Headcount
Methodology
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1. Thinking about doing a headcount

StreetInvest’s observational headcount methodology of street-connected children and youth is a process of observation and reflection that has been recognised as the sector-preferred approach to counting street-connected children\(^1\). These children are largely excluded from the national census and often without any form of legal identity, these children and youth are exposed to multiple rights violations, through their invisibility and anonymity.

The methodology provides a standardised, scalable, rights-respecting approach to collecting quantitative data on the number of street-connected children in a specified geographical location. The methodology is grounded in the principles of a rights-based approach and incorporates training which includes attitudinal and behavioural change, as well as knowledge transfer and skills training in line with the guidance in the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in General Comment No.21 on Children in Street Situations (UNGC21,2017)\(^2\).

1.1. Introduction

The headcounting approach was conceptualised by Patrick Shanahan as a way to get realistic numbers and demographic data on street-connected children. It was developed in Ghana in the 1980s and 1990s and has since been used by a range of partners, including national governments and UNICEF, to deliver headcounts in: Democratic Republic of Congo; Ethiopia; Ghana; India; Uganda and Kenya. The Sierra Leone headcount in 2011 was the first national headcount of street-connected children that has been conducted\(^3\) and a repeat headcount is being conducted in 2019. Railway Children has further developed the methodology and used it for a government commissioned headcount of six major cities in Tanzania in 2017\(^4\).

The approach is purely based on observation – but observation by experts. It relies on local participants with knowledge of the area and experience of the street-connected children. It has elements of participatory approaches: the local partners and counters discuss and agree the categories and definitions to be employed in the headcount to ensure the local context is understood and captured. It is different to a census in that only information that can be obtained by observation is collected. No form of sampling, estimations or averages are used.

This approach has been developed because numbers are important, and they are important for different reasons for different audiences. However, StreetInvest does not support collecting numbers for numbers sake. Headcounting should be recognised as part of a broader child rights-based programme cycle where quantitative and qualitative research and

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2 Committee on the Rights of the Child (2017), General comment No. 21 on children in street situations, New York, UN
3 Street Child of Sierra Leone (2012), National Headcount of Street Children in Sierra Leone, London, Street Child of Sierra Leone
data is used to inform evidence-based decision-making: it is not a stand alone exercise. The authoritative guidance set out in UNGC21 makes explicit that, while States should collect and share disaggregated information about street connected children, they must ensure that the collection and use of such information does not stigmatize or harm these children⁵.

In a child rights approach the process of realising children's rights is as important as the end result. A child rights approach ensures respect for the dignity, life, survival, wellbeing, health, development, participation and non-discrimination of the child as a rights-holder. The approach uses rights standards and principles from the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other human rights instruments to guide behaviour, actions, policies and programmes, paying particular attention to the General Principles of the UNCRC: Non-discrimination; Best interests of the Child; Life, survival and development; Right to be heard and taken seriously.

Quantitative data on street connected children should be supported by qualitative data which reflects the realities of street children's lives and is respecting their rights. Organisations and agencies using the data to inform policies and programmes should be committed to a child rights approach, and not driven by a binary approach of 'on' or 'off' the street as the key measurement of progress in upholding the rights of these children. When thinking about doing a headcount it is important that the organisation is very clear on why you want to do a headcount.

The methodology is based on critical observation with checks and quality controls, making it a robust tool of social research and measurement. Effective headcounting, using a methodology that is reflective and uses the skills of street workers who are familiar with the environment of the street child results in a clearer identification of the demographics of children on the street, their movements and activities.

1.2. Considerations before planning a headcount

Before starting to plan a headcount there are some important considerations the lead agency/organisation of the headcount must make, such as:

- The length of time a headcount takes and the number of personnel required depends on the number of locations and size of the areas to be counted.
  - The first consideration is to identify the locations and areas of the headcount (see more in Planning below).
  - Following the identification of location and areas an estimate of the number of trainers, supervisors and headcounters can be made.

⁵ Committee on the Rights of the Child (2017), General comment No. 21 on children in street situations, New York, UN
The next consideration is to determine if there are enough resources available for the duration of the headcount:

- Human resources – can the organisation/agency or network of organisations involved mobilise enough qualified staff to conduct the headcount?
- Financial resources - can the organisation/agency mobilise sufficient funds to cover the costs of scoping and planning, training, implementation logistics, analysis and dissemination?

Supporters: are there supporters of street-connected children and their rights that can act as champions to help identify and allocate resources?

The timing of the headcount is also important. Are there times of year that should be avoided? Are there festivals or political events that may impact on the headcount?

Consider the objectives for the headcount. Examples of objectives are:

- Establish the number of children and youth within a given age-range that are living and/or working on the streets
- Establish the age and sex composition of the street-connected children and youth
- Establish the main activities the street-connected populations in identified key areas are engaged in.
- Use the disaggregated data to include street-connected children and youth in official national statistics, policies, interventions and funding
- Use the disaggregated data to plan and implement services
- Use the disaggregated data for funding proposals
- Establish a baseline against which policies and service provision to street-connected children and youth can be planned and monitored
2. Planning

When a decision has been made to conduct a headcount and sufficient human and financial resources has been confirmed, the logistical planning can start. The four key parts of the planning stage are 1) scoping of the locations and areas to be included in the count, 2) selecting the counters, supervisors staff to be trained as trainers (if applicable), 3) scheduling the training and 4) deciding on the definitions, categories, age ranges and any other characteristics to be employed for the count.

2.1 Scoping and mapping the area of the headcount

The first step in planning the headcount is deciding on the areas where the headcount is to take place. