terrorism, human conflict or other types of violence as a result of political instability.
Operational	Operational risks may include poor staff recruitment, training and retention, poor contract pricing, doubt about security of assets and poor beneficiary welfare or safety.
Natural	Natural disasters (such as earthquakes, tsunamis and droughts), famines and disease outbreaks can have devastating consequences for large numbers of people and can disrupt advocacy in-country.

Below is an example of a simple risk assessment matrix that you can use to identify and manage the different risks that might arise as a result of your advocacy. It allows you to set out any threats, concerns or challenges that you anticipate (under 'Risk description'), the level of impact the risks could have and likelihood of them occurring (scored as low, medium or high by grading them on a scale from 1-3). The risk score, calculated by multiplying the impact and likelihood scores, gives an indication of the severity of the risk, 1 being the lowest level of risk and 9 being the highest. You are then invited to list any actions that can be taken to mitigate the risk, either to prevent it from arising or to lower the loss or harm caused should it arise. If the risk score is high, you should consider whether the risk outweighs the value in undertaking the action or initiative that gives rise to the risk. Finally, the last column in the matrix allows you to allocate an individual as the 'responsible person' for managing that risk.

In particular, if you are working with street-connected children either directly or indirectly, it is essential to have policies and procedures in place around child protection and safeguarding. Child protection should be integrated across all your organisational workstreams; it is the responsibility of every person working at or with your organisation to ensure the safety of the children affected by your work.

No	Risk description	Impact (I)	Likelihood (L)	Risk score (I x L)	Mitigation	Responsible person
1	Reprisals from government	3	1	3	Regular dialogue with government and law enforcement agencies	Programme manager
2						
3						

Find additional information on risk management and child safeguarding in Annex 5: Further Resources.



Stage 6

What is our capacity? Identifying the capacity of your organisation

An important part of planning for your advocacy is assessing the capacity of your organisation; taking stock of the resources you already have and those you need.

What advocacy have you carried out in the past? What did you learn from this? What are the strengths and weaknesses of your organisation to conduct this advocacy? What are the opportunities you could utilise and what are the threats?

What is capacity?

Capacity of an organisation can be defined as the availability and quality of resources:

- **Human resources** – number, quality, skills and experience of staff, consultants, advisers and volunteers
- **Material resources** – Equipment necessary to carry out the work of the organisation
- **Financial resources** – Money and credit available to an organisation
- **Informational resources** – Pool of knowledge, information and evidence
- **Intellectual resources** – Copy rights and patents

To assess the capacity you need for your advocacy, it can be helpful to ask the following questions:

- How many staff, volunteers, advisers do you need? What skills should they have?
- What equipment is necessary to conduct your advocacy?
- How much money do you need to conduct your advocacy?
- What evidence / knowledge do you need?

Think about how you are doing as an organisation on each of these aspects of capacity.



Learning from past or current experiences

If you have already conducted advocacy in the past, or are currently conducting advocacy on the same or different issues, it can be helpful to analyse what worked and what did not work in those advocacy action – and whether any of the challenges or successes were related to the capacity of your organisation.

Conducting a SWOT analysis

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis, helps you identify the strengths and weaknesses of your organisation, but also the opportunities and threats in the environment you work in that determine in part the capacity you need to effect the change you want to create.

INTERNAL	<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things your organisation does well • Things you do better than other organisations in your area of work • Internal resources, such as skilled knowledgeable staff or existing funding • Etc. 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things your organisation lacks • Things other organisations in your area of work do better than you • Resource limitations • Etc.
EXTERNAL	<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging interest in your advocacy ask • Press / media coverage of your work • Events addressing issues related to your advocacy ask • Etc. 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of political will to address the issues • Risk of reprisals from government • Negative media / press coverage • Etc.

Stage 7

Is it working?

Developing a monitoring and evaluation plan to measure progress towards your advocacy objectives

The final stage in putting together your advocacy strategy is developing a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan. This will help capture results and challenges and improve your advocacy along the way.

This section will introduce the topic of M&E and provide tools to develop an M&E framework for your advocacy strategy. Chapter 5 is dedicated to conducting monitoring and evaluation during your advocacy work. It provides further detail and can therefore be helpful in developing your strategy as well.

Monitoring and evaluation

M&E is the process of tracking and assessing the actual results of your advocacy compared to your intended results. M&E plays a key role in shaping and improving an advocacy strategy, and in helping capture the impact. Advocacy occurs in a changing environment – be it fast or slow. A strong M&E plan can help you adapt and evolve your advocacy work to changing and emerging circumstances.

When developing your monitoring and evaluation plan it can be helpful to keep in mind the main differences between monitoring and evaluation:⁷

Monitoring	A continuous process that lasts for the whole duration of your advocacy and may call for readjustments for efficiency and effectiveness.
Evaluation	In-depth assessments selectively undertaken at specific stages in your advocacy cycle. Evaluation is an exercise that attempts to determine as systematically and objectively as possible the worth or significance of an intervention, strategy or policy. Evaluation findings should be credible, and should be able to influence decision-making by programme partners on the basis of lessons learned. For the evaluation process to be 'objective', it needs to achieve a balanced analysis, recognize bias and reconcile perspectives of different stakeholders through the use of different sources and methods

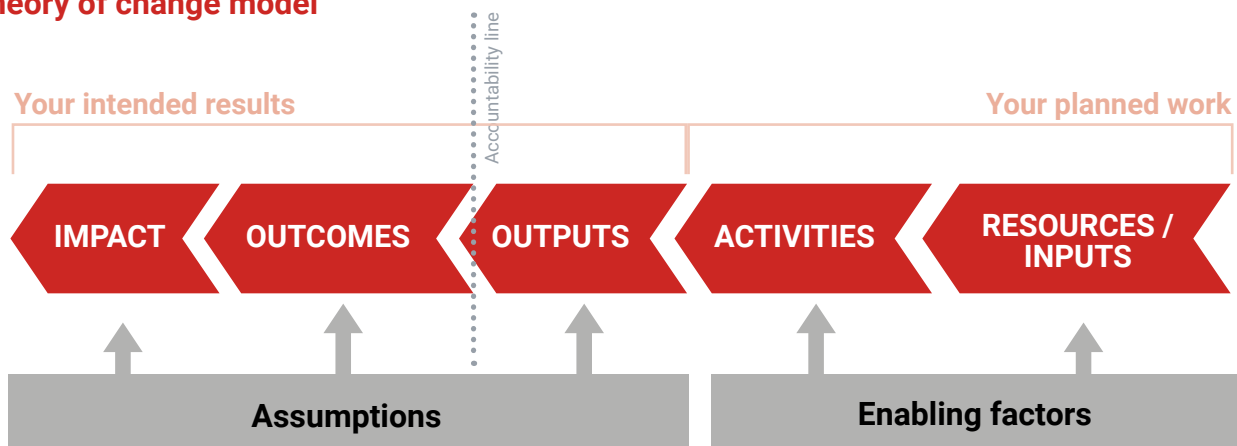
Theory of Change

Developing a Theory of Change (ToC) is key for understanding how expected changes may occur. A ToC explains the relationship between the intended changes the organisation aims to create and the pathways through which to achieve that influence (i.e. outputs and activities of the advocacy strategy). It also helps identify the external factors that influence your programmes or activities, including assumptions and enabling actors – those things that need to exist for the change to happen.

Reflecting on your advocacy issues, goals, objectives, methods and capacity analysis, you can create your own theory of change.

The diagram below depicts a backward mapping ToC example. As the name suggests, it works backward from the aim you want to achieve, to identify the outcomes, outputs, activities and resources (as well as external factors) you need to achieve that aim – beginning with the end in mind!

Theory of change model



7. Find additional information on risk management and child safeguarding in Annex 5: Further Resources.

Elements of the ToC:

IMPACT	The ultimate final aim/goal – the ideal situation
OUTCOMES	Medium- and long-term changes that occur as a result of your advocacy strategy, which is experienced by your beneficiaries (e.g. street-connected children). These are changes necessary to achieve your final aim / goal.
OUTPUTS	Products and services that are necessary to achieve the desired outcomes. They are direct results from your activities.
ACTIVITIES	The steps you are taking through your advocacy strategy to produce the necessary outputs
RESOURCES / INPUTS	Financial, technical and human resources needed to carry out the activities
ASSUMPTIONS	External factors or conditions that you do not fully control and that you rely on for the success of your advocacy strategy. They influence your ability to achieve the desired outputs, outcomes and impact.
ENABLING FACTORS	External opportunities that you can tap into to pull together the necessary resources and carry out your activities effectively.
ACCOUNTABILITY LINE	Everything right of the accountability line is within your control. It is the work you are doing and the direct result from that work. You can therefore attribute this to your own work and organisation. Everything left of the accountability line is outside your direct control, dependent on external factors and influenced by work of others. You contribute to this through your own work, but others contribute to this as well.

Logframe

Building on the theory of change you can develop a logframe. A logframe is a tool that can help in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating your advocacy strategy. It is not a full M&E plan, but often a useful framework to build your M&E plan around, and to help you track progress and adapt to changing circumstances.

Logframe terminology

Indicators	Markers that can help us observe, measure or validate a situation to tell us about progress made towards the intended result
Baseline	Data to describe the problem/situation before the intervention, against which your targets can be measured.
Targets	Specified objectives that indicate a number, percentage or description of the situation you would like to see after the intended result. You can have different targets for different stages throughout your advocacy project.
Means of Verification	Describes how or where you can find the information to measure your indicator.
Assumptions	External factors or conditions that you do not fully control and that you rely on for the success of your advocacy strategy. They influence your ability to achieve the desired outputs, outcomes and impact.

Results	Measures or indicators	Baseline	Targets	Means of verification	Assumptions
<i>What are the results you want to achieve at the different levels?</i>	<i>What measures will indicate that you have achieved your results?</i>	<i>What is the situation now?</i>	<i>What does the situation look like when you have achieved your result?</i>	<i>How/where can you find the information to measure your indicator?</i>	<i>What could influence progress towards your results?</i>
Impact					
Outcomes					
Outputs					
Activities					
Inputs					

Adapted from: UNICEF, Advocacy Toolkit, 2010

Indicators

Indicators (or success indicators) are quantitative or qualitative variables that provide reliable means to measure success and to reflect changes that result from your intervention. Indicators help to demonstrate progress when the strategy is on track and provide early warning signs when things go wrong, allowing an appropriate and timely response.

For instance, if your advocacy is aimed at ending abuse, exploitation and all forms of violence against street-connected children, an impact indicator could be: the proportion of street-connected children who have experienced violence, abuse or exploitation in the past month. If you measure this before you start your advocacy (baseline), and then measure it, for instance, every 6 months, and see a reduction in the proportion of children who report abuse, exploitation or violence, you know you are making progress towards your intended impact.

Effective indicators should be:

- **Clear** – precise and unambiguous
- **Relevant** – appropriate to the subject
- **Economic** – measurable at a reasonable cost
- **Adequate** – provide appropriate basis to assess performance
- **Monitorable** – available to independent validation

Capturing the information from the 7 stages in an advocacy plan

Now that you have gone through the 7 stages to plan your advocacy strategy, you can use the template below to capture the key results in an advocacy plan – or create your own!

Using this template you can capture your key messages, messengers and advocacy methods/actions per stakeholder, and then fill in the risks, capacity and success indicators associated with the advocacy methods/actions you have identified, as well as by when and by whom this should be completed.

Issue:									
Goal:									
Objectives:									
Stakeholders/ target audience	Key message(s)	Key Messenger(s)	Advocacy method / action	Risks	Capacity needs / gaps	Success indicators	By when	By whom	

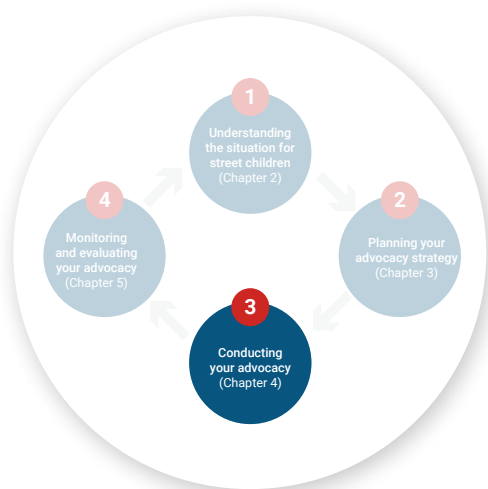


4 CONDUCTING YOUR ADVOCACY

Chapter 3 provided information and tools to develop an advocacy strategy. This chapter focusses on implementing this strategy; conducting your advocacy.

This chapter will provide guidance for engagement with:

- National and local government
- Media
- Civil society
- Communities
- Human rights mechanisms



4.1 Engaging your national and local government

As States are the main 'duty-bearers' and are responsible for the obligations to respect, protect, and fulfil the rights of the child under the Convention, national and local governments are a key stakeholder with influence over the laws and policies that affect street-connected children. Engaging with national and local governments (either your own or others) will therefore likely be one of the key priorities of your advocacy strategy.

National governments

There are many ways we can engage with national governments to advocate for and support them in using the framework and recommendations set out in the General Comment in their work implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Here are some ways to engage with your national government:

- Meet with the relevant government minister or your local representative (or both!) to **raise awareness** regarding the General Comment and the government's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and how the General Comment helps to provide guidance on how to respect, protect and fulfil their obligations vis-à-vis street-connected children.
- Engage with the national government regarding **policies and laws** that are not in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and General Comment No. 21, or new laws and policies being drafted concerning street-connected children, and make recommendations.
- Raise awareness of the importance of taking a **child rights approach** to preventing children needing to be in the streets and protecting children who are already in the streets, for example, **consider writing a policy paper** on how to address this issue in light of General Comment No. 21, and distribute this information to members of parliament and civil servants in the relevant ministries.
- Work in collaboration with government to **build their capacity to integrate a child rights approach** in all their strategies, for example using General Comment No. 21 in training with civil servants working directly and indirectly on children's issues.
- Encourage the government to develop and implement a **national action plan** on street-connected children to realise their rights, and seek to collaborate and provide input on the elaboration of this national action plan.
- Create **meaningful dialogue between government and street-connected children** to ensure children's voices are being heard and included in decision-making, for example through organising events, seminars, workshops and speaking opportunities.
- **Hold government actors responsible** for actions or inactions that violate the rights of street-connected children, for example through using national or international human rights mechanisms, ombudspersons or the media.

- **Complement the actions of the government** in delivering for realising the rights of street-connected children.
- **Use evidence to show the government the structural causes of street-connectedness** and how changes in government policy and practice can better protect children and realize the rights of street-connected children, for example by gathering personal testimonies and providing government with case studies.
- **Asking members of the legislative arm of government to ask questions of ministers or representatives**, for example by identifying and approaching members of the legislature who may have an interest in your issue and may be prepared to ask questions.
- **Call for a parliamentary inquiry** into the realisation of the rights of street children in your country, for example by identifying and approaching specialist parliamentary committees addressing issues such as implementation of international laws, constitutional rights, children's issues or human rights. Consider writing to the chair of the relevant committee/s and propose an inquiry or other action to review the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in relation to street-connected children, as per General Comment No. 21.
- **Use the General Comment as an audit tool** to assess service provision for street-connected children and progress towards the realisation of street-connected children's rights.

Case Study: Using GC21 to develop guidance regarding working with street-connected children in Tanzania



Railway Children intends using General Comment No. 21 as a tool to help inform the development and adoption of guidance that define how staff from a range of governmental and non-governmental agencies should respond to children on the streets in Tanzania: "We do not want to create yet another national plan, but instead articulate a practical guide that helps duty bearers understand how to interact positively with children on the streets, and how children need to be provided with support from a range of service providers. We will bring together a range of stakeholders from civil society and government, and with the children themselves agree what procedures and processes need to be followed. The General Comment No. 21 will act as a reference point in developing these procedures so that we can ensure all procedures are in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child".

Local governments

Engagement with local governments is important as this is where the bulk of the practical policies and procedures that affect the day-to-day lives of street-connected children are made.

Within their responsibility for public administration, local governments will generally have oversight of children's services, schools, housing, public spaces and emergency services (police, fire and medical services). It is also notable that local government will have responsibility for creating and enforcing by-laws, which are laws applying only to a local area. By-laws often include laws around 'nuisance' behaviours, such as loitering, begging and hawking, which can disproportionately affect street-connected children (but typically have lower-level penalties, such as fines or community service orders).

States should encourage and support local-level, partnership-based, specialized interventions on the basis of a child rights approach, small and flexible, with adequate budgets, often led by civil society organisations with local expertise. These interventions should be coordinated by local governments and supported by the State, through the national child protection system. They could benefit from support from the private sector, for capacity-building resources and organisational skills, and academia, for research capacity to enable evidence-based decision-making. Child-friendly cities and communities contribute to an atmosphere of acceptance and provide the basis for social networks and community-based protection systems for children in street situations. Children in street situations should be supported to participate in local, decentralized bottom-up planning processes.

[\(GC21 para. 20\)](#)

For some advocates, the most relevant local government contacts will be those running municipal or city shelters, or the local police who engage with youth on the streets. For others, it will be most effective to engage with the local mayor or the head of the local government department who oversees policy-making in relation to the use of public space, housing and homelessness. In some instances, it may be that engagement with a local political party is one of the more effective approaches for raising awareness of a particular issue – though many organisations prefer to adopt a cross-party approach in order to build a broad base of support across the political spectrum.

Some of the same engagement approaches that were outlined for use with national governments can easily be adapted for use with local governments, particularly those regarding capacity-building and assessing compliance.

In relation to local-level policy development, some of the ways we can engage with policymakers include:

- **Engaging in local policy consultations and discussions** with local policy-makers regarding the ways in which policies impact upon street-connected children. You can engage with local policy-makers on an individual basis (by requesting a meeting) or by attending community engagement events, such as town hall meetings.
- **Collaborating with other organisations** who are already influencing local policy and decision-makers. This can range from charities and voluntary organisations to local businesses and citizens' or residents' associations.
- **Organising seminars and workshops for policy-makers** so that they can hear from field experts and child rights policy advisors.
- **Connecting policy makers with street-connected children** to hear first-hand about their experiences of local service delivery and engagement with local authorities.
- **Providing research on policy issues to decision-makers** and/or collaborate with others who have the capacity to do this, for example, academics, think tanks and lawyers.
- Demonstrating **alternative policy approaches** and providing **examples of good practice** from other places to help guide policy making.

