THE GLOBAL NETWORK THAT RAISES STREET CHILDREN’S VOICES, PROMOTES THEIR RIGHTS AND IMPROVES THEIR LIVES
A UNIQUE GLOBAL NETWORK FOR STREET CHILDREN

Across the world millions of children live and work on the streets. Every day they face discrimination and violence. Consortium for Street Children (CSC) is the only global network dedicated to improving the lives of street-connected children, giving them a chance of a better future and realising their rights worldwide. We bring together our network members, street children, researchers, corporate partners and global organisations such as the United Nations to create life-changing reforms for street-connected children.

OUR VISION

CSC’s vision is of a world where all children in street situations enjoy all their rights.

OUR MISSION

To champion the rights of all street-connected children, building on the shared aspirations and ambitions of our members, leveraging the collective international experience, energy and voice of the network and working collectively to improve understanding and recognition of the issues, ensuring that children’s voices are heard and that their rights are protected, promoted and fully realised.

OUR VALUES

Our values shape the way we work and define our organisational aspirations.

CHALLENGING
We will actively challenge common misconceptions of street-connected children. Where change is necessary, we will challenge the status quo to ensure policies and practices recognise them. We will challenge our network and each other to strive for the realisation of street-connected children’s rights.

COLLABORATIVE
We seek to bring people and organisations together to create a louder collective voice for children in street situations. By working collaboratively, building on strengths and sharing expertise, we will have more impact. It is vital that street-connected children are able to have their say in order to influence change.

PROGRESSIVE
With our network, we will work hard to identify innovative solutions that address challenges faced by street-connected children. Through leveraging and building on our knowledge we will progress and improve ways of achieving the realisation of street-connected children’s rights.

ACCOUNTABLE
We are a trusted partner for our network and are accountable for delivering our strategy. We are accountable to street-connected children and promise to shine a light on the issues that affect them. We believe others should be held accountable for their actions towards children.

CHAIRMAN’S WELCOME

During this year, my second as Chair, I had the privilege of overseeing the launch of our Five Year Strategy for 2015-2019 driving towards the CSC network’s vision of a world in which all children in street situations enjoy all their rights. This was supported by a 2015-2016 governance plan to strengthen CSC’s Board of Trustees and improve sustainability.

At the heart of our work in 2015 has been mobilising our network and resources to secure the best possible United Nations General Comment on Children in Street Situations, an international legal instrument for which we collectively lobbied and which will provide definitive guidance on how States must fulfil the rights of street-connected children. This will be the first global legal mechanism directly to address children in street situations, with the potential to transform the legal and policy landscape for street-connected children throughout the world. CSC chairs the Advisory Group to the working group of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child for this General Comment, which is on track for publication in 2017. This year we mobilised an inclusive, consultative process to listen to street-connected children’s experiences, in order to inform this General Comment.

On 12th April we hosted our fifth International Day for Street Children, providing a digital platform and infographics for our members and allies to get the voices of children in street situations heard on social media. Meanwhile we continued to build our Global Resource Centre as a one-stop-shop for research and shared learning about street-connected children.

To diversify fundraising opportunities for smaller charities as they face increasing resource challenges, CSC hosted a ‘Marathon Walk’ on 21st June, which enabled hundreds of individuals to raise much-needed funds, through sponsorship, for CSC member organisations.

On 5th November, we held CSC’s third Research Conference, bringing some of the world’s best-known researchers on street children together with leading service providers to explore street-connected children’s Identities, building collective knowledge and informing good practice in front-line work with street-connected children.

Finally, Kirsty Brimelow, QC, Chair of the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales, opened CSC’s 2015 Annual General Meeting as our keynote speaker, bringing to a close an eventful year full of challenge and opportunity.

I want to thank CSC members, interns, staff, trustees, donors and corporate partners for our work together to improve the lives of street children worldwide. And I look forward to helping our network to thrive and make the world a better place for street-connected children in 2016.

We are Louder and Stronger Together.