In relation to implementation at the local level, you may consider the following forms of engagement:

- **Provide training to local authorities and institutions** to help them understand the impact of their policies and practice on street-connected children. Specialised training for schools, housing authorities, children's services and the police can lead to improvements in the treatment of street-connected children and can help to build trust within communities.
- **Support local government oversight and scrutiny committees** by providing them with evidence about successes and shortcomings in the local government's efforts to support street-connected children.
- **Encourage local authorities and institutions to share good practice** so that their knowledge and expertise has wider reach.

Guidance tools for approaching your government

Use the **stakeholder mapping** section of this Guide (page 32) to **ensure you are identifying the relevant decision makers** – who you want to approach will differ depending on your national or local context.

A simple internet search may be enough to give you an **email address, phone number, and physical address** for the government official you want to approach – otherwise use your other government or civil society contacts to see if anyone can help you get the relevant contact information. You can use this information to request a meeting, which is **usually best done first via letter, then via follow-up phone call**.

You can also try 'cold-calling', or calling a contact that you already have in your network, either to discuss the issue/s that you are advocating for, or to **request a meeting to discuss in person**. Further below we have included some **hints for making telephone calls** (page 52) and **hints for meetings** (page 53) to help with each of these processes.

Hints for writing a letter to government


Often writing a letter to your local representative or other relevant government contact is the first step in approaching your government to discuss issues such as how to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child and take into consideration the guidance in General Comment No. 21.

HINTS and TIPS	
Ensure clear structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start your letter by briefly introducing yourself and other organisations with whom you are writing the letter, unless you are already known to the contact. • Briefly explain the reason for the letter. State clearly the actions you are requesting. In addition to implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and compliance with General Comment No. 21, you could call for intermediate steps – for example, organisation of a conference to consider the content of General Comment No. 21 and its implications for street-connected children in your community, or development of a comprehensive, long-term national strategy. • Show how the objective can be achieved and point out the benefit to the government. End by proposing the next steps that should be taken and announcing in advance if you will be telephoning and/or wanting to set up a meeting. • Keep letters short and inviting. Most letters should be no more than one page. Use short paragraphs and sentences, and include no more detail than necessary. You may find it useful to attach briefing materials to the letter – for example, The text of the General Comment (or glossy brochure) in relevant language, as well as the 4 steps to equality overview.
Explain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be careful not to assume knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the General Comment No. 21 or street-connected children’s lives and challenges. • Use clear language and avoid jargon.
Use lists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarise, use bullet points.
Be polite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use proper titles where appropriate • Always address the superior official and copy in the subordinate, never the other way around.
Email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you manage to enter into correspondence with a lobbying contact by email, you may find that contact becomes easier and less formal. • Email contact should build confidence and regular dialogue.
Archive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save copies of your letters and emails.
Responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share responses with other NGOs working on this issue in your country. • Please also share these with CSC, so that your experience can assist or inform efforts in other countries.

Model letter to government

You can use this model letter to **let your government know about the Four Steps to Equality**, and how these can help understand the content of General Comment No. 21.

Simply fill out the highlighted sections – or write your own letter to educate them about General Comment No. 21 and the Four Steps, and ask for a meeting to discuss further.



[Date]

[Title of your representative] [Their full name]

[Position]

[Institution/department]

[Address]

RE: INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR STREET CHILDREN 2018: THE 4 STEPS TO EQUALITY

Dear [title] [last name],

This International Day for Street Children, we call on you to turn words into reality for street children.

In 2017, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recognised street-connected children's rights and set out guidance for states how to realise their rights in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Our country signed and ratified the CRC on [find the date your country signed the CRC here: https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-11&chapter=4&lang=en].

Based on the UN Guidance, the Consortium for Street Children (CSC) – the global network of NGOs, researchers and practitioners working with street-connected children – has developed a global plan for street children's rights. This plan includes four clear, actionable steps to equality for street children.

The 4 Steps to Equality for Street Children:

- **Commit to Equality** – Recognise street-connected children have the same rights as every other child – and reflect that in law and policy.
- **Protect Every Child** – Protect street-connected children from violence, abuse and exploitation and ensure they have access to justice when they are harmed or in conflict with the law.
- **Provide Access to Services** – Enable street-connected children's access to the same essential services as every other child so they can reach their full potential
- **Create Specialised Solutions** – Develop and deliver specialised services and opportunities that tune into the unique needs and challenges of life for street-connected children.

We call on you as the highest authority on realising children's rights in this country, to integrate the 4 Steps to Equality for Street Children in your strategies and policies.

This provides an excellent opportunity to your government to showcase to the world your commitment and dedication to one of society's most vulnerable groups.

We, and CSC, are available to provide technical support in integrating these steps into existing strategies or developing new strategies concerning street-connected children.

I remain at your disposal for further information.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

[Name], [Position, Institution], [Contact details]

Hints for making telephone contact with government representatives

HINTS and TIPS	
Initial/primary contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the name and position of the most relevant contact. • The first person you identify may not be the best person – but they may be able to give you the details of someone else who is more relevant. You can always ask “Who is the best person to talk to regarding government policies on children living on the streets?” • Find out how to reach your initial/primary contact. • If you don’t know where to start, who can help you set up a meeting or make the first contact?
Support staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a polite and friendly relationship with the person who answers the phone. Remember their name and ask for their help. They may be the person who makes sure that your message reaches the relevant official or who finds time for your telephone call or meeting.
Prepare yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an outline of your intended call: the points you want to make, the intended flow of conversation, possible objections and how to overcome them. Have supporting material on hand.
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider -- is this a good time? • Make it a routine to ask very early in the conversation if the person has 10 minutes to discuss an important issue, and if not, when it would be a convenient time for you to call. • Ask what is the best time to call if you need to call again. • Don’t overstay your welcome: aim to keep your call to a maximum of 10 minutes, and arrange a follow-up meeting if further discussion is welcomed.
Clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be clear about what you want from them.
Grab attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will have 45 seconds or so to catch the person’s interest. • Plan what you are going to say in that time. • Be open and enthusiastic about what you want. • Engage them by asking questions.
Be polite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relationship starts here! • Recognise that your issue might not be their priority. • Create a pleasant atmosphere. • Be positive and avoid negative formulations. • Make it easier to say “yes” than “no”.
Take notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take notes of what is said, particularly any decisions and anything you have promised to do or send. • Email contact should build confidence and regular dialogue.
Difficult contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If possible, start by mentioning a recommendation from someone they know (this helps them feel more comfortable and gives you more credibility). • Show interest in the person’s critique of your position. • Inviting a critique or suggestions on your views regarding a particular situation should be a part of most advocacy conversations. Such comments provide valuable information.
Close by summing up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarise what you would like them to do, what you will do and the next steps. • If the purpose of the call was to request a meeting in person, ensure that the details of the meeting have been confirmed.
Follow up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a letter/email of thanks, confirming the outcomes in writing

Hints for meeting with government representatives

Holding a meeting is one of the central activities of all types of lobbying. A typical meeting with government representatives should last no more than one hour. To make this meeting effective, you need to prepare thoroughly, make sure your goals are clear throughout the meeting and not raise too many issues. Focus on the one or two most important messages you want to convey, especially if you have a short meeting.

HINTS and TIPS	
Before the meeting	
Prepare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your facts and as much background information as possible, and know your government's position in the past on similar issues and their track record on implementing General Comment No. 21 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). • If possible, find out about the people you are going to meet: Have they met your organisation before? If so, on which issue and with what outcomes? • What is the scope of their authority and what action can they take in response to your requests? • When meeting politicians, obtain their political biographies and find out if they have been involved in promoting issues that are relevant to street children, children and youth, or human rights generally. • Consider their interests and influences
Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about who is best to attend the meeting. • The best number of delegates is usually two or three. Can you join forces with (an) other organisation(s) as it can help to show that several organisations are involved and interested in this issue. • Decide who will take notes. • Ensure that at least one person has expertise on the General Comment, the CRC, and the rights of street-connected children in order to answer any technical rights-related questions. • Can you involve those directly affected by the issues, i.e. street-connected children?
Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go through your messages and requests. • List your key points to communicate. • Discuss and agree on your goals, the points that you must get across in the meeting and the specific requests that you will be making. • Ensure that you ask the person with whom you are meeting to do something, even if it is only to speak to a colleague. • Discuss and agree on your roles: Who will lead the delegation, who will introduce its members and the main subject of the meeting, what will each person say and who will sum up at the end?
Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about the level of confidentiality you wish to establish. • A confidential meeting may yield useful information or insights.
Legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you recognised as a representative of the people whose interests you are advocating? • Do you have evidence from your research? • Can you bring in other organisations or experts who will know more or who also work on this issue and have credibility?
Be convincing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have evidence to support your position? • Will what you are proposing really make a difference?
Bring material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may want to bring basic materials related to GC21 (such as CSC's glossy guide to GC21) to share in the meeting. • You could use excerpts from this Guide, for example the FAQs, but keep the material brief (i.e., 2 pages where possible) and offer to follow up with more information if requested.
Plan B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you got a plan B? • It's common to turn up at a meeting to find that it's a different person than you expected, that you have less time, and that their agenda is different to what you'd agreed. Be ready for anything!

At the meeting	
Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce yourself, and the purpose of your meeting
Listen carefully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the positions and interests of others
Keep positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep a positive atmosphere • Listen actively, and show interest in and understanding of the other person's point of view
Communicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that you communicate your key points • State your case precisely • Make your request explicit
Don't argue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't get into an argument, it uses too much time and focuses on the negative
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on common ground • Make the meeting effective • Keep the discussion on track and assess progress
Summarise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end summarise what each side has said • Summarise any agreements and next steps before leaving • Be prepared to ask for clarifications if something is unclear • If reference is made to specific documents or legislation, ask for copies
Get agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't let it end there! Try to get agreement to meet again, or a promise to follow up
Clarify follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to follow up on questions. If you are not able to answer certain questions immediately, find out the answer after the meeting and make a follow-up call the next day. It is better to do this than provide incorrect information at the meeting. • If the person with whom you met makes a commitment to obtain information or documentation, make sure to ask during the meeting whether you may follow up, for example, by a phone call the next day or week.

After the meeting	
Follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the meeting, the delegates should agree on who will be responsible for following up. • Remember to send a letter thanking the person for the meeting, reiterating your key message(s) and confirming any agreements reached. • For future reference, make a written report of the meeting and share it with other NGOs in your country working on the issue.

ORGANISING GC21 EVENTS

Why?



- Disseminate information to stakeholders and the general public
- Help street-connected children understand their rights
- To raise money
- Help local and national governments understand how to better protect street-connected children
- Raise awareness within civil society
- To educate people helping to hold governments to account

What should we do?



- Round table meeting
- Networking event
- Panel of experts
- Press conference
- Side event at UN meeting
- Rally/march/protest
- Cocktail party
- Gala
- Fun day
- sports day event
- Breakfast/lunch briefing
- Sponsored event ('sleep out')

When should we do it?



- Formal/business events typically held in the day
- Informal - anytime, good to tie it to a holiday i.e. themed Gala
- There are lots of national days that already have a buzz e.g. the International Day for Street Children (12th April)
- Would your message be heard more if delivered when the UN Human Rights Council or Treaty Body is meeting and there is already some media focus on human rights?

Where should the event be held?



- Somewhere appropriate for your guests
- Many UN / country missions / governmental buildings offer rooms you can book for free or hire
- Depending on what message you want to deliver, consider geographical location - local is appropriate if you are holding an event for rights holders, international events are good if you are advocating at UN level

Who to invite?



- Involve street connected children, whenever you can! (Ensure proper safeguarding)
- A good guest list is made up of people ready to hear the message
- Government officials, diplomats, heads of civil society groups, NGOs, members of the NHRI, media, UN officials, academics, experts on the topic, coalition partners, service providers

How much will it cost?



- This will entirely depend on what kind of event you run!
- Can you ask for pro bono or in kind support (e.g. for use of venue)
- Can you use free social media to spread the word, or do you need a budget for advertising?
- What in-house or in-kind skills can you draw upon to organise the event (i.e. do you have volunteers who can help?)
- Do you need/want to invite experts or others from outside the local area? Do you need to include a budget for travel costs?
- If the event has a fundraising component, how much do you expect to raise?

4.2 Engaging non-governmental stakeholders

In addition to engaging your national and local government, you can also engage with non-governmental stakeholders, such as other civil society actors, the private sector, media, communities and of course street-connected children themselves.

Civil society

Identifying civil society allies to work with, such as NGOs, community-based organisations (CBOs) and academic and religious institutions, can lead to potential collaborations, such as working in coalitions on General Comment No. 21 and the rights of street-connected children. Together, civil society coalitions could assist in leading efforts to engage national and local governments or other actors, and working together could enhance your organisation's ability to become a reference point for authorities and other interested parties. Building partnerships or coalitions can strengthen impact through a collective voice.

Engagement with civil society actors can also focus on raising awareness on the standards of General Comment 21, to guide civil society actors working with and providing services to street-connected children. This can help ensure the ways they work with street-connected children respect, protect and promote their rights.

Join and engage with the CSC Network

Through the CSC Network you can access:

- support from other NGOs, advocates and researchers around the world,
- access to CSC's knowledge hub,
- a platform to demonstrate your organisation's work to a global audience, and most crucially,
- a stronger platform for street-connected children's voices to be heard.

It may also be useful to engage organisations not working directly with street-connected children but on issues affecting street-connected children, such as anti-trafficking organisations, education organisations, labour organisations, legal aid organisations. Other entities that could support your cause include UN agencies participating in programme delivery such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO) or UNICEF or representatives of foreign or local funders and donors.

Engagement with academic or research organisations may be helpful in collecting data and evidence on street-connected children, which can support your advocacy message and further strengthen the credibility of your advocacy.

Questions to ask when thinking about other civil society actors you could engage:

- Who is already working on this issue?
- What are they doing, and how successful are they?
- Are there opportunities for collaboration?

The private sector

Strategic partnerships between the private sector and civil society can be an effective method of delivering advocacy with a wider reach. You may consider engagement with companies, which can range from small businesses to large service delivery companies contracted by the State; lawyers; financial institutions; or other relevant private enterprises. Collaboration with the private sector can be a useful source for capacity-building resources and organisational skills, technical support (providing legal or technological skills, for example) and other valuable services.

With respect to private companies, it is important to note that they usually do not bear a binding legal duty to fulfil street children's rights in the way that States do. However, you may consider engaging private companies in the following ways:

- Raise awareness of their **corporate responsibility** to respect the rights of street-connected children
- Encourage companies to adopt ethical business processes that fully respect and promote the rights of street-connected children
- Encourage companies to provide pro bono services for street-connected children (in a manner consistent with a child rights approach)

- Request funding, technical support or service delivery for projects and programmes to support street-connected children in exchange for promotion of their brand, where appropriate

If your advocacy plan involves law and policy reform, you may consider engaging lawyers:

- Arrange for lawyers to provide (pro bono) legal advice and assistance for street-connected children and their families
- Collaborate with lawyers and law firms to analyse the compliance of existing laws with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and General Comment No.21 and to draft amendments or new legislation to promote compliance
- Engage lawyers to undertake strategic litigation to improve the laws, policies and practices for street-connected children
- Provide training for lawyers, judges and legal aid providers on the application of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Case study: CSC's collaboration with law firm Baker McKenzie



CSC's longstanding partnership with the leading global law firm Baker McKenzie is an example of a successful corporate partnership. Baker McKenzie and its private sector clients worked alongside CSC on a pro bono (free) basis to arrange consultation events with street-connected children so that their views could inform the content of General Comment No. 21. As well as providing valuable logistical support, over 40 in-house attorneys from Baker McKenzie and companies such as AbbVie, Amazon, Cargill, CNH, Merck, Salesforce and Starbucks came together to provide legal research and analysis to support the consultation events.

Following the publication of the General Comment, CSC and Baker McKenzie have been working on a project to take the legal guidance in the General Comment from paper to practice. This project, 'The Legal Atlas for Street Children', has brought together in-house legal teams from a number of Baker McKenzie clients to map the existence of laws, policies and procedures across the world in relation to some of the key issues highlighted in the General Comment. By putting legal knowledge in the hands of advocates, policymakers, the media and the public, we can empower people to change the law and make a difference to street-connected children's lives.

Communities

To build the capacity of the general public to speak out against human rights violations and abuses against street-connected children, it is also important to raise public awareness. This can also be a powerful tool in changing public attitude towards street-connected children.

Ideas for raising public awareness and changing public attitudes

- Engage with the media: for example, using newspapers, TV, radio, social media
- Organise public events
- Organise petitions directed at government or other decision-makers and involve community members in gathering support for the issue you are working on
- Hold public seminars with experts and street-connected children, to dispel myths and clarify rights
- Host 'town hall' style gatherings or public inquiries

Street-connected children

As discussed in Chapter 1, street-connected children should be involved in your work so that your advocacy is inclusive, effective and well-informed. They can be engaged throughout the process of planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.



Street-connected children should be at the centre of your advocacy strategy and be included in every stage of the process. If possible, involve those most affected by the issue in your planning and action – inform, consult, involve!

It is important to build the capacity of street-connected children to claim their rights, hold government accountable and participate effectively in decision-making so that their participation is meaningful. This can be achieved through capacity building workshops and events as well as the dissemination of materials explaining their rights in a child-friendly format.

Case study: The Growing up on the Streets Knowledge Exchange



Street Invest and Growing Up on the Streets conducted a Knowledge Exchange in three African cities, where they found that when supported and given an opportunity street children and youth can make meaningful contributions to discussions on policy and programme design, ensuring many aspects of General Comment No. 21 are addressed.

They describe the experience in their Briefing Paper:

Young people were confident enough to challenge the views of adults and respond to incorrect assumptions about street children and youth or life on the street. By providing expert testimony and being able to lead discussions with stakeholders, young people demonstrated resilience and the capabilities needed to live on the street, as well as the ability to communicate their experiences.

In all three cities, it was evident that professionals working with street children and youth, although seeking to act in their best interests, do not always consider young people's perspectives when designing programmes and services. When confronted with the realities of street life, stakeholders acknowledged that often policy is based on assumptions and may not fully address the needs of the young people they are targeting.

The Voices of Street Children and Youth, Briefing Paper 6, October 2015

In addition, you will need to take additional precautions when working with street-connected children to ensure that your advocacy activities do not directly or indirectly cause them harm. Key safeguarding measures to put in place include (but are not limited to):

- Having a child protection policy in place, and ensuring all staff and volunteers know what it contains and are aware of their duty to comply with it
- Giving child protection inductions to new staff and training existing staff on child protection best practice
- Monitoring and reviewing staff practices to ensure child protection is being carried out in day-to-day activities
- Having a strong reporting and complaints procedure
- Putting in place additional context-specific safeguards where direct contact with children is planned in your advocacy activities

You can find links to more detailed information on child protection and safeguarding in Annex 5: Further Resources.



4.3 Media engagement and social media strategies

You might find that your advocacy plan will be of interest to the general public. To maximise your chance of securing public support, consider engaging with the media

Questions to ask when thinking of engaging with the media

- Search for past media coverage of street children – who are the journalists who have worked on this issue before?
- Do you have existing contacts in media outlets? Can they help provide you with other contacts for others who may be interested in covering such stories?
- Who are the reporters who cover issues such as: law, crime, children, social interest issues, your local community, national laws, human rights and social justice?

Find out which newspapers or reporters in your area are interested in covering street-connected children, human rights, and policy change. Send a media release about your advocacy plan to journalists who might be interested – it will help if you develop a relationship with them first.

A good media release:

- Sums up why your initiative is needed and what the key dates are in the first sentence.
- Includes photos – if you want to include photos of children, ensure you have their informed consent (see example consent form in Annex 4)
- Includes quotes from prominent people and those who are affected by the issue

The tips provided in Chapter 3 for crafting your advocacy message can be helpful in drafting media releases and newspaper articles or social media posts



If you are asked for interviews, prepare your spokesperson with key messages for the advocacy plan – they should be able to confidently explain why the plan is important, how it will work, and what needs to be done.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is perhaps the quickest and easiest way to speak directly to an audience. It is a cost effective way to communicate important issues to many people at one time.

What is it?

Social media, like traditional media, is a catch-all term to describe a platform to spread information and share ideas with an audience. Social media utilises the internet's connectivity through apps or websites and allows people to share content quickly and in real-time.

Why use it?

There is an estimated **2.77 billion** social media users in the world - that's a lot of people that could potentially see your message!

Who uses it?

In almost all countries of the world, a large proportion of people of all ages have access to the internet and use one or more forms of social media.

What platform to use?

There are pros and cons to using every platform. Depending on where you are based and your government's policy, you will have access to different platforms. A quick google search should point you in the right direction of what is the most popular platform for your audience.

What's the cost?

Usually it is free! If you choose to use a platform that charges a subscription fee, it is worth investigating if there is a discount available for non-profit organisations - often there is!

Netiquette

As a general rule, it is important to only put things online that you would feel comfortable saying to someone's face! In the next quick links page there is more information on what is and what isn't acceptable netiquette.

Do I need a strategy?

No. But if you have one, you will spread your message further and deliver it more effectively. Check out the resources listed on the quick links page (next page) for help creating a strategy.

I am too busy for social media!

Are you too busy for your message to be heard? There are some fabulous tools available to help with time management of social media, check out the scheduling resources on the quick links page - they could save you some serious time.

What tone/ language do I use?

Adopt a tone and language that you are comfortable communicating in, that your audience will be receptive to, and one that represents your organisation.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Quick links to useful resources (find URLs in Annex 5: Further Resources).

Different Platforms

- 60+ social networking sites available in 2018

Content

- Is my headline catchy? CoSchedule have built a clever FREE tool to analyse how effective your headline is
- Tips and tricks on writing 'emotional' headlines
- Incorporating social media into your human rights campaigning

Netiquette

- "What is netiquette? (BBC website)

Social Media Strategy

- 7 social media time saving templates
- Social media strategy templates
- Hootsuite 6 step social media marketing plan

Content Creation Tools

- Adobe Spark
- Piktochart
- Canva

Time Management Tools

Pricing correct April 2018

- Buffer – social media management tool (low usage account is free / Pro is \$15 per month)
- Social Pilot – social media management tool (14-day free trial / yearly costs apply)
- CoSchedule – powerful all-rounder for marketing (14-day free trial / \$40-\$1200 per month)
- Hootsuite – unlimited scheduling tool (30 day free trial / \$19 - \$99 per month)
- Social Bee – scheduling tool (14 day free trial / \$29 - \$147 per month)

Inspiration / Good Practice

- Social CEO – Social trends for charity leaders – free guide
- Shorty Awards – Best non-profit social media campaigns
- Top 10 digital charity campaigns in 2017
- Social CEO – A round-up of the best charity CEO's social media

Safety and Security

- Security in-a-Box is a guide to digital security for activists and human rights defenders, jointly developed by Front Line Defenders and Tactical Technology Collective
- Digital Defenders Partnership - The Digital First Aid Kit
- Guardian Project – apps to help HRDs with privacy. ObscuraCam is particularly useful and can blur/pixilate faces in photographs if you want to share photos of human rights violations whilst keeping people's identities anonymous.
- Video4Change – resources for safety and security around videos
- Me and My Shadow – Information, tips, tricks on what digital footprint you are leaving
- Witness – This organisation makes it possible for anyone, anywhere to use video and technology to protect and defend human rights.

Further Information

- The Nonprofit Social Media Decision Guide
- Meet Edgar – free guides on: Social media marketer's beginner's guide, Social media optimization, Skeptic's guide, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
- Know How Non Profit's social media guide

SOCIAL MEDIA IN ACTION

Creating content using General Comment No. 21

Issue

The starting point for any advocacy using social media is to focus on a particular issue or aspect that you work on within your organisation.

For example, helping to protect children who are being targeted by police when using public space.

How

You can use social media to explain what GC21 says when it clarifies the relevant rights in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For example, we could draw on what the Committee elaborates in paragraphs 36-40 of GC21 about art. 15 of the Convention regarding the rights to freedom of association and peaceful assembly.

Why

Referring to the words of the Committee in its General Comment helps to substantiate and provide clarity on how to interpret the Convention on the Rights of the Child in relation to the situation of street-connected children.

In our example, it can help to explain what the rights of street-connected children are, how they are being violated, and what obligations the state or others have to protect these rights.

Blog posts

Some examples of possible blog posts on the topic could include:

- *10 ways governments can protect street children*
- *Youth contributions: Protecting children on the street*
- *Police and street children work together to ensure rights*

Live Tweeting

If you are present and watching a situation unfold where the rights of street connected children are at risk, it can be useful to live tweet about it, to raise awareness in the community and amongst stakeholders. If you are doing this, be careful to protect the privacy of any children involved. Use some pre-identified hashtags, and/or create your own hashtag for the incident.

Photo/Video sharing

In social media, sharing photos and videos can be a great way of garnering attention and helping to personalise issues. How can you include these more?

Hashtags

Using hashtags (#) in your social media helps others to quickly identify and participate in discussions on particular issues. It helps create a searchable history of the issue, and helps to make what you are saying easier to spread.

A hashtag can be a word or phrase - the shorter the better - and make sure it is preceded by a hash mark (#). Whenever someone adds a hashtag to their post, it's able to be indexed by the social network and becomes searchable/discoverable by other users.

Some examples of hashtags that you could use include: #GC21 #GC21streetchildren #UNCRC #childrensrights #childrights #streetchildren #streetwork #streetchildrenday #implementCRC

4.4 Engaging with human rights mechanisms

There are many human rights mechanisms that we can engage with in order to further our advocacy goals and to hold governments to account for ensuring compliance with and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in relation to street-connected children.

National-level human rights mechanisms

Many countries have a *National Human Rights Institution (NHRI)*. NHRIs together with ombudspersons often provide complaints mechanisms. Using these mechanisms is an opportunity to enforce compliance with the Convention and the guidance set out by the Committee in General Comment No. 21.

“Independent national human rights institutions for promoting and monitoring implementation of the Convention, such as children’s rights ombudspersons, must be easily accessible to children in street situations.”

(para 21 GC21)

Other ways to engage with NHRIs include:

- Collaborating with NHRIs on capacity-building initiatives for government officials and other relevant stakeholders on applying a rights-based approach in work with street-connected children
- Collaborating with NHRIs for the development of guidance or toolkits on rights-based approaches for working with street-connected children
- Urging NHRIs to make a statement / submission to government regarding laws or policies that contradict General Comment 21 or rights violations occurring that affect street-connected children.

Regional-level human rights mechanisms

Depending on the country you are working in, you can engage *regional human rights mechanisms*.

Region	Mechanism
Africa	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights 2. African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child 3. African Court on Human and Peoples Rights 4. East African Court of Justice 5. Economic Commission for West African States (ECOWAS) Court 6. Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC) 7. Southern African Development Community (SADC) Tribunal
America	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inter-American Commission on Human Rights 2. Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) 3. Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ)
Arab	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) 2. Arab Human Rights Committee
Asia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. South Asian Association for Regional cooperation (SAARC) 2. Association of Southeast Asian nations (ASEAN)
Europe	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council of Europe (CoE) 2. Commissioner for Human Rights 3. European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) 4. European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 5. OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and human Rights

Derived from OHCHR webpage on regional mechanisms and arrangements

As each of these mechanisms and arrangements have their own practices, procedures and guiding documents, should you wish to consider using these mechanisms in your advocacy work, you can click on the links in the table above or review some of the further reading material in [Annex 5](#).

International-level human rights mechanisms

At the universal level, the [United Nations human rights mechanisms](#) provide a variety of opportunities for us not only to seek access to justice, but also put pressure on governments to improve their track-record and better implement the Convention in ways that comply with General Comment No. 21.

Providing information to UN human rights mechanisms need not be complex. Many avenues exist for sending information about work you are already doing, submitting case studies you have already encountered in your service provision work, or questions that you would like asked of your government. For many of these types of actions, it is not necessary to use a complicated formal process – you can engage with the UN human rights mechanisms as easily as sending a tweet or forwarding them a copy of your latest report or compilation of case studies!

Of course, in other instances, more formal engagement, for example through submitting an NGO report on the government's implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, or writing a letter of allegation regarding specific violations in relation to individuals or groups, requires that you follow established procedures. Participating in a national coalition of NGOs providing information for the Universal Period Review is another way to use your local knowledge to enhance the recommendations made by the international human rights system.

There are many guides to using these UN mechanisms available to help you through this process. In this next section, we set out some information about the possible entry points, as well as further details about the mechanisms, how to use them, and where to access further



Join the CSC Network to receive updates on the work of international human rights mechanisms, and learn from other organisations on their engagement with these mechanisms!

Entry-points into UN Human Rights Mechanisms

As mentioned, engaging with the UN human rights mechanisms does not need to be overly complex. First, let's start with some basic questions:

Which mechanisms are applicable to you and your government?

In the [diagram on page 66](#) you will see that the UN human rights mechanisms have been divided into two main categories: those that were mandated by bodies created by the UN Charter (Charter-based mechanisms), and those that have been developed by the core human rights treaties (Treaty mechanisms).

Only if your government is a party to a treaty can you use that treaty body's mechanisms. This means that you must first check to see if the state whose actions you are concerned about has ratified the relevant treaty. This information can be obtained at: <http://indicators.ohchr.org/>

Human rights mechanisms that fall under the category of charter-based mechanisms apply to all members of the United Nations, regardless of whether or not they have ratified treaties. This means that even if your government has not ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, they can still be examined on their implementation of rights related to street-connected children under, for instance, the Universal Periodic Review process or by Special Rapporteurs and Representatives.

Are you entitled to engage with those mechanisms?

As members of civil society, sometimes it is necessary to be an NGO accredited with the proper status to intervene on matters at the United Nations – this is referred to as Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) status, as access to interact with the UN is regulated by a resolution of ECOSOC and is determined by a sub-committee of ECOSOC, called the NGO Committee.

You can access these mechanisms through collaborating with other NGOs who do have ECOSOC status (like CSC) or [applying for ECOSOC status](#) yourself.

ECOSOC status is not always required. For example, it is possible to submit information to and participate in the work of the Treaty Bodies without ECOSOC status, as well as the Special Procedures. However, participating in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and the Human Rights Council (HRC) sessions requires this status.

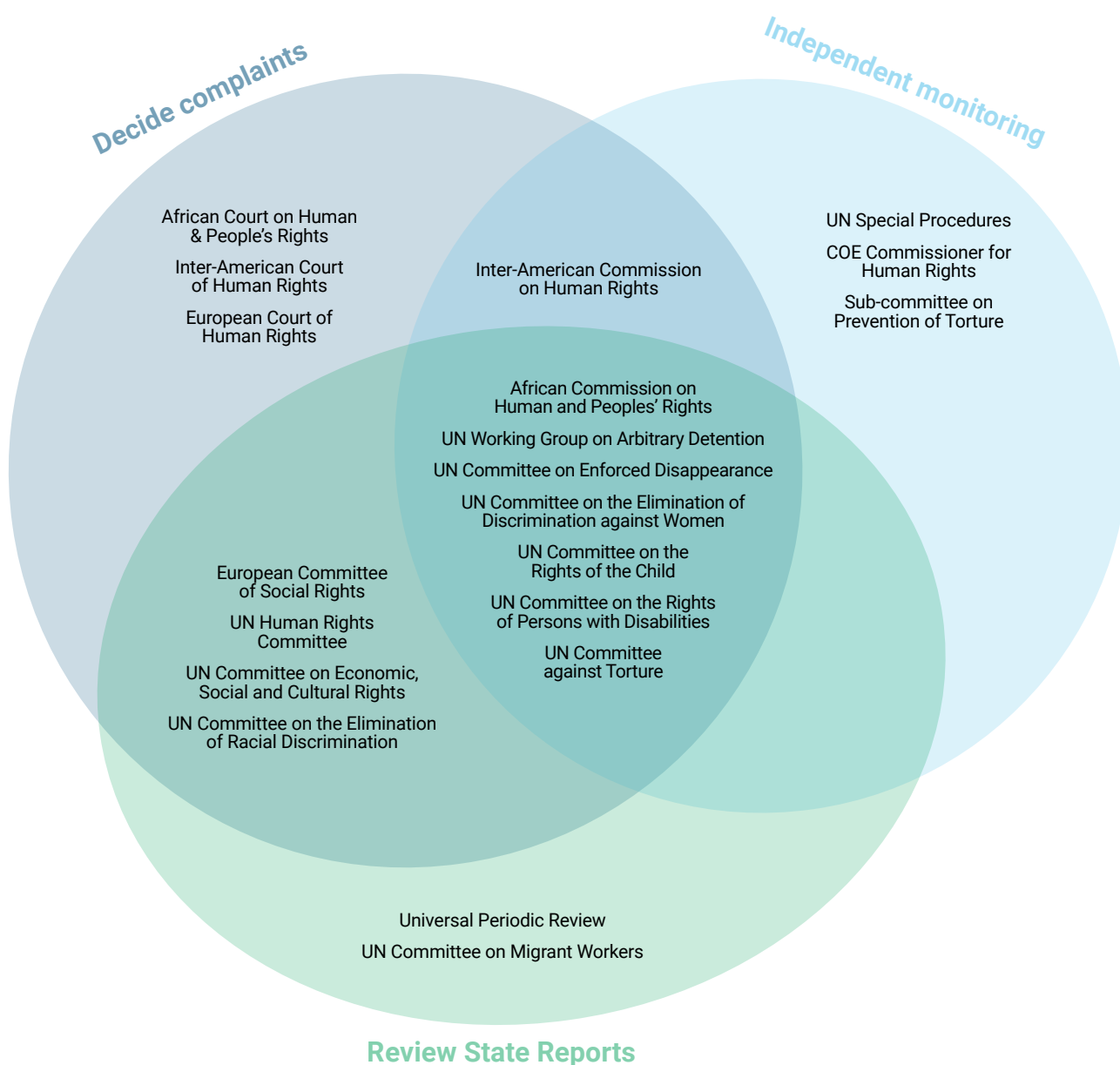
What kind of result do you want to achieve?

What kind of results you want to achieve, and how long it is going to take to obtain these results, are other important factors to consider when deciding which UN mechanisms to use.

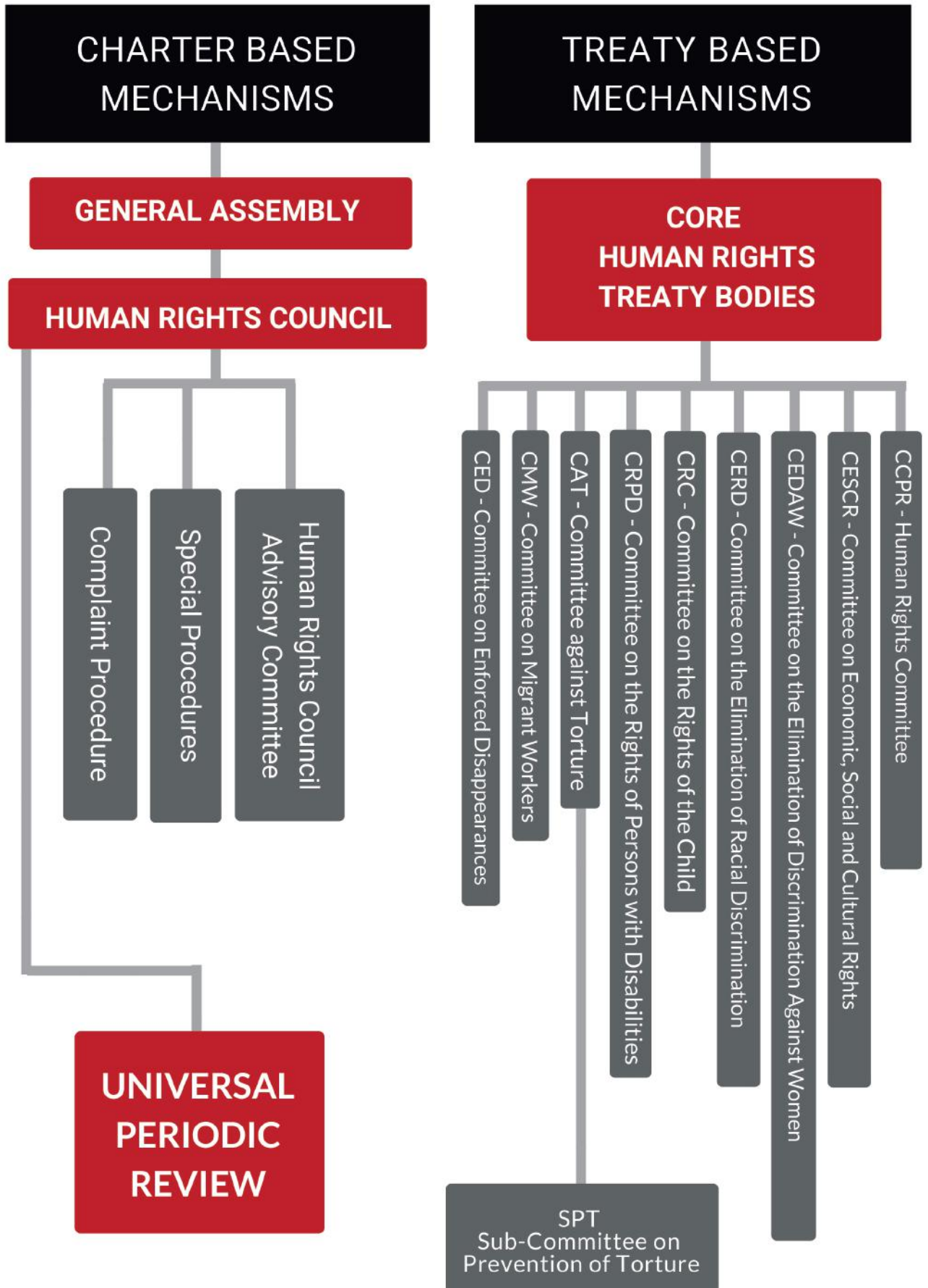
For example, as we will discover later in this section, you can **submit a communication to the UN Special Rapporteurs** to deal with urgently, for instance within 48-72 hours when lives are at risk. Compare this with **communications to Treaty Bodies**, which often take years to progress through the system.