Max Mongia, Chairman
**A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO**

Dr Sarah Thomas de Benitez, CEO

My visit to the border of Greece and Macedonia in November 2015 brought home clearly to me that the precarious situations of children who depend on public spaces can be every bit as challenging in Europe as they are in Africa, Asia and the Americas. Children in street situations face discrimination wherever and whenever they are seen as a threat to law and order, or as an affront to people’s beliefs about how children should behave. If they are forced under the radar – whether by hostility from the public or to avoid round-ups by the authorities – children become even more vulnerable to predators and traffickers. In this climate, more than ever, street-connected children need strong legal protection, effective policies and appropriate interventions. We must listen to children’s experiences and make sure they contribute to the evidence used to inform the policies and interventions that affect them.

CSC has worked hard this year to convert these challenges into opportunities:

At the global level we partnered with Aviva to spearhead our initiative to develop the ‘best possible’ UN General Comment on children in street situations, making sure that the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has full access to the skills, evidence and support it needs. This General Comment will set out Government obligations to fulfil the rights of street-connected children, by reducing inequalities, confronting discrimination, eliminating police round-ups, decriminalising survival behaviours and supporting interventions that recognise street-connected children’s abilities to make decisions about their lives. It will also create some basic ‘architecture’ to develop priorities and resources for a coalescing ‘sector’ of organisations and researchers committed to working with street-connected children. I am proud we were able this year to mobilise partnerships with a number of CSC members, partners and sponsors, so that over 1000 street-connected children from 32 countries could contribute their experiences to inform the content of this UN General Comment.

Meanwhile, we launched a 2-year grassroots learning project, in an exciting new partnership with the Oak Foundation, to explore how street-connected children can successfully build their resilience in the face of threats of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. Working on the ground in three cities around the world, this project also aims to share lessons learned – and ways to share learning – within our growing digital CSC community. In this way, CSC will contribute to helping street-connected children protect themselves.

I join Max in celebrating the many opportunities we took in 2015, such as our 5th International Day for Street Children, the dissemination of valuable new resources and our very successful third annual research conference, aimed at helping CSC members get better evidence for advocacy and programmes.

Diversifying our funding and improving our sustainability in 2015 has meant that compared to 2014, our corporate and trust partnerships’ income grew by 40%, individual support grew by 35% and income from events grew by over 50%. In all, we spent eight pence on fundraising for every £1 raised. Our income in 2015 exceeded expenditure, as our small and lean Executive Team worked to create a sustainable platform for delivery of CSC’s 5 Year Strategy.

Meanwhile, CSC’s network continued to grow and become more international, as we expanded in Europe and Latin America. Our Research Forum also grew and we established a new Advocacy Forum which includes several leading CSC members. Responses to our 2015 network survey suggest that you, our members, continue to find CSC’s fee represents good to excellent value for money and that your membership has helped you to work more effectively with street-connected children.

I am pleased by what we have achieved together this year. Sometimes the scale of challenges has been almost overwhelming, but we found strength together to grasp opportunities that I believe will prove decisive for street-connected children. I look forward to continuing the journey together.
After securing a game-changing General Comment on Children in Street Situations in 2014, this year we worked with our members, partners and legal experts to support the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child to begin the drafting process, including taking part in three meetings in Geneva to drive forward the development of this monumental international legal document.

In 2015 we worked with CSC members and formed partnerships to pilot and plan for groundbreaking consultations on the General Comment with street-connected children, the first time street children across the world have a unique chance to make their voices heard and influence governments. These consultations, which took place in early 2016, saw street children from 32 countries take the lead in seven pioneering events in Brazil, India, Belgium, Mexico, Zimbabwe, Ghana and the DRC.

We developed an ‘Easy Guide’ to help our network members understand and explain the General Comment and what it will mean for street-connected children, and shared information about the General Comment’s development through events, meetings and social media.

Two other UN initiatives recognised CSC’s place as the international expert organisation on street-connected children, inviting us to take part in high-level consultations on homelessness and children and armed violence in Argentina and Honduras.