Concluding Observations and Recommendations made by Treaty Bodies, and **recommendations made by Special Procedures mandate holders**, can be used in the **Universal Periodic Review**, where the peer pressure of having other governments review the human rights situation in every country often has a great impact.

This figure shows the various functions and possible outcomes of each of the international and regional human rights mechanisms:



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS SYSTEM



Treaty body mechanisms

Committee on the Rights of the Child

One of the most relevant mechanisms for our work on street-connected children is the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. As the author of General Comment No 21, the Committee on the Rights of the Child uses this and other General Comments, in their dialogues with States, in their Concluding Observations, and in developing their Recommendations to States.

How to engage with the CRC reporting mechanism

Your work can support the Committee in monitoring implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in relation to street-connected children. One way of doing this is by submitting a Civil Society Report (also called an Alternative Report) to the Committee when your government is under review,⁸ and using the General Comment to explain the actions and inactions of the government in realising the rights of street-connected children.

You can also participate in pre-sessions of the Committee. Three or six months before the Committee meets the government to review the State's report and its progress in realising child rights, it holds a pre-session in Geneva. This is a private meeting where the Committee talks to NGOs, UNICEF and children about what the government is doing to put children's rights into practice, and what needs to be done to improve things for children. The Committee may also hold a separate children's meeting so that it can hear directly and privately from them.

Once the Committee has met with NGOs, UNICEF and children, the Committee sends the government a list of things that it wants to know more about, called the List of Issues. The government has to answer this in writing. Once a government has submitted the written Reply to the List of Issues, its officials travel to Geneva for a formal examination by the Committee. This is a public meeting, which means that anyone, including NGOs and children, can attend the session. At this meeting, the government is questioned about its children's rights record. A few weeks or days after meeting the government, the Committee publishes its recommendations known as Concluding Observations, saying what the government has done well, where it has not done enough to protect children's rights and what it must do to improve the situation.

Why report to the Committee?

"when provided with reliable and relevant information from a variety of sources, the Committee is better able to make concrete and effective recommendations to States, to more fully guarantee the rights defined in the CRC ... To understand the impact of State initiatives on the rights-holders – the children – it is essential for the Committee to have the perspective of NGOs, NHRIs and children themselves. These national actors are best placed to monitor the impact of the State's measures to fulfil their obligations under the CRC and to evaluate whether they are effective. Where gaps in implementation occur, they can suggest concrete recommendations to help a State to comply with its obligations under the CRC and its Ops [Optional Protocols]. At the national level, the preparation of an alternative report encourages and facilitates public scrutiny of government policies and provides NGOs and NHRIs with ways to influence the national agenda. It opens a debate on the status of children and can create an opportunity to have a serious dialogue with all levels of government about the State's efforts to comply with the CRC."

[Child Rights Connect, The Reporting Cycle of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: A Guide for NGOs and NHRIs, page 1](#)

How to engage with the CRC complaints mechanism

Another way of participating in the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child is by using the complaints mechanism. Communications to the Committee on the Rights of the Child can be submitted by victims (children), lawyers, and NGOs, by completing the model complaints form.

This communications procedure enables children or their representatives to bring complaints about violations of their rights to the Committee, if these were not fully resolved in national courts. It is important to note that the communications procedure only applies if your country has ratified the Optional Protocol to the CRC on Communications.

This Optional Protocol also establishes an inquiry procedure for grave or systematic violations of child rights, which is **open to anyone**.

8. Find out when your government is next due to report and when the deadlines are for submitting information here: http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/MasterCalendar.aspx?Type=Session&Lang=En

This allows children to:

- **Bring their individual cases** to be considered by the Committee;
- **Access a communications mechanism** adapted to their specific rights, which will provide concrete recommendations to States about violations incurred;
- **Get international recognition of the violations they suffered.**

For information about whether the individual communication procedure or inquiries procedure is applicable in your country, how to submit a complaint or submit information about grave or systematic violations of child rights, visit the [***International Coalition for the OPCRC on a Communications Procedure - Ratify OP3 CRC***](#), also listed in [***Annex 5: Further Resources***](#).

The Committee on the Rights of the Child is not the only treaty body that will be relevant to the rights of street-connected children. Children are also protected by all the other treaty bodies. Other treaty bodies which could be relevant to your work on street-connected children include:

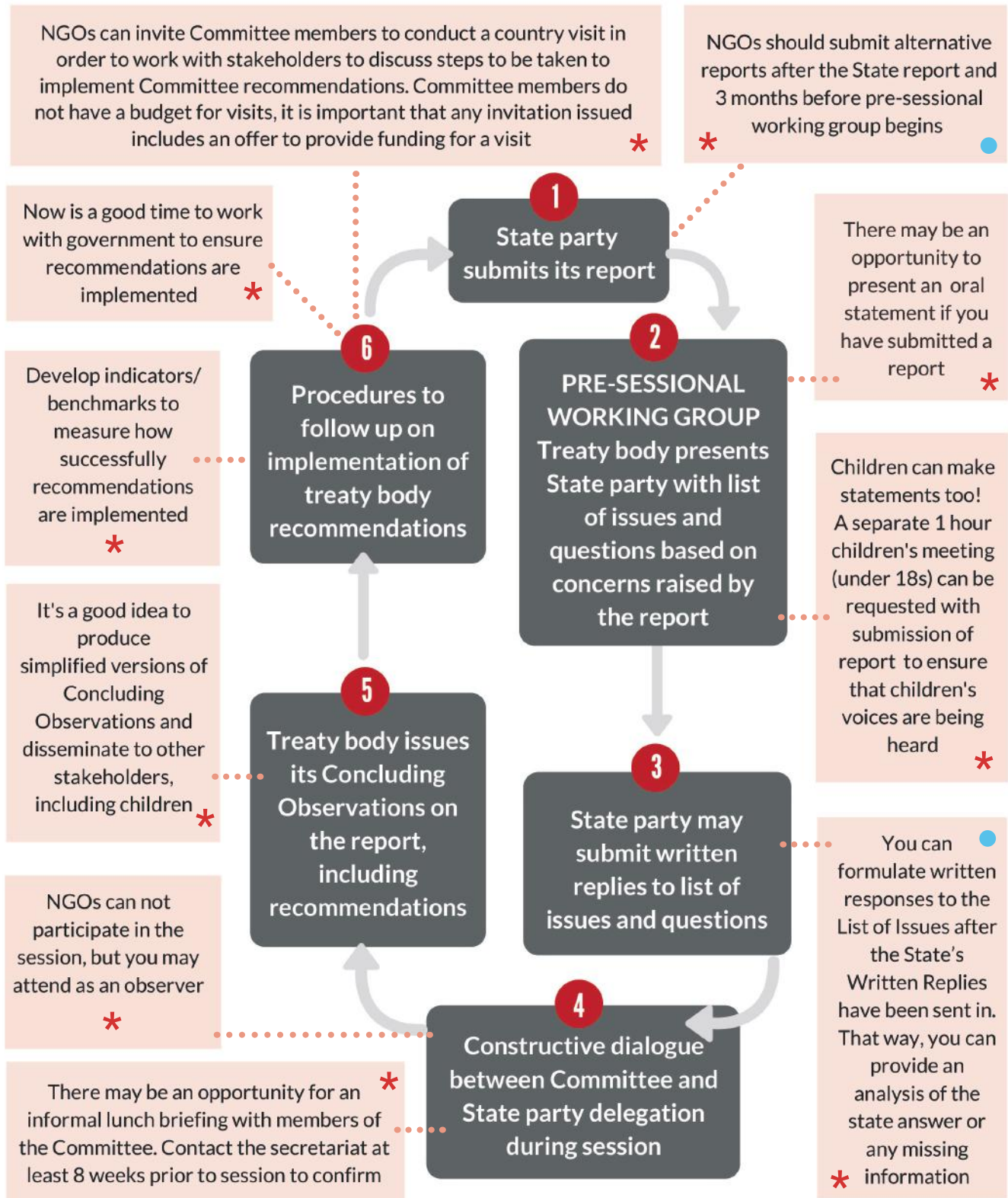
- ✓ The [*Human Rights Committee*](#), which you can address for issues related to the civil and political rights of street-connected children (such as, e.g. freedom of assembly, association and expression, access to justice, minority rights, amongst others);
- ✓ The [*Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*](#), which you can address for issues related to street-connected children's right to education, right to housing, right to food, right to health, rights to water and sanitation, right to work, rights to social security, and cultural rights, amongst others;
- ✓ The [*Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination*](#), which you can address for issues related to the racial discrimination experienced by some street-connected children;
- ✓ The [*Committee Against Torture*](#), which you can address for issues related to torture or cruel inhuman and degrading treatment suffered by street-connected children;
- ✓ The [*Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women*](#), which you can address for issues related to discrimination against street-connected girls in relation to all human rights;
- ✓ The [*Committee on the Protection of Migrant Workers and their families*](#), which you can address for issues related to street-connected children who are also migrants;
- ✓ The [*Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*](#), which you can address for issues related to the rights of street-connected children with disabilities;
- ✓ The [*Committee on Enforced Disappearances*](#), which you can address for issues related to the disappearance of street-connected children.

All the UN Treaty Bodies review periodic reports from States Parties, and they also fulfil other functions which allow for opportunities for us to engage in relation to the rights of street-connected children. For example, each treaty body has its own [***communications procedure for submitting individual communications***](#).⁹ These all work in a similar way to the processes used by the Committee on Rights of the Child, as explained above.

On the next page we will show you the reporting cycle under the UN Treaty Bodies, and the various opportunities for engagement in that process.

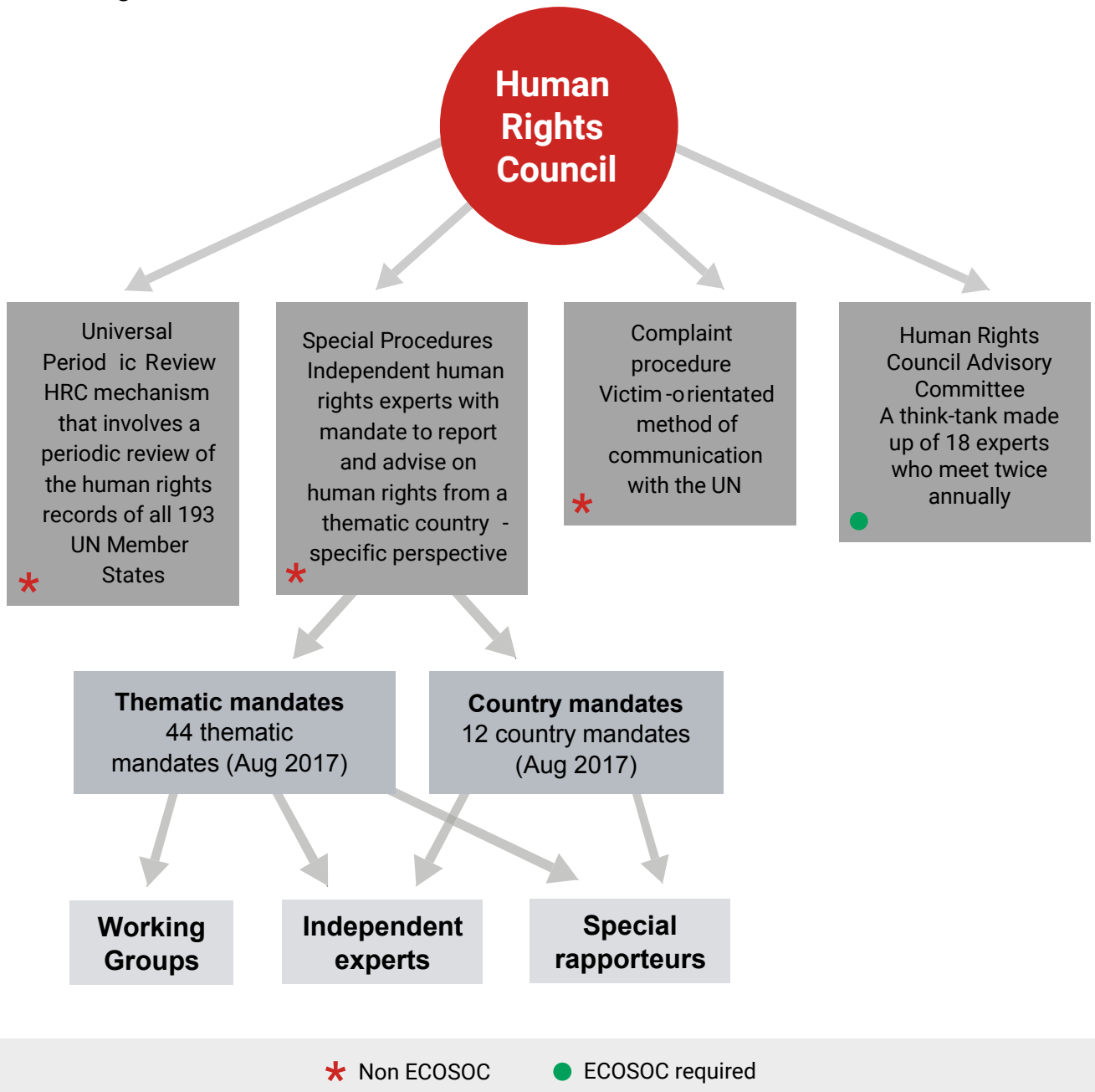
The Reporting Cycle Under the Human Rights Treaties

NOTE: There is a new simplified reporting procedure being used by some countries: A List of Issues Prior to Reporting (LOIPR) is sent to the government & the replies constitute the State party's report. This shortens the reporting process



* Non ECOSOC • Joint submission allowed

Human Rights Council



**Most opportunities for engaging in the UPR process do not require ECOSOC status, except when making a statement to the HRC at adoption*

The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and make recommendations on them.

It has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year. It meets at the UN Office in Geneva.

The Council is made up of 47 UN Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly.

Among the Council's subsidiary bodies are the **Universal Periodic Review** mechanism (UPR), the **Special Procedures**, the **Advisory Committee** and the **Complaint Procedure**.

The Council can also establish international commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions investigating and responding to human rights violations, to help expose violators and bring them to justice.



Universal Periodic Review

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a unique process of the UN Human Rights Council through which all UN Member States review each other's human rights record. Unlike the monitoring mechanism of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, where experts review States, under the UPR governments directly review each other and make recommendations to each other.

Some key facts about the UPR:

- ✓ **Every 5 years** every State is examined;
- ✓ **All UN Member States undergo review;**
- ✓ States receive **recommendations from their peers;**
- ✓ The State under Review **can decide to support or note the recommendations;**
- ✓ **Supported recommendations should be implemented** by the next review;
- ✓ States can also work on implementing noted recommendations in this same timeframe.

The UPR is **conducted on the basis of three documents:**

1. Information prepared by the state under review
2. A compilation of information contained in the reports of Special Procedures, human rights treaty bodies, and other UN entities prepared by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
3. Summary of information submitted by **other stakeholders including NGOs**

The review itself takes place in Geneva in a session of the UPR Working Group consisting of the 47 member states of the Human Rights Council. During this review, all UN Member States can make recommendations to the government under review. The government under review can decide which recommendations it accepts. The final outcome, including recommendations, is adopted at the following plenary session of the Human Rights Council a few months after the review.



NGOs, civil society organisations, and other stakeholders cannot take the floor at the review itself. Therefore submitting information and draft recommendations to be included in the Stakeholder Summary is a crucial element of civil society engagement in the UPR process.

You can engage with the UPR in the following ways to promote implementation of the General Comment:

Before the review takes place:

- **Submit a Stakeholders Report** on the actions and inactions of the government on realising the rights of street-connected children
- Engage with your government to **provide input into the State Report**
- **Hold national consultations to raise public awareness**, and inform foreign missions in your country about the actions and inactions of the government on realising the rights of street-connected children. These foreign missions will communicate this information to their country representatives in Geneva who will make recommendations to your government.

During the review:

- **Participate in the UPR-Info Pre-Session.** This Session is specifically set up for NGOs to inform country representatives in Geneva about the human rights situation in the country under review. You can use this opportunity to inform them about the actions and inactions of the government on realising the rights of street-connected children, and suggest recommendations they should make to your government. You can also use this opportunity to meet these country representatives one-on-one for more in-depth discussion and advocacy.
- If your organisation lacks the resources to do this alone, **consider participating as a group with other Consortium members in your country.** The *Consortium Secretariat* can put you in touch with other Consortium members.
- **Monitor the UPR Working Group Session when your government is being reviewed.** Though NGOs are not able to make submissions during the review, monitoring the review is important to know what recommendations are made by which governments to know, for instance, who has an interest in promoting street-connected children's rights. You can even monitor these sessions via webcast video.
- When the UPR Outcome Report is adopted during the next Human Rights Council session, NGOs get an opportunity to submit a statement.

Following the review:

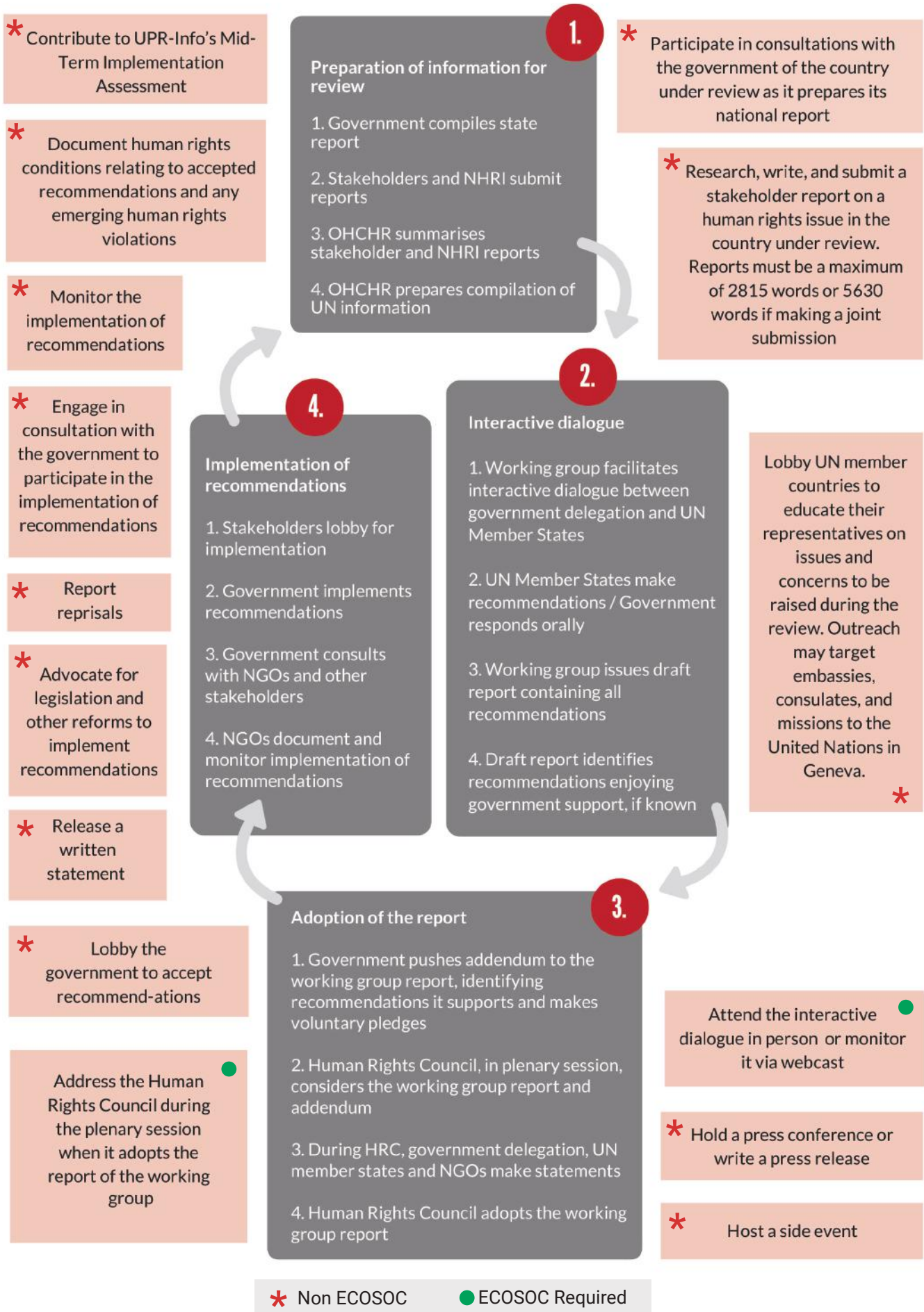
- **Raise public awareness** on the recommendations made to your government to build capacity of the public to hold the government accountable.
- **Monitor implementation** of the recommendations, and collaborate with the government in implementing the recommendations.
- Advocate for and contribute to *UPR mid-term reporting* by your state and civil society.

Case study: successful engagement with the UPR for the realisation of rights of street-connected children in Mali

Samusocial Mali and Apprentis d'Auteuil work in collaboration to advocate for the rights of street-connected children in Mali. In June 2017, when Mali was undergoing review under the UPR, Samusocial Mali and Apprentis d'Auteuil submitted a joint stakeholder report, assisted by Caritas Mali. Apprentis d'Auteuil supported Samusocial Mali's participation in the pre-session of the UPR in Geneva in December 2017 where they lobbied state representatives to make recommendations on the rights of street-connected children. As a result, the State of Luxembourg made a specific recommendation to the Government of Mali to promote the socio-economic reintegration of street-connected children. This recommendation was well-received by the Government of Mali who decided to support the recommendation. This means the government has an obligation to implement this recommendation.



Universal Periodic Review Process



UN Special Procedures

The *UN 'Special Procedures'* are mechanisms established by the Human Rights Council to address human rights issues in *specific countries* or on specific *thematic issues*.

As the Special Procedures are mandated by the Human Rights Council, they are classified as **Charter-Based Mechanisms** and thus the mandate holders look at their thematic issues in relation to every country in the world, or look at every human rights issue in the specified country, i.e. they are not limited by whatever treaties particular governments have signed.

The titles given to different Special Procedures mandates vary from **Special Rapporteurs** (SRs) and **Independent Experts** (IEs), who are all independent individuals appointed for their expertise, to **Working Groups** (WGs) made up of a number of independent individual experts. There are also **Special Representatives of the Secretary General** (SRSGs).

Role of Special Procedures

The role of SRs, WGs, IEs, and SRSGs, is to examine, monitor, advise and publicly report on their respective thematic or country specific cases of human rights violations. They do this via:

- **Undertaking official in-person *country visits*** (when an invitation has been arranged) to **assess human rights situations** pertaining to their respective mandates, and **making recommendations** to governments with a view to improving those situations;
- ***Receiving information* from individuals and civil society** and **analysing this information on human rights situations** provided by various sources on an on-going basis;
- **Acting on individual cases** and concerns of a broader, structural nature by sending ***communications (letters of allegation or urgent appeals)*** to States and others in which they bring alleged violations or abuses to their attention, by seeking—often urgently—**clarification from governments on alleged violations** and, where required, requesting governments to implement protection measures to guarantee or restore the enjoyment of human rights;
- **Making *recommendations to States*** for preventing, ending, or remedying violations;
- **Conducting thematic studies;**
- **Convening *expert consultations***, which civil society members are usually invited to participate in;
- **Contributing to the development of international human rights standards;**
- **Reporting and making recommendations to the Human Rights Council** and, where relevant to their mandates, to the General Assembly (and in some cases to the Security Council) on: regular activities under their mandate; field visits; and specific thematic trends;
- **Raising awareness** about specific human rights situations and issues, and threats to and violations of human rights;
- **Communicating concerns through the media** and other public statements;
- **Providing advice** for technical cooperation and adherence to human rights standards;
- **Conducting informal visits to countries**, often facilitated via invitations from NGOs to participate in expert meetings or events.

Special Procedures **report annually** to the Human Rights Council and, depending on their mandate, also **report to the General Assembly**. Their reports can, in some cases, lead to political pressure or induce action in countries where gross and systemic violations occur. Their reports also feed into the Universal Periodic Review Process, as they input into one of the three reports that forms the basis of that mechanism. Thus the views of the Special Procedures can have ramifications beyond the immediate attention given to them.

Special Rapporteurs can be particularly important for our work on street-connected children, as **they offer a relatively fast, easy to access mechanism for drawing attention to human rights violations** or threats of such, and the intervention of Special Procedures mandate holders can often draw international attention and prompt resolution to matters.

There are a number of Special Procedures that may be of particular relevance to our work:

- ✓ Special Representative of the Secretary General on *Violence Against Children*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on *adequate housing* as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on *sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on *trafficking in persons*, especially women and children
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on *violence against women*, its causes and consequences
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on *extreme poverty* and human rights
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on the right to *education*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on the *right to food*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking *water and sanitation*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of *physical and mental health*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of *slavery*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on *freedom of peaceful assembly and of association*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on the right to *freedom of opinion and expression*
- ✓ Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on *sexual orientation and gender identity*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on the rights of *persons with disabilities*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on *minority issues*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on the rights of *indigenous peoples*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on the human rights of *internally displaced persons*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on the human rights of *migrants*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable *environment*
- ✓ Special Rapporteur on the situation of *human rights defenders*



How to engage with Special Procedures

We can use the thematic and, if relevant to the country where we are working, country-specific Special Procedures in our work on street-connected children, by:

➤ **Submitting regular information** to the Special Procedures about the situation of street-connected children in countries we work on.

We can do this via email, postal mail, or social media – most Special Rapporteurs are active on Twitter, Facebook and other social media platforms and you can draw their attention to issues simply by tagging them!

- This can be useful in their thematic work, helping them to include issues relevant to street-connected children in their work
- This can draw attention to the need for a country visit and we can also provide information during a country visit
- This can also help provide context for individual communications
- If the issue warrants it, the Special Rapporteur may issue a press release highlighting the matter in the international and national media, which can be particularly effective to then use in advocacy.

The process of submitting information is relatively straightforward and the information that advocates already have can usually be turned into a submission with relatively few resources.



➤ **Responding to a call for submissions:** where the Special Procedures (often Special Rapporteurs and Working Groups) request information in relation to a specific subject matter, submissions from civil society can provide invaluable information, expertise and evidence. It is a good opportunity for advocates for street-connected children to raise awareness of the issues faced on relevant thematic issues.

➤ Reporting cases of human rights abuses against street-connected children, by submitting individual communications in instances when individuals or communities are suffering human rights violations or are potentially at risk of having their rights violated, through:

- (a) **Urgent Appeals** (for when it is a life-and-death situation and the person's safety is at urgent risk); or
- (b) **Letters of Allegation** (for all other instances).

Communications can be submitted by victims, lawyers, and NGOs, simply by sending an email to urgent-action@ohchr.org. It is not usual to receive anything other than a simple confirmation of receipt when you submit a communication, therefore if you want to know the progress of your communication, you must either follow up with the relevant OHCHR team and/or read the annual report on communications presented by each Special Rapporteur to the Human Rights Council.

You should always keep the best interests of the child at the forefront of your advocacy, particularly when serious allegations are made in relation to the ill-treatment of a child. Neither Special Procedure mandate-holders nor the United Nations have the means to ensure the safety of children on whose behalf they intervene. You should ensure that you comply with child protection best practice and that the identity of the concerned victim is kept confidential where there are privacy or protection concerns. See the Resources section for additional guidance on child protection and safeguarding.

For the majority of the Special Procedures the following essential information should be included:

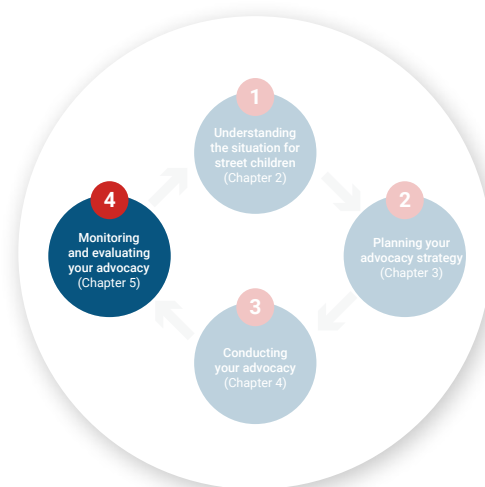
- ✓ Information about the authors of the communication and the sources of information (which is kept confidential). This should include contact details.
- ✓ You should state whether the situation is urgent.
- ✓ The name of victim(s), age, sex, place of origin and/or residence. If the allegation concerns a large group then information should be provided about that body.
- ✓ Details about the allegation including place and date of violation. This should be kept relatively short but supporting documents and photos can be annexed to provide more information. In the case of communications about a law or policy you should provide details of how it operates and why its impact is concerning.
- ✓ The perpetrators, including, if possible, names, titles/functions, as well as any possible motive.
- ✓ Provide any required background such as relevant legal framework etc. This is particularly important in the case of submissions concerning a general situation.
- ✓ Outline actions taken / remedy already sought at national and international level.



5 MONITORING AND EVALUATING YOUR ADVOCACY

Stage 7 in developing your advocacy strategy provided an introduction to monitoring and evaluation and tools to set up a theory of change and log frame and develop success indicators.

This Chapter will detail further the different purposes and designs for conducting monitoring and evaluation and how to share results and lessons learned.



5.1 Monitoring and evaluating advocacy

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes for advocacy have distinctive features, including:¹⁰

- **Timeframes can be unpredictable:** Creating the change you want to see, especially when advocating for legal or policy change, can often take years. It can be unpredictable, and M&E data may need to be gathered before your goals are achieved.
- **Strategies evolve and shift:** As your advocacy strategy is in part influenced by external factors that do not remain constant, strategies should evolve and adapt to changing circumstances. Your M&E approach should be flexible so that it remains relevant throughout the whole life of the strategy.
- **Contribution rather than attribution:** When evaluating impact, many factors are involved, not only your own advocacy; other stakeholders and changing circumstances / context will likely have contributed to the change as well. Attributing the impact to a single advocacy project is therefore not possible. Instead, it is common practice among evaluators to examine the links between an advocacy effort and the impact using a standard of contribution (recognising that the influence of a given intervention is just one of the factors contributing to the overall change).
- **Assessing progress not only impact:** Closely relating to the first feature, your advocacy goals may not be achieved within the given timeframe, and it is therefore important to measure the journey; measure progress on a regular basis to capture those intermediate changes you are able to create within the project period, even if the overall goal has not yet been achieved.
- **Context should be always taken into account:** Just like you choose your advocacy strategy with the context in mind, you should do the same when choosing your M&E approaches and analysing your data.

5.2 What do you want to measure?

The methods you use to monitor and evaluate your advocacy will depend on what you want to measure. Do you want to know how your beneficiaries perceive the value of your advocacy? Do you want to know how the advocacy is performing? How cost-effective is your advocacy? What lessons are you learning? How can you adapt to changing circumstances? What is the impact of your advocacy?

Keep your target audience in mind when identifying your M&E needs – is it for an internal or external audience? What information do they need? How will they use it?



10. UNICEF, Advocacy Toolkit, 2010, p. 71.



These are some common purposes for conducting M&E:

- **On-going learning and adaptation:** M&E frameworks and tools can be helpful to assess how you are doing throughout your advocacy, how the context is changing, what is going well and what is not going well, so you can learn and adapt continuously. This type of M&E will take place during your advocacy, rather than after.
- **Assessing performance and processes:** Using performance or process indicators can help during your advocacy to assess whether your advocacy efforts are achieving what they intended, that resources are managed well, and that human rights principles are followed, among others. This type of M&E is usually carried out during your advocacy to allow you to adapt and correct.
- **Identifying your advocacy value as perceived by you beneficiaries:** As your advocacy is likely targeted at improving the situation of an identified group of beneficiaries (e.g. street-connected children), you may want to monitor how your beneficiaries are perceiving the value of your advocacy. This type of M&E is most useful during your advocacy, though can also be carried out at the end of your advocacy cycle.
- **Determining cost-effectiveness:** To ensure that you are getting the most out of the resources used for your advocacy, it may be useful to monitor and evaluate the cost-effectiveness. This can be done at regular intervals during your advocacy to allow you to reallocate resources or change strategies, or at the end of the project, to inform future advocacy strategies.
- **Measuring impact:** To assess whether your advocacy has achieved its intended goal, an impact evaluation is typically carried out. Impact is typically evaluated at the end of your advocacy, or even after finishing your advocacy, though intermediate outcomes could be measured at regular intervals during your advocacy.

- **Generating good practices and lessons learned:** Based on your advocacy, it can be helpful to assess what the successes and challenges were, and to generate good practices and lessons from your experiences, so that it can help you in future advocacy work and to share it with other actors doing similar work. Conducting a post-mortem of your advocacy campaign can help you in this (find further resources on this in [Annex 5: Further Resources](#)). This type of M&E is typically carried out at the end of your advocacy, though it ties in closely with on-going learning and adaptation during your advocacy.

The Consortium for Street Children is trying to enhance its ability to collate and share such examples of good practice amongst members – increasing sharing and the exchange of information about lessons learned and stories will help us to do this!



5.3 How will you measure this?

Depending on the purpose you identified for your monitoring and evaluation, there are different types of M&E methods or designs that you can use. You can find examples of possible methods for different M&E purposes in below table – you can click on each method for further information, or look at the links in [Annex 5: Further Resources](#).

Examples of M&E designs for different purposes

Purpose	Possible methods	Timing
On-going learning and adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental evaluation • Appreciative inquiry • Causal Link Monitoring 	During advocacy
Assessing performance and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment evaluation • Innovation history 	During advocacy
Identifying your advocacy value as perceived by you beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beneficiary assessment 	During or after advocacy
Determining cost-effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost-benefit analysis • Social Return on Investment 	During or after advocacy
Measuring impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution analysis • Outcome harvesting • Outcome mapping • Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol • Success Case Method 	After advocacy
Generating good practices and lessons learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study • Most Significant Change 	After advocacy

5.4 Monitoring progress towards realisation of street-connected children's rights

Monitoring progress is not just important for ensuring our advocacy efforts have been worthwhile, but it is also a key way we can assess whether or not the rights we are wanting to promote and protect have been implemented. And in this sense, it is not just a useful tool, it is something that the Committee on the Rights of the Child asks all governments to do.

The effective implementation of legislation, policies and services relies on clear monitoring...

(para 21 GC21)

One of the requirements the Committee has set out in General Comment No. 21 is to monitor progress regarding the implementation of the Convention in relation to street-connected children.

In order to monitor, we need to gather information and evidence regarding the implementation of rights for street-connected children. This data collection is important for monitoring, and the information we collect needs to be broken down in a systematic way (disaggregated). Measuring changes made as a result of our advocacy ensures that we can assess if we are working in an effective manner. Further, the future development of laws, policies, and other measures that affect street-connected children depends on the quality and usefulness of information we gather during the monitoring process.

When monitoring implementation of the Convention, consider how you can take into account children's stories and experiences as much as possible!