Photos: CSC Advocacy Manager Elinor Milne, third from right, at the India consultation (top left) Children who had their say at the India (bottom left and page 7) and Brazil (bottom right) consultations
BECOMING THE GO-TO PLACE FOR RESEARCH ON STREET CHILDREN

In November CSC held our third annual research conference, entitled ‘I Move Therefore I Am Not’, exploring street-connected children’s identities. We brought together a record number of leading global practitioners and researchers to discuss the topic. Throughout the day panel discussions, workshops and poster displays considered the different conceptualisations of identities, encouraging the sharing of learning and expertise between researchers, students and practitioners. This year, keynote speeches focussed on the use of stories in defining identities, and the need to recognise the intersectionality of multiple factors in a street-connected child’s identity.

In 1989, UNICEF estimated that there were 100 million street children in the world, but this figure is often challenged. ‘Do I Count if You Count Me’, our briefing paper based on the findings of our 2014 Research Conference, was published in April 2015 and looks at the different counting methodologies, giving a better understanding of the real challenges of counting street-connected children.

Alongside our 2015 conference, we convened our Research Expert Forum (REF) for a meeting to consider developing CSC’s State of the World’s Street Children series, an annual publication that will collect, present and interpret key data about street-connected children across countries, mapping trends over time.

OUR GLOBAL RESOURCE CENTRE: STREETCHILDRENRESOURCES.ORG

We continued to update our unique online resource library, research and shared learning hubs, aimed at academics, practitioners, journalists and members of the public who want to access relevant, up-to-date information on street children. Our GRC is the largest online library of literature related to street-connected children, helping researchers and practitioners to access over 1000 resources.
CSC had 93 members

Including:

- 65 organisations working with or for street connected children
- 17 researchers
- 11 honorary members

9 organisations joined CSC in 2015

272 documents were uploaded to our Global Resource Centre which was accessed from 126 countries

85 delegates attended our annual Research Conference

We planned 7 pioneering consultations with street-connected children to inform the General Comment and prepared materials for other NGOs to use to consult with children, meaning 1044 children from 32 countries had their voices heard by the UN

On the International Day for Street Children, our #TweetForTheStreet and #Streetchildren hashtags reached around 10 million impressions

We had a total income of £382,061

We received grants worth £294,946. Compared to 2014, our corporate and trust partnerships’ income grew by 40%, individual support grew by 35% and income from events grew by over 50%

We spent 32% of our budget on Advocacy

92p in every £1 raised was spent on charitable activities

CSC launched our new 5 year strategy
International Day for Street Children is a platform for the millions of street children around the world - and their champions - to speak out so that their rights cannot be ignored. Our 5th International Day for Street Children took place on Sunday 12th April 2015. This year was a celebration of the upcoming UN General Comment and its potential impact. The day was an important opportunity to raise awareness of the discrimination that street children face and make their voices heard.

We sent over 500 tweets from the CSC Twitter account and our #TweetfortheStreet and #Streetchildren hashtags reached around 10 million impressions.

To mark International Day, we produced new publications: A new Street Children World Map; An Easy Guide to the UN General Comment and A Street Children Myth Busters, to challenge harmful perceptions of street-connected children. These publications were made widely available as valuable tools to promote the rights of street-connected children.
GROWING AND STRENGTHENING OUR UNIQUE NETWORK

DEVELOPING THE CSC NETWORK

CSC’s network comprises a wide-range of organisations, including small NGOs delivering grassroots work, large international NGOs, networks, individuals, and a federation of street children. We are proud to have worked closely with our membership throughout 2015 on advocacy, research and network development initiatives.

Having secured the UN General Comment on Children in Street Situations, now is the time for us to grow and strengthen our unique network so that by 2017, we are ready to take the General Comment forward and transform the lives of street-connected children globally.

We welcomed nine new members in 2015, including grassroots organisations in Nepal, DRC and Uruguay, and a European network of street workers.

BUILDING WITH BAMBOO: A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE AND LEARNING ON RESILIENCE

In 2015 we entered an exciting new partnership with the Oak Foundation, to deliver stage two of their pioneering Bamboo initiative on child resilience. Building with Bamboo is an international learning project exploring resilience-based approaches to working with street-connected children exposed to sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The project is a fantastic opportunity to facilitate sectoral learning across our network and work closely with three learning partners in Uganda, Nepal and Ecuador. Over the course of the project, we will oversee the exploration and evaluation of innovative resilience-based approaches developed from research conducted with children across three continents. Our learning will be shared and enriched through a virtual Community of Practice and Learning, where our pilot sites and wider network can share ideas, resources and knowledge relating to how we can support children to cope in the face of adversity.

We spent 21% of our budget on network services

For more statistics see p10-11
Aviva is the UK’s largest insurer. Aviva became a corporate partner of CSC in 2010 as part of Street to School, the company’s global flagship community programme, which has reached over 640,000 street-connected children or those at risk of becoming street-connected. Aviva has supported the International Day for Street Children since 2011 and continues to support CSC’s Research and Advocacy work, including the UN General Comment and our Global Resource Centre. Aviva will continue to fund CSC into 2016.

The Oak Foundation awarded CSC a grant for the delivery of Building with Bamboo, an international learning project exploring resilience-based approaches to working with street-connected children who are exposed to sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The Oak Foundation commits its resources to address issues of global, social and environmental concern, particularly those that have a major impact on the lives of the disadvantaged.

We invite applications from organisations and individuals whose work seeks to protect street-connected children. By becoming part of the CSC network, you will join forces with other individuals and organisations who believe in realising the rights of street children and ensuring the General Comment on Children in Street Situations achieves its potential. We believe that collectively we can achieve maximum impact by being Louder Together.

CSC is extremely grateful to all our 2015 partners and supporters for making possible our valuable work in realising the rights of street-connected children.

HSBC is one of the world’s largest banking and financial services organisations, with around 6,600 offices and 58 million customers. In 2015 as part of their global education programme HSBC provided support to CSC’s Global Resource Centre and International Day for Street Children.

Thanks to support from British Airways in 2015, CSC was able to conduct vital meetings with members in India, Morocco and Greece, take part in the Global UN Consultation on Homelessness in Argentina, represent street children at Google and Baker & McKenzie’s Child Rights Summit, and secure world-leading academics in street child research from the US and Canada for our annual Research Conference.

In 2015 CSC also received grants from Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust, William A. Cadbury Charitable Trust and the Oakdale Trust. In addition, CSC benefitted from the generous support of Howard Roth, Kim Reid, H2O, CMG, Baker & McKenzie and Corporate Citizenship.
In 2015 we received significant income from corporate partnerships, grants, fundraising events and donations. This funding enabled the CSC team to grow as we welcomed new Advocacy, Fundraising and Communications managers to deliver our 5 Year Strategy. This also allowed CSC to diversify our income stream from an increased number of funders, meaning that CSC has been able to meet its reserve requirement and will be able to recruit more staff in 2016 to deliver the 2015 – 2019 strategy.

Thanks to efforts from our Trustees, our fundraising events income increased by 54%. As well as completing the London Marathon, Trustee Ashok Bhardwaj organised the Just Walk event, benefiting CSC, our members and other charities.

CSC continued to demonstrate excellent value for money. For every £1 raised, we spent 8p on fundraising.

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Many thanks to our members CHETNA, CINI, CWISH, SALVE International, StreetInvest and Via Niños for the photographs featured in this publication.

Cover photo by Vijay Kumar, former street child now working at CHETNA.

To find out more on how to get involved in the work of the Consortium for Street Children visit www.streetchildren.org or email us at info@streetchildren.org

To make a donation and help make a lasting difference to the lives of street children, visit streetchildren.org/donate or call 0207 549 0218

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR STREET CHILDREN
www.streetchildrenday.org

LOUDER TOGETHER

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