As organisations working with street-connected children, we can:

- collect data ourselves that helps us quantify improvements in this area
- collect qualitative and anecdotal evidence on implementation of the Convention
- rely on our national statistics and data collection body to provide useful information, and
- work with these agencies to inform them of the kinds of information to collect and the ways in which it needs to be disaggregated.



Sometimes advocacy may be needed to ensure that there is suitable data available to monitor the implementation of rights related to street-connected children.

Working with data collection and statistics agencies to address what information should be collected is an important part of this work. Often advocating for street-connected children to be recognised as a category in data collection needs to become part of our advocacy strategy, particularly if we are missing the information required to adequately monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in relation to this group.

Indicators based on General Comment No. 21

To track progress towards state implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as relevant to street-connected children, guided by General Comment No. 21, the Consortium for Street Children is developing a set of indicators that can be used by civil society organisations globally. These will be useful for monitoring implementation and holding governments accountable and to ensure progress in improving the rights and lives of street-connected children. These will be distributed to Consortium members and made publicly available in due course.

Another way to monitor progress is to follow and participate in the mechanisms at the UN level which are mandated to monitor the implementation of treaty and other obligations. For example, the Committee on the Rights of the Child is mandated to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including in relation to street-connected children, and does this through reviewing regular reports submitted by States and related reports submitted by civil society.

5.5 Sharing knowledge and lessons learned

It is important to communicate the outcomes of your monitoring and evaluation efforts to share knowledge, success and lessons learned. This can help your own organisation strengthen future advocacy efforts, and can help others strengthen their advocacy work. Think about the different internal and external audiences you should communicate your findings to.

Internally – it is important to share successes and challenges that can inform and strengthen future advocacy strategies. This can be discussed in staff meetings, and captured in internal documents available to all relevant staff for institutional memory.

Externally – there are different audiences for which you may want to use a different approach. For instance, for donors it may be important to share the impact your advocacy has had, as well as the cost-effectiveness and most significant change. For other organisations wishing to conduct advocacy, it may be important to share how you were able to achieve this success. Through such good practices and lessons learned, others may be able to strengthen their advocacy work – accelerating action towards making rights a reality for street children.

Share your lessons learned and results with us!

Sharing your plans and the results of your advocacy with the Consortium for Street Children will help us to develop useful information about good practices and lessons learned that we can share amongst members, helping everyone to enhance their advocacy around the rights of street-connected children.



Please share your ideas – as well as the results of your advocacy – with the Consortium for Street Children!

Please let us know:

- How much is known about General Comment No. 21 in your country?
- Have you taken advocacy action in relation to General Comment No. 21?
- What has been the response from your government or other stakeholders?
- What successes have you achieved through your advocacy?
- What further advocacy is needed?
- Has there been any interest or activities on the part of other civil society partners, government bodies, or media?
- What are your advocacy plans for the future?

Your feedback is very important to us! Please send any feedback you may have to: advocacy@streetchildren.org



ANNEXES

Annex 1: Frequently Asked Questions regarding the General Comment

1. What is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child?

The *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* is a human rights treaty which tells countries what specific human rights children have. It is an international law agreement between all the countries that have committed to putting the treaty into practice (making this commitment is called “ratification”). Those countries are legally bound to implement the treaty by protecting children’s human rights. All countries except the United States have ratified the Convention.

2. What is the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child?

The Committee on the Rights of the Child is a group of independent experts at the United Nations that oversees implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols. It gives advice to governments about how to respect, protect and promote the rights of children under the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Established at the same time as the adoption of the Convention, the Committee presently has 18 members who meet three times a year in Geneva, Switzerland.

A very important aspect of the work done by the Committee is the formulation of General Comments which provide detailed guidance to States for implementing rights and obligations contained within the Convention.

3. What is a UN General Comment?

A UN ‘General Comment’ is a document which explains what specific human rights in a treaty mean and gives guidance to States on what they should be doing to put the treaty into practice. The committee of experts for that treaty, such as the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, writes these documents.

A General Comment itself is not a piece of international law, so it is not legally binding. However, it explains what governments must do to put a treaty, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, into practice, and the treaty is legally binding. General Comments are considered authoritative, so governments should follow what they say.

4. What is the UN General Comment on Children in Street Situations?

The General Comment on Children in Street Situations provides guidance to governments how they can ensure that street-connected children can enjoy their rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

It explains in detail how States can: prevent children from having their human rights violated; give children opportunities so they don’t have to rely on the streets to survive and develop; and protect and promote the rights of street-connected children by ensuring they are cared for and helped to reach their full potential.

The General Comment explains how certain human rights in the Convention on the Rights of the Child are especially relevant to street-connected children and why. It says that people must respect street-connected children as citizens with human rights. It also aims to help people better understand children’s connections to the street.

5. Did street children participate in the development of this General Comment?

The process by which the General Comment on Children in Street Situations was written, and how the research to inform it was collected, was unique, inspirational and ground-breaking. Rather than writing solely a legal interpretation of national government obligations under the CRC, the Committee elected to undertake a process whereby children in street situations themselves would identify the priority areas and which parts of their lives could be most improved with targeted application of the CRC.

As a result, the General Comment was developed by speaking directly to the children involved. The Consortium for Street Children – with help from NGOs globally, and supported by the private sector – arranged for 327 children and young people from 32 countries¹¹ to be consulted in seven regional *consultations*¹² on what their

11. Albania, Argentina, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Bolivia, Burundi, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, France, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Italy, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Spain, the United Kingdom, Slovakia, Switzerland and Zimbabwe.

12. Brazil, Mexico, Belgium, India, Ghana, Democratic Republic of Congo and Zimbabwe.

lives were like, what their needs were, what violations were being committed against them, and what their hopes and dreams were for the future.

Through these consultations and additional written submissions, the views of over 1,000 children in street situations around the world were collected, considered and included in the development of the General Comment. This is the greatest number of children ever to be consulted on the development of a UN General Comment.

To have a General Comment so grounded in the experiences of those whose lives it is aimed to improve is a major achievement.

6. Does the General Comment create new rights for street-connected children?

No. General Comments do not create new human rights, but give detailed explanations of rights that already exist in the treaty. This means that when a General Comment says that a country is required to do something, it is not creating a new requirement, but explaining something that countries were already supposed to be doing.

7. Do we now need a new Convention on the rights of street children?

No. The Convention on the Rights of the Child includes street-connected children, as the General Comment explains. The rights contained within the Convention are sufficient to protect street-connected children. What is required is for the obligations to street children to be met in full.

8. Why is this General Comment important?

There are street-connected children in virtually every country in the world. They are not treated as well as other children and their voices are often not heard. Governments have historically ignored street-connected children and not looked after their needs. They have not made sure that street-connected children can access basic services. This is because street-connected children's lives are complicated and it is hard for governments to understand how best to help them. Previous attempts by governments to force children to leave the street have been shown not to work. This General Comment helps governments to understand how best to support street-connected children so that this is no longer a problem.

9. Why is this General Comment important for governments?

The General Comment on Children in Street Situations outlines the obligations that a government has under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and how these obligations should be implemented in order to realise rights for street-connected children by encouraging them to improve laws, policies and programmes that relate to street-connected children.

This General Comment is important for governments, as although it does not provide any new obligations that do not already exist under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, it helps to provide guidance as to what steps need to be taken in order to ensure these obligations are met for children in street situations. It is also a useful tool to use for capacity building for civil servants, helping governments to frame the development of plans, policies, procedures, and programmes.

Governments that are parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child will be questioned by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in their *reporting procedure* regarding their implementation of the Convention in relation to street-connected children. This General Comment provides guidance for governments to assess what they should be doing for street-connected children and report what they have done to the Committee. Thus, while this General Comment is intended to be a tool for guiding action, it will also be used to assess the standards to be upheld.

10. What difference will this General Comment make?

Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child using the General Comment will have many positive impacts. Better laws and policies will mean street-connected children face less discrimination, violence and harassment on the streets. Better systems of care and access to services will keep street-connected children healthier, happier and safer. Effective intervention approaches by governments will support children that are at risk of moving onto the streets. All of these changes have the potential to transform the lives of street-connected children around the world.

11. Who is responsible for implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child and General Comment No. 21?

The government has the main responsibility for implementing the rights of children in street situations. The government should work with others in doing so, including:

- parents and those caring for street-connected children;
- civil society such as organisations working with street-connected children; and
- companies or businesses whose operations impact the lives of street-connected children.

12. How can the General Comment be used by governments? What is the role for governments now that the General Comment is issued?

Governments must put in place laws, policies, programmes, budgets and other measures to respect, protect and promote the rights of street-connected children as set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and General Comment No. 21. These changes should help individuals and groups to work together so that they can protect the rights of street-connected children.

Every five years, states must report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child on what they have done to put the Convention on the Rights of the Child into practice – including what they have done for street-connected children. This reporting procedure encourages governments to assess how well they are protecting the rights of children and creates a dialogue between governments and the Committee.

13. Does the General Comment require governments to spend more money?

Not necessarily. Many rights in the Convention on the Rights of the Child are so-called ‘negative obligations’, meaning, the government’s responsibility is simply to respect the rights in relation to street-connected children. This can often be realised without great expense, for example through adhering to pre-existing anti-discrimination laws.

Other aspects of the Convention on the Rights of the Child contain ‘positive obligations’ and thus require more proactive action and resource allocation on the part of the government. For example, the funding of services directed towards the needs of street-connected children, the establishment of shelters and education programs, and training of police and other stakeholders.

14. What happens to a government who does not implement the General Comment?

As the General Comment itself is not a legally binding document, although the Convention on the Rights of the Child is, governments should follow the General Comment, as this will demonstrate that they are implementing the Convention for the benefit of street-connected children.

There is no international police force which can force countries to comply with international law. Countries follow international law because they will be politically embarrassed if they are publicly shown to have failed to meet their commitments. It is in their own interests to ensure they do not have a bad reputation in the international community.

In certain circumstances, treaties and international law can be enforceable at the local and national levels through the courts. This means you can sue the State for failing to comply with their international obligations, and the General Comment can be useful support for the legal arguments raised. It will depend on your country’s legal system and the international law or treaty whether this course of action is possible. Sometimes international laws and treaties are ‘directly applicable’ in the national legal system and sometimes they need to be incorporated in domestic law before being enforceable in the courts. Advocates considering taking legal action on the basis of international law or treaties should obtain advice from a lawyer who is qualified in their jurisdiction.

In certain countries, an individual whose rights have been violated can make a complaint to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. This only applies to countries that have ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on a Communications Procedure, which allows those complaints to be heard by the Committee. Similarly, amongst those countries that have ratified the Optional Protocol, one country can make a complaint about another country if it believes that it has failed to comply with the Convention.

15. How can the General Comment be used by civil society? What is the role for non-governmental organisations now that the General Comment is issued?

The role of civil society and non-governmental organisations is to share the General Comment as widely as possible and, where possible, to translate it into different languages. In particular, civil society can raise awareness of the General Comment at the national, regional and international levels so that governments are more strongly encouraged to put the General Comment guidance into practice. Civil society actors are well-placed to track the government's progress in fulfilling street-connected children's rights and can hold the government to account if it fails to meet the standards in the General Comment through direct government engagement or by conducting public awareness campaigns.

Civil society can also support governments to put the General Comment into practice by offering expertise, assistance and research. The General Comment standards can be incorporated into guidance and procedures for service delivery by civil society actors. However, it is important to note that civil society are complementary actors – the government still bears full responsibility for putting the General Comment into practice, even if civil society chooses to support their efforts.

16. How does the Consortium for Street Children use the General Comment?

CSC is using the General Comment to advocate for the rights of street-connected children in order to influence policymakers around the world. This involves:

Making it accessible by:

- Distributing it amongst CSC's network and including it in CSC's online library;
- Providing it to governments and other high-level stakeholders;
- Sharing child-friendly illustrated materials on the General Comment in different major languages.

Making it actionable by:

- Developing indicators to track progress towards realisation of the rights of street-connected children based on the standards in the General Comment;
- Organising regional, national and local-level workshops and webinars;
- Supporting CSC members with advice and guidance on their strategies.

Promoting its use by:

- Securing governments' commitment to use the General Comment in implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Collaborating with CSC members and street-connected children
- Monitoring implementation using CSC's General Comment indicators
- Engaging with national, regional and international human rights mechanisms;
- Sharing key learnings.

17. What is the role of the Committee on the Rights of the Child now that the General Comment is issued?

The Committee will continue to supervise countries' progress using the 5-year reporting procedure. Governments are required to report how much progress they are making on the implementation of child rights for street-connected children in their country as part of this process. Civil society are also invited to submit evidence to the Committee so that the Committee can consider a range of perspectives on the level of progress being made. The Committee will use the standards in the General Comment to assess whether countries are implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child for the benefit of street-connected children, and where necessary make recommendations for how governments can improve their strategies for realising the rights of street-connected children. The Committee will follow up with governments on the recommendations made. Finally, it will continue to give clear guidance on children's rights.



18. Is there a relationship between General Comment 21 and the Sustainable Development Goals?

Yes, there is a strong link between the General Comment and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as it will not be possible to achieve all the SDGs, such as the targets of zero poverty, universal access to health care and education, and ending hunger, if we do not address the specific challenges faced by street-connected children. The General Comment provides useful standards and guidance regarding education, health care, poverty reduction and other key development issues that will help to realise the SDGs for the benefit of all children, including street-connected children. Individuals and organisations working towards fulfilment of the SDGs should incorporate the General Comment's guidance into their advocacy work.

19. What can I do if my advocacy puts me at risk of reprisals?

Anyone working (voluntarily, or as part of their employment) to protect and promote the human rights of street-connected children is a human rights defender. If your advocacy and work as a human rights defender puts you at risk of reprisals, there are avenues for seeking help. For example, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders regularly receives communications from human rights defenders at risk, and intervenes with governments on their behalf to ensure their protection. More information on this can be found at <https://www.protecting-defenders.org/>.

In countries where your advocacy for street children may put you or others (individuals or organisations) at risk, consider discussing with the Consortium what solutions may be possible.

Annex 2: Key rights explained

General Comment No. 21 on Children in Street Situations focuses on articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which are very important for children in street situations. It explains how these key rights are relevant for children in street situations, and how governments can ensure implementation of these rights for children in street situations.

In the below table, the individual rights in the Convention on the Rights of the Child are explained from two perspectives: from the wider perspective of how the rights apply to all children, and from the narrower perspective of how the rights apply to children in street situations specifically. Children in street situations require both general support with accessing their rights (as set out in the left-hand side column) and specialised support which is tailored for their needs (as set out in the right-hand side column). It is essential to keep both perspectives in mind as you advocate for the rights of children in street situations.

ARTICLES OF THE CRC PARTICULARLY RELEVANT IN A CHILD RIGHTS APPROACH		
Right	How does this right apply to children generally?	How does this right apply to street-connected children specifically?
Non-discrimination: CRC Art. 2 GC21 [25]-[27]	States must put the Convention's rights into practice for every individual child, without favouritism or prejudice. States must not only ban all forms of discrimination, but also take positive actions so that all children can enjoy their rights equally, for example through laws and policies.	Discrimination is one of the main causes of children ending up in street situations. Discrimination can be direct or indirect. Direct discrimination includes policies and practices that are directly harmful to children in street situations. Indirect discrimination includes policies and practices that exclude children in street situations from, for instance, services. In eliminating discriminations, States should also raise awareness about the experiences and rights of children in street situations to positively transform attitudes.
The best interests of the child: CRC Art 3(1) GC21 [28]	Considering the best interests of the child is an essential part of a child rights approach. The best interests of one child may not be the same for all children who are in the same vulnerable situation. Each child is unique and the people making the decisions must assess each situation according to the child's uniqueness.	Though children in street situations require extra support to meet their needs, they are also resilient and independent and this needs to be taken into account. Children should not be viewed as 'victims' or 'delinquents' and decisions about the best interests of the child should be made with serious consideration for their views.
The right to life: CRC Art 6 GC21 [29], [32]	The right to life is about being free from unnatural or premature death and it is also about enjoying a life with dignity.	Children in street situations face many risks to their lives. In ensuring a life with dignity, States must stop violence against children and stop treating children as criminals for things they have to do to survive, and protect children in street situations from harm caused by others.
The right to survival and development: CRC Art 6 GC21 [30]-[31]	"Development" includes the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral, psychological and social development.	States should make an effort to understand the behaviours and lifestyles of street-connected children, even if they are different from what communities or societies think is 'normal' or 'acceptable' for children in general. This is important because programmes will only work if they are based on how children in street situations really live.
The right to be heard: CRC Art 12 GC21 [33]	States should ensure that children who are capable of forming their own views are given the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting them, and that their views are given due weight noting their age and maturity. States must ensure that children are given the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting them, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body.	States should take positive actions to overcome the barriers that children in street situations face in being heard. Children in street situations need to: be heard in legal, justice and other procedures; carry out their own ideas for programmes and projects; and take part fully in designing, putting into practice and reviewing policies and programmes at local and national levels. States should also help and encourage children in street situations to create their own child-led organisations, projects and programmes.
Appropriate measures: CRC Art 4 GC21 [34]	Every State has to make sure that at least the minimum, essential levels of social, economic and cultural rights are in place for everyone. States cannot say that they don't have enough resources to make this happen. Even in times of economic crisis, States cannot go backwards and stop putting into practice the minimum and immediate things needed for children's rights.	This obligation on States applies equally to children in street situations.
Direction and guidance for children as they develop: CRC Art 5 GC21 [35]	States should help parents, caregivers, families, and community members to: listen to children and take them seriously; give children suitable guidance and a safe and caring environment as they grow and develop; recognize that children have rights and they can increasingly exercise those rights themselves as they develop, if they are given proper guidance.	Children in street situations sometimes come from family backgrounds where they feel unsupported or neglected, which can lead to children spending increasing amounts of time in street situations. Fulfilling the right to direction and guidance will help to prevent children from moving onto the streets and ensure they have the skills and opportunities to support themselves.

ARTICLES PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

Right	How does this right apply to children generally?	How does this right apply to street-connected children specifically?
<p>The right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly: CRC Art 15 GC21 [36]-[40]</p>	<p>Actions taken by the police or others to stop children coming together, freely and peacefully in public spaces, are only allowed for the reasons explained in article 15(2) of the Convention and these actions should not be taken in relation to whole groups.</p>	<p>The right to come together as a group, freely and peacefully in public spaces, is important not only for the civil and political rights of children in street situations, but also so they can survive, develop, rest, play, create networks, organize their social life, and as a key feature of their lives in general. States should make sure that children in street situations have the same access as other children to spaces where they can come together peacefully. Children in street situations need to be permitted to come together as a group, freely and peacefully, so they can claim their rights, for example through unions and child-led organisations. This means that harassing, rounding-up and being violent towards children in street situations are unacceptable breaches of the rights of children in street situations. People who violate children's rights in this way should be punished.</p>
<p>Birth registration and legal identity: CRC Art 7 GC21 [41]</p>	<p>States should make sure that all children of all ages can get their birth registration documents simply, quickly and for free to help them access services.</p>	<p>As a temporary solution, States and local governments should allow children in street situations to obtain informal identity cards (which may be linked to civil society personnel or addresses, for example) which allow children to access basic services and to be protected in the justice system.</p>
<p>Freedom of expression and access to information: CRC Art 13, 17 GC21 [42]</p>	<p>All children need access to information so that they can speak about and share information about their views and experiences. Human rights education, including education about the Convention on the Rights of the Child, should be designed for children and made easy to access so that children's voices can be heard.</p>	<p>It is essential for children in street situations to be able to obtain and share information about their rights so these rights can be made a reality.</p>
<p>Privacy, honour and reputation: CRC Art 16 GC21 [43]</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation. 2. The child has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks. 	<p>Children in street situations are particularly vulnerable to attacks on their privacy, honour and reputation because of their context and the discrimination they face. The Committee thinks that forced eviction is a violation of their right to privacy, honour and reputation.</p>

ARTICLES PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO FAMILY ENVIRONMENT AND ALTERNATIVE CARE

Right	How does this right apply to children generally?	How does this right apply to street-connected children specifically?
<p>The right to special protection and help for children who do not live in a family environment: CRC Art 20 GC21 [44]</p>	<p>The State has to make sure any child who does not live in a family environment, either temporarily or permanently, is looked after in an alternative way.</p> <p>States should make sure that the child's views are actively asked for and considered in decisions about where they live, what kind of help they need, and visits with their family.</p> <p>Children should be supported to move into a caring home environment with their views and best interests taken into account. Institutional (residential care) arrangements are recognised by the United Nations as a last resort. States should make sure that both State and NGO shelters and centres are safe and of good quality. It is not acceptable to put children in police or detention cells.</p>	<p>For children in street situations who do not have a main or temporary caregiver, the State becomes their caregiver.</p> <p>States can make sure children are not forced to depend on their street connections to survive and develop, and that they are not forced to accept placements against their will, by using a child rights approach.</p> <p>It is important for children in street situations to be given a say in where they live and who they live with. In addition, it is not acceptable to force children in street situations to live in institutions or stay in detention just because they have been living or spending time on the streets; safe, rights-respecting alternatives must be provided.</p>
<p>Separation from parents: CRC Art 9 GC21 [46]</p>	<p>States should ensure that children are not separated from their parents against their will, unless it is in the best interests of the child, as determined by competent authorities subject to judicial review. In cases of separation, the child's right to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to their best interests must be respected.</p>	<p>Children in street situations should be helped to keep family connections. States should not separate children from their families just because the child's family lives or works on the streets. If children in street situations have babies of their own, States should not separate these babies either.</p>
<p>Standards for care and protection institutions, services and facilities, and regular review of placements: CRC Art 3(3) and 25 GC21 [47]</p>	<p>The quality of these State and non-State services needs to be checked on a regular basis.</p>	<p>State and NGO services need to be of good quality, and based on a child rights approach to prevent children ending up in street situations, and for the benefit of children already in street situations.</p>
<p>Parental responsibility: CRC Art 18 GC21 [48]</p>	<p>States should take action to remove the pressures on families in difficult situations, for example by: improving community development in poor neighbourhoods; setting up financial and social safety nets; providing safe and affordable day-care centres and other specialist services; and making it easier to get suitable housing for families and for families to generate income.</p> <p>In addition to this, vulnerable families also need well-trained professionals to help them find case-by-case solutions to problems.</p> <p>Finally, States should provide education on child rights and positive parenting for all parents and caregivers.</p>	<p>It is essential to help parents and caregivers to prevent children moving into street situations, and to strengthen family reunification when this is an option for children already in street situations</p> <p>These obligations upon the State are particularly significant for families with children at risk of moving into street situations.</p>

ARTICLES PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING

States should make sure that all children have a standard of living which is good enough for their physical, mental, spiritual and moral development. This will help to prevent them ending up in street situations and will help fulfil the rights of children already in street situations.

Right	How does this right apply to children generally?	How does this right apply to street-connected children specifically?
Support to parents, caregivers and children: CRC Art 27 GC21 [49], [51]	<p>States will take actions to help parents and caregivers to provide a good standard of living for children. States have to make sure that at least the minimum, essential levels of social, economic and cultural rights are in place by using their national resources and international cooperation.</p> <p>States should tackle the root causes of poverty and unequal wealth in society to reduce pressure on unstable families through: tax and spending policies that reduce inequalities; Expanding livelihood opportunities; introducing policies for rural and urban development that help poor people; eliminating corruption; introducing policies and budget processes focused on children; offering social welfare, benefit and cash transfer programmes.</p>	<p>States can provide practical help to children directly where this is needed, through State or non-State services, especially for children in street situations who have either difficult or no family connections.</p> <p>All these measures serve to address some of the causes for children moving into street situations.</p>
Adequate housing: CRC Art 27 GC21 [50]	For housing to be 'good enough', it needs to be: legally secure; have a decent infrastructure; and be affordable, accessible and culturally appropriate.	<p>Children should not be forced to move out of somewhere without first having a suitable alternative place to move to.</p> <p>States have to provide suitable housing for children who face forced evictions, including those who live in informal or illegal housing.</p>

ARTICLES PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO DISABILITY AND HEALTH:

Right	How does this right apply to children generally?	How does this right apply to street-connected children specifically?
Children with disabilities: CRC Art 23 GC21 [52]	States should find special ways to protect children with disabilities, and to make sure they can access services.	Children with disabilities are more likely to end up in street situations. Children in street situations are also at increased risk of developing disabilities, making them vulnerable to abuse and being exploited for begging. States should take all actions necessary to prevent this and to punish those responsible.
Health: CRC Art 24 GC21 [53]	States must respect and protect the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and should strive to ensure that no child is deprived of their right of access to such health care services.	Children in street situations can be at greater risk of physical and mental health problems. Health education and services are needed, including on sexual and reproductive health, tailored to the specific needs of children in street situations. Health education and services should be friendly and helpful, easy to access (without the need for parents to be there), free, confidential, and with no judgement or discrimination against children in street situations.
Drug and substance abuse: CRC Art 33 GC21 [53]	States should take all appropriate measures to protect children from substance abuse and to prevent the use of children in the drug trade.	States should make more services available to prevent substance abuse and to treat children in street situations who experience this. There should also be more trauma therapy and mental health services for children in street situations. Children in street situations also need to be protected from the drug trade.

ARTICLES PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO EDUCATION, LEISURE AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Right	How does this right apply to children generally?	How does this right apply to street-connected children specifically?
Education: CRC Art 28, 29 GC21 [54]- [55]	<p>The aims of education for all children should include reading, writing, maths, digital skills, life skills, child rights education, tolerance for diversity, and citizenship education.</p> <p>States should provide good quality, free child rights education and life skills to all children, through the school curriculum and through non-formal and street education, to reach children who are not in school.</p>	<p>Easy to access, free, safe, relevant and quality education is essential to prevent children from ending up in street situations and to fulfil the rights of children already on the streets.</p> <p>States should make sure that children in street situations can stay in school and that their right to quality education is fully protected, including through catch-up classes, mobile schools, vocational training (linked to actual possibilities for real jobs), and ways for these children to get back into formal education.</p>
Rest, play and leisure: CRC Art 31 GC21 [56]	<p>The right to rest, play, relax and take part in artistic and cultural activities is very important for children.</p>	<p>The right to rest, play, relax and take part in artistic and cultural activities is very important for children.</p>

ARTICLES PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND SPECIAL PROTECTION MEASURES

Right	How does this right apply to children generally?	How does this right apply to street-connected children specifically?
Freedom from all forms of violence: CRC Art 19, 39 GC21 [57]	<p>All children need to be protected from all forms of violence, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse and legal and other support mechanisms put in place to respond appropriately.</p>	<p>Emotional, physical and sexual violence is one of the main causes and consequences of children ending up in street situations.</p> <p>Children in street situations need to be urgently protected through immediate actions, such as: banning all forms of violence, including corporal punishment; setting up ways to reach out to vulnerable children; putting in place mechanisms to report violence; and holding perpetrators of violence responsible.</p>
Sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, trafficking and other exploitation: CRC Art 34-36 GC21 [58]	<p>All children need to be protected from all forms of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, trafficking and other exploitation and legal and other support mechanisms put in place to respond appropriately.</p>	<p>Children in street situations are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence and exploitation. Children are also vulnerable to other forms of exploitation once they are on the streets. Professionals working with these children should be trained in the specific circumstances of children in street situations and provide help and services that are sensitive to children's gender.</p>
Child labour: CRC Art 32 GC21 [59]	<p>States should respect children's right to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with their education, or to be harmful to their health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.</p>	<p>States should protect children in street situations from economic exploitation and the worst forms of child labour, including by helping children to move away from work and into education, and guaranteeing a good enough standard of living for children and their families. Treating children as criminals when they beg or sell things without a license can result in them being forced into worse forms of work to survive, like prostituting themselves. Children should therefore not be punished for things they have to do to survive. Savings schemes for children in street situations can help children to develop budgeting skills and keep safe any money they earn.</p>
Juvenile justice: CRC Art 37, 40 GC21 [60]	<p>Children are entitled to due process rights and when authorities are dealing with any wrongdoing by a child, children are to be dealt with in a manner that takes into account their age and life circumstances, with a view to rehabilitating and reintegrating them into society. The State shall not inflict torture, or other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment on them.</p>	<p>Children in street situations are more likely than other children to be treated as criminals and to end up in the justice system. They are also less likely to benefit from processes which are aimed at keeping children out of detention. Human rights violations by police are common. States should urgently make these criminal offences. The Committee is worried about "zero tolerance" policies that treat children in street situations as criminals, and which result in them being forced into institutions against their will. States should support community policing which emphasises protecting children in street situations rather than punishing them.</p>
Armed conflict: CRC Art 38 GC21 [61]	<p>During conflicts it is important to try and keep children and families together. Family tracing programmes should be prioritised for children who have become separated.</p>	<p>Children in street situations are vulnerable to being recruited into armed forces or armed groups. Conflicts may also lead to children ending up in street situations. For prevention, child rights education, including peace education, needs to reach children in street situations.</p>

ARTICLES PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO DISSEMINATION AND COOPERATION

Right	How does this right apply to children generally?	How does this right apply to street-connected children specifically?
Dissemination: GC21 [62]	General Comment No. 21 should be translated into different languages, sign language, Braille and child-friendly, easy-to-understand formats, including for children with disabilities and children who cannot read very well.	States should share this general comment widely and make sure it is accessible for children in street situations.
International cooperation: GC21 [63]	States should identify and share good practices based on child rights, as well as research, policies, monitoring and capacity-building. Cooperation should also extend to non-State actor. Cooperation is especially important to protect children who cross borders as migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, and as victims/survivors of cross-border trafficking.	The Committee wants States to improve how they work together and help each other to prevent children ending up in street situations and to protect children already there.

Annex 3: 4 Steps to Equality Framework with Standards from the General Comment on Children in Street Situations

Step 1: Commit to Equality Recognise street-connected children have the same rights as every other child – and reflect that in law and policy		
Objectives	What does the General Comment require of governments?	Source
1. End discrimination against street-connected children	Respect and ensure the rights set forth in the CRC for each child and end all forms of direct and indirect discrimination against children in street situations.	GC21 para. 25
	With immediate effect remove provisions from law and policy that directly or indirectly discriminate on the grounds of the street situation of children or their parents or family	GC21 para. 14
	With immediate effect abolish any provisions allowing or supporting the round-up or arbitrary removal of children and their families from the streets or public spaces	GC21 para. 14
	With immediate effect abolish where appropriate offences that criminalize and disproportionately affect children in street situations, such as begging, breach of curfews, loitering, vagrancy and running away from home	GC21 para. 14
	With immediate effect abolish offences that criminalize children for being a victim of commercial sexual exploitation, and so-called moral offences, such as sex outside of marriage.	GC21 para. 14
	Introduce appropriate proactive measures to ensure effective equal opportunities for all children to enjoy the rights under the CRC, including measures aimed at redressing a situation of substantive equality.	GC21 para. 26
	Recognize legally constituted working children's unions and organisations led by children in street situations	GC21 para. 39
	Respect the choice of children in street situations to associate together in public spaces, without threat to public order, to satisfy their survival and development rights, for rest, play and leisure, to create networks and organise their social life and as a key feature of their lives in general	GC21 para. 38
	Do not apply policing or other measures relating to public order on a group or collective basis, especially round-ups and street sweeps of children in street situations, including in the context of major political, public or sporting events.	GC21 para. 39
	Do not harass or arbitrarily remove children in street situations from where they associate and peacefully assemble in public spaces. Sanctions should be imposed on those who violate this right.	GC21 para. 40
	Build the capacity of police and security forces to deal with public order situations in a way that upholds respect for the rights of children in street situations	GC21 para. 40
	Review local government by-laws to ensure compliance with the right to association and peaceful assembly	GC21 para. 40
	Ensure that all children in street situations are equal under the law	GC21 para. 27
	Ensure that all discrimination on the basis of street situation is prohibited	GC21 para. 27
	Ensure that incitement to discriminate and harassment is addressed	GC21 para. 27
	Ensure that children in street situations are not arbitrarily deprived of their property	GC21 para. 27
Ensure that curfews are legitimate, proportional and non-discriminatory	GC21 para. 27	
Ensure children in street situations are not excluded in a discriminatory way from parks and playgrounds, for example, in relation to dress codes	GC21 para. 56	

Step 1: Commit to Equality

Recognise street-connected children have the same rights as every other child – and reflect that in law and policy

Objectives	What does the General Comment require of governments?	Source
2. Address stigmatisation and transform attitudes	Support creative artistic, cultural and/or sports programmes led by, or involving, children in street situations that help to address misconceptions and break down barriers with professionals, communities – including other children – and wider society through visible mutual dialogue and interaction.	GC21 para. 27
	Work with print, broadcast and social media to disseminate and amplify sensitization and de-stigmatization messages and stories on the basis of a child rights approach	GC21 para. 27
	Sensitize professionals, the private sector and the public to the experiences and rights of children in street situations, with the aim of positively transforming attitudes.	GC21 para. 27
	Encourage the media to use accurate data and evidence and conform to child protection standards to safeguard children's dignity, physical security and psychological integrity.	GC21 para. 27
3. Integrate a child rights approach in government policy and strategy relevant to street-connected children	Ensure a child rights approach, meaning ensuring respect for the dignity, life, survival, well-being, health, development, participation and non-discrimination of the child as a rights-holder.	GC21 para. 5 GC21 para. 10
	Promoting their resilience and capabilities, increasing their agency in decision-making and empowering them as socioeconomic, political and cultural actors.	GC21 para. 12
	Invest in good quality initial and in-service basic training on child rights, child protection and the local context of children in street situations for all professional who may come into direct or indirect contact with children in street situations	GC21 para. 18
	Additional in-depth training on a child rights approach, psychosocial support and child empowerment for professionals working directly with children in street situations	GC21 para. 18
	Put in place or strengthen clear monitoring and accountability mechanisms that are transparent, robustly enforced and include the involvement of children in street situations.	GC21 para. 21
	Take into account the different kinds and degrees of vulnerability of each child, as each child is unique and each situation must be assessed according to the child's uniqueness	GC21 para. 28
	Provide children in street situations with a supportive and enabling environment to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be heard in judicial and administrative proceedings; • carry out their own initiatives; and • fully participate at the community and national levels in policy and programme conceptualization, design, implementation, coordination, monitoring, review and communication, including through the media 	GC21 para. 33
	Support and encourage children in street situations to form their own child-led organisations and initiatives, which will create space for meaningful participation	GC21 para. 33
	Empower children in street situations to exercise their participation rights and counter co-option and manipulation by adults	GC21 para. 37
	States should not use other approaches (than the rights-based approach), such as welfare and repressive approaches, as they fail to take into account the child as a rights holder and result in the forcible removal of children from the streets, which further violates their rights.	GC21 para. 5

Step 2: Protect Every Child

Protect street-connected children from violence, abuse and exploitation and ensure they have access to justice when they are harmed or in conflict with the law.

Objectives	What does the General Comment require of governments?	Source
1. Protect the life and dignity of every street-connected child	Address crime, and in particular extra-judicial killings by state agents, murder by adults or peers, vigilante justice and criminal gangs	GC21 para. 29
	Interpret 'development' as a holistic concept, embracing the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral, psychological and social development	GC21 para. 31
	Support individual children in street situations to achieve their optimal development, maximizing their positive contribution to society	GC21 para. 31
	Refrain from state-led violence	GC21 para. 32
	Decriminalize survival behaviours and status offences	GC21 para. 32
	Ensure that measures against child labour are developed in collaboration with children in street situations and other key stakeholders to reflect children's best interests and to ensure they do not have any inadvertent negative impact on children's survival or development	GC21 para. 59
	Protect children in street situations from harm caused by third parties	GC21 para. 32
	Put in place procedural and practical funeral arrangements to ensure dignity and respect for children who die on the street	GC21 para. 32
2. Provide legal identity for all street-connected children, including birth registration	As a minimum, States should ensure that free, accessible, simple and expeditious birth registration is available to all children at all ages	GC21 para. 41
	Support children in street situations proactively to obtain legal identity documents	GC21 para. 41
	As a temporary solution, allow innovative and flexible solutions, such as providing informal identity cards, linked to civil society personnel/ addresses	GC21 para. 41
	Adopt innovative solutions to overcome the challenges faced by children in street situations, who are often highly mobile and who lack the means to keep a physical identity document safe without losing it or having it damaged or stolen	GC21 para. 41
3. End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of street-connected children	Prohibit all forms of violence, including corporal punishment	GC21 para. 57
	Provide accurate, high-quality and child-friendly information through accessible and appropriate channels on protection from violence	GC21 para. 42
	Train professionals in understanding the specific circumstances of children in street situations in order to apply gender-sensitive responses to situations of sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking.	GC21 para. 58
	Take all actions necessary to prevent and to explicitly criminalize exploitation of children with disabilities and bring perpetrators to justice	GC21 para. 52
	Implement the provisions of article 32(2) of the Convention, and the International Labour Organisation Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), to protect children in street situations from economic exploitation and the worst forms of child labour.	GC21 para. 59
	Minimize the impact of armed conflict, including by mitigating proactively the separation of children from families, and prioritizing family tracing programmes, and by ensuring that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes take into account the dynamics of street-connectedness as a cause and a consequence of children's involvement in armed conflict.	GC21 para. 61

Step 2: Protect Every Child

Protect street-connected children from violence, abuse and exploitation and ensure they have access to justice when they are harmed or in conflict with the law.

Objectives	What does the General Comment require of governments?	Source
4. Put in place comprehensive, accessible child protection mechanisms	Within a legislative and policy framework, budgeting for, developing and strengthening holistic child protection systems, on the basis of a child rights approach, forms the basis of the practical measures required for prevention and response strategies.	GC21 para. 17
	Child protection systems need to reach children in street situations and should incorporate fully the specific services they need	GC21 para. 17
	Put in place mechanisms for reaching out to vulnerable children in the process of disconnecting from family and community	GC21 para. 57
	Introduce or review an act on child protection or children based on a child rights approach and that specifically addresses children in street situations	GC21 para. 14
	Child protection systems need to provide a continuum of care across all relevant contexts, including prevention, early intervention, street outreach, helplines, drop-in centres, day-care centres, temporary residential care, family reunification, foster care, independent living and other short- or long-term care options.	GC21 para. 17
	Put in place child protection mechanisms for reporting violence, discrimination and other forms of rights violations	GC21 para. 57
	Establish special mechanisms to deal with individuals reported by these children as threats to their well-being	GC21 para. 57
	Information should be made available in child-friendly and accessible formats	GC21 para. 17
5. Justice systems to serve the best interests of street-connected children	Children in street situations should be supported to understand and navigate the child protection systems	GC21 para. 17
	Provide access to effective legal and other remedies, including legal representation for children in street situations who have been victims or are survivors of human rights violations.	GC21 para. 22
	Provide access to individual complaints mechanisms, by children themselves and/or represented by adults	GC21 para. 22
	Provide accurate, high-quality and child-friendly information through accessible and appropriate channels on the role and accountability of the State, and complaints mechanisms for redress in relation to human rights violations.	GC21 para. 42
	Provide access to judicial and non-judicial redress mechanisms at the local and national levels, including independent human rights institutions.	GC21 para. 21-22
	Provide access to applicable international human rights mechanisms should be available when domestic remedies are exhausted, including the procedure set up by the Optional Protocol to the CRC on a communications procedure	GC21 para. 22
	Support community policing, with an emphasis on protection rather than punishment of children in street situations	GC21 para. 60
	Adopt a multi-cultural police service	GC21 para. 60
	Guarantee all rights to all children, including those in street situations, in the context of a restorative rather than punitive juvenile justice system	GC21 para. 60
	Criminalize as a matter of urgency police misconduct, such as harassment, corruption, extortion and physical, psychological or sexual violence.	GC21 para. 60
Put in place mechanisms for holding perpetrators of violence against children in street situations to account	GC21 para. 57	

Step 3: Provide Access to Services

Enable street-connected children’s access to the same essential services as every other child so they can reach their full potential.

Objectives	What does the General Comment require of governments?	Source
1. Ensure access to an adequate standard of living and social services for street-connected children	Ensure that all children have a standard of living adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual and moral development, to prevent them ending up in street situations and to fulfil the rights of children already in street situations.	GC21 para. 49
	Take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing, including directly to children especially for children with non-existent or abusive family connections.	GC21 para. 49
	Direct material assistance to children in the form of services may be provided either by the State or via State support to civil society organisations.	GC21 para. 49
	Provide access to adequate housing, meaning, among others, attention for: Legal security of tenure; availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure; affordability; habitability; accessibility; location; and cultural adequacy	GC21 para. 50
	Do not subject children, including those living in informal or illegal housing, to forced evictions prior to the provision of adequate alternative accommodation.	GC21 para. 51
	Make child and human rights impact assessment a prerequisite for development and infrastructure projects to minimize the negative impacts of displacement.	GC21 para. 51
	Take measures to address the structural causes of poverty and income inequalities, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce tax and expenditure policies that reduce economic inequalities • Expand fair-wage employment and other opportunities for income generation • Introduce pro-poor policies for rural and urban development • Eliminate corruption • Introduce child-focused policies and budgeting • Strengthen child-centred poverty alleviation programmes in areas known for high levels of migration • Offer adequate social security and social protection 	GC21 para. 51
	Make efforts so that social security programmes reach the most marginalized families who may not have bank accounts	GC21 para. 51
	Help parents or caregivers to secure, within their abilities and financial capacities and with respect for the evolving capacities of the child, the living conditions necessary for the child’s optimal development.	GC21 para. 15
	Build the capacity of parents, caregivers and community members to provide appropriate direction and guidance to children, helping them to take into account the child’s views, provide a safe and supportive environment and recognize the child as an active rights holder.	GC21 para. 35
	Improve rights-based community development in impoverished neighbourhoods	GC21 para. 48
	Establish comprehensive economic and social safety nets	GC21 para. 48
	Provide safe and affordable day-care centres and other specialist services	GC21 para. 48
Improve access to adequate housing and income generation for families.	GC21 para. 48	
Invest in and scale up family support programmes on the basis of a child rights approach that are proved to halt the intergenerational transmission of conditions that exacerbate children ending up in street situations.	GC21 para. 48	

Step 3: Provide Access to Services

Enable street-connected children's access to the same essential services as every other child so they can reach their full potential.

Objectives	What does the General Comment require of governments?	Source
2. Access to health-care for all street-connected children	Provide access to free basic health-care services through universal health coverage and social protection schemes.	GC21 para. 53
	Provide health education and services, including on sexual and reproductive health, tailored to the specific needs of children in street situations. These should be friendly and supportive, comprehensive, accessible, free, confidential, non-judgmental, non-discriminatory, respectful of autonomous decision by the children and without the requirement for parental consent	GC21 para. 53
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accurate, high-quality and child-friendly information through accessible and appropriate channels on: • Sexual and reproductive health, including family planning and prevention of sexually transmitted infections • Healthy lifestyles, including diet and physical activity • Safe and respectful social and sexual behaviours • Prevention of accidents • The negative impacts of abuse of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and other harmful substances. 	GC21 para. 42
	Increase the availability of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services for substance abuse, including harm-reduction services, and trauma therapy and mental health services for children in street situations.	GC21 para. 53
	Promote properly supported peer education that can be especially effective in combating substance abuse, sexually transmitted infections and HIV.	GC21 para. 53
3. Access to education for all street-connected children	Make adequate provision, including support to parents, caregivers and families, to ensure that children in street situations can stay in school and that their right to quality education is fully protected	GC21 para. 54
	Ensure a range of education options are available including: second-chance education, catch-up classes, mobile schools, vocational training linked to market research and followed up with long-term support for income generation, and pathways into formal education.	GC21 para. 54
	Train teachers on child rights and children in street situations, and child-centred, participatory teaching methodologies	GC21 para. 54
	Take measures to provide good quality, free child rights education and life skills universally to all children, through the school curriculum and through non-formal and street education, to reach out-of-school-children	GC21 para. 55
	Adopt special protection measures, including identifying and removing barriers that prevent children with disabilities from gaining access to services, including inclusive education.	GC21 para. 52

Step 4: Create Specialised Solutions

Develop and deliver specialised services and opportunities that tune into the unique needs and challenges of life for street-connected children.

Objectives	What does the General Comment require of governments?	Source
1. Care measures reaching children on the streets	Provide practical and moral support to children on the streets, through a trustworthy adults street worker or peer support, without requiring or coercing children to renounce their street connections and/or move into alternative accommodation	GC21 para. 44
	Provide specialised services on the streets, involving trained social workers with good knowledge of local street connections and who can help children reconnect with family, local community services and wider society.	GC21 para. 19
2. Child-centred family reunification for street-connected children without families where appropriate	Where placement with family members is deemed, in consultation with the children in street situations themselves, to be in their best interests, careful preparation and follow-up is needed on both sides.	GC21 para. 45
	Ensure through legislation, regulation and policy directives, that the child's views are solicited and considered in decisions regarding placements, development and review of care plans, and visits with family	GC21 para. 45
3. Access to quality short- and long-term alternative care measures for street-connected children	Ensure alternative care to a child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, including: drop-in and community / social centres, night shelters, day-care centres, temporary residential care in group homes, foster care, family reunification, and independent living or long-term care options such as adoption.	GC21 para. 44
	Apply a child rights approach to the development and provision of alternative choices	GC21 para. 45
	Ensure that children are not forced to accept placements against their will	GC21 para. 45
	Respect the established international parameters that limit institutionalization as a last resort	GC21 para. 45
	Ensure that children are not placed in alternative care unnecessarily	GC21 para. 45
	Ensure that, where alternative care is provided, it is delivered under appropriate conditions responding to the rights and best interests of the child.	GC21 para. 45
	Ensure that state and civil society-run shelters and facilities are safe and of good quality	GC21 para. 45
	Do not use police or other detention cells to accommodate children owing to lack of alternative care facilities – this is not acceptable.	GC21 para. 45
	Do not separate children from their families solely on the basis of the families' street-working or street-living status	GC21 para. 46
	Do not separate babies of children born to children themselves in street situations	GC21 para. 46
	Support temporary, rights-respecting care options for children whose parents, for instance, migrate for certain periods of the year for seasonal employment	GC21 para. 46
	Provide quality, rights-respecting services and support civil society organisations to do the same	GC21 para. 47
Ensure follow-up mechanisms for children in alternative care settings and in street situations as they transition into adulthood at the age of 18, to avoid an abrupt termination of support and services.	GC21 para. 16	

Step 4: Create Specialised Solutions

Develop and deliver specialised services and opportunities that tune into the unique needs and challenges of life for street-connected children.

Objectives	What does the General Comment require of governments?	Source
4. National government strategy on street-connected children	Adopt holistic and long-term strategies and make the necessary budget allocations for children in street situations.	GC21 para. 13
	As experts on their own lives, children in street situations should participate in developing and implementing strategies, and in local, decentralized bottom-up planning processes	GC21 para. 13 GC21 para. 20
	Interventions should be coordinated by local governments and supported by the State	GC21 para. 20
5. Cross-sector collaborations for street-connected children	States should encourage cross-sectoral and inter-state cooperation.	GC21 para. 13
	Support civil society, as complementary actors, in providing personalised, specialist services for children in street situations on the basis of a child rights approach, through funding accreditation and regulation.	GC21 para. 15
	Ensure that the business sector meets its responsibilities regarding children's rights	GC21 para. 15
	Encourage and support local-level, partnership-based, specialized interventions on the basis of a child rights approach	GC21 para. 20
	Benefit from support from the private sector, for capacity-building resources and organisational skills, and academia, for research capacity to enable evidence-based decision-making	GC21 para. 20
6. Systematic and comprehensive data collection on street-connected children	In partnership with academia, civil society and the private sector, develop systematic, rights-respecting, participatory mechanisms to collect data and share disaggregated information about children in street situations	GC21 para. 23
	Ensure that the collection and use of such information does not stigmatize or harm these children	GC21 para. 23
	Integrate data collection on children in street situations into national data collection on children, ensuring that national data do not rely solely on household surveys but also cover children living outside household settings.	GC21 para. 23
	Involve children in setting the aims and agendas of research and in gathering information, analysing and disseminating research to inform policy making and designing specialized interventions	GC21 para. 23
	Carry out research periodically to ensure policy and programmes are up to date	GC21 para. 23

Annex 4: Example Consent Form

Consent Form – Use of Children’s Information and Images^{13,14}

[ORGANISATION] exists to make street-connected children’s rights a reality around the world. The images and information collected in accordance with the below conditions of use are intended to be used to promote the work carried out by [ORGANISATION].

As an organisation, we prioritise the welfare and safety of all children and young people. In accordance with our child protection policy we will not permit the information, photographs, video or other images of children and young people to be taken without their consent and the consent of their parent/caregiver.

We will take all steps to keep the images secure and ensure they are used solely for the purposes they are intended for. If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately you should inform us immediately.

Conditions of use by [ORGANISATION]

1. This form is valid for five years from the date you sign it. After **five years, unless we ask you if we can continue to use your data and you agree**, we will delete the personal data from our records (including images/video etc.).
2. We, [ORGANISATION], will not use your personal details or full name (which means first name and surname) in a photographic image or video, on our website, or in any of our printed publications.
3. We will not include personal e-mail addresses, postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers, or any other identifying information that may disclose your specific location on our website or our printed publications.
4. If we use your individual photograph (meaning a photo of you on your own, not in a group), we will not use your name in the text or caption next to the photograph unless we have your agreement.
5. If we write your first name in the text of a publication or webpage, we will not use your photograph alongside the text.
6. We may use group photographs or footage with very general labels, such as “an awareness-raising campaign” or “outreach in schools”.
7. We will only use your image if you are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of such images being used inappropriately.
8. We will ensure that the information we publish about you is accurate and does not put you at risk of harm. We will only collect information about you with your full informed consent and the consent of your parent or caregiver.
9. You are entitled to ask us what personal information about you we are keeping on our records; request that any description of you is changed, corrected or deleted; and you can tell us to delete any information about you that we hold on our records. You do not have to give a reason for why you are asking us to do this.
10. Your consent to our use of your information can be changed or withdrawn at any time by contacting us at [CONTACT INFORMATION].

¹³ Adapted from the consent form of Mercy Corps.

¹⁴ Where children and/or adults are unable to read this form, its contents should be used as the basis for a careful explanation of the consents and permissions it contains. Where a child does not have a parent/ guardian or carer to provide consent, a judgement should be made regarding their capacity to provide informed consent for use of their images/stories.

Permissions granted:

Please circle your answer

May we use your information (unidentified or use of first name only) in printed publications that we produce for promotional purposes?	YES	NO
May we use your photograph (unidentified) in printed publications that we produce for promotional purposes?	YES	NO
May we use your story (unidentified or use of first name only) on our website?	YES	NO
we use your photograph (unidentified) on our website?	YES	NO
May we May record your image (unidentified) on video or webcam?	YES	NO
Do you consent to being photographed or filmed at events organised by [ORGANISATION]?	YES	NO

I _____ (child's name) have read and/or had the above conditions explained to me, I understand the conditions and I consent to [ORGANISATION] obtaining my information or image in line with these conditions.

I, _____ (parent/caregiver), confirm that I understand how [ORGANISATION] intend to use this child's information or image and can confirm that I also consent to their information being obtained and used in this way.

Signed (child):
Date:
Signed (parent/caregiver):
Date:
Signed ([ORGANISATION]):
Date:

Annex 5: Further Resources

Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Convention on the Rights of the Child: www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography: www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPSCCRC.aspx

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPACCRC.aspx>

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPICCRC.aspx>

The Committee on the Rights of the Child: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/CRCIndex.aspx>

General Comment No. 21 on children in street situations

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 21 on children in street situations: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fGC%2f21&Lang=en

UN OHCHR, Consortium for Street Children, Rights of Children in Street Situations: General Comment No.21 (2017) on Children in Street Situations (2017): <https://www.streetchildren.org/resources/rights-of-children-in-street-situations-general-comment-no-21-2017-on-children-in-street-situations/>

Consortium for Street Children, A child-friendly Guide to the UN General Comment on Children in Street Situations (2017): www.streetchildrenresources.org/resources/child-friendly-guide-to-the-general-comment-english/

StreetInvest, How the United Nation's General Comment No. 21 (2017) on children in street situations recognises and promotes the role of street work, November 2017: <https://www.streetinvest.org/sites/default/files/files/How%20the%20General%20Comment%20No.21%20%282017%29%20on%20children%20in%20street%20situations%20Recognises%20and%20Promotes%20the%20role%20of%20Street%20Work-new%20brand.pdf>

Other UN Instruments relevant to the protection of the rights of children in street situations

Human Rights Council Resolution 16/12 on the rights of the child: a holistic approach to the protection and promotion of the rights of children working and/or living on the street (2012): http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/16/12

Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights: <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/uncrc-general-comment-no-19-2016-public-budgeting-realization-childrens-rights-art-4>

Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 17 (2013) on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fGC%2f17&Lang=en

Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 16 (2016) on State obligations regarding the impact of the business sector on children's rights: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fGC%2f16&Lang=en

Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 15 (2013) on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fGC%2f15&Lang=en



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Human Rights Funds, Grants and Fellowships:

www.ohchr.org/Documents/AboutUs/CivilSociety/OHCHRFundsGuide_en.pdf

Universal Human Rights Index:

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Appreciative inquiry
www.betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/appreciative_inquiry

Causal Link Monitoring
www.betterevaluation.org/en/approach/causal_link_monitoring

Empowerment evaluation

www.betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/empowerment_evaluation

Innovation history

www.betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/innovation_history

Beneficiary assessment

www.betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/beneficiary_assessment

Cost-benefit analysis

www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/CostBenefitAnalysis

Social Return on Investment

www.betterevaluation.org/en/approach/SROI

Contribution analysis

www.betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/contribution_analysis

Outcome harvesting

www.betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting

Outcome mapping

www.betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/outcome_mapping

Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol

www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/QUIP

Success Case Method

www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/success_case_method

Case study

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Links for references listed in Social Media section

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<https://makeawebsitehub.com/social-media-sites/>

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Shorty Awards – Best non-profit social media campaigns:

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Social media strategy templates:

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Hootsuite 6 step social media marketing plan:

<https://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-create-a-social-media-marketing-plan/>

Buffer

<https://buffer.com/>

Social Pilot

<https://www.socialpilot.co/>

CoSchedule

<https://coschedule.com/>

Hootsuite

<https://hootsuite.com/>

Social Bee

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Meet Edgar – free guides on: Social media marketer's beginner's guide, Social media optimization, Skeptic's guide, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn: <https://meet Edgar.com/social-media-guides/>

Know How Non Profit's Social Media Guide:

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The Nonprofit Social Media Decision Guide:

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<https://guardianproject.info/apps/>

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Me and My Shadow:

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Witness:

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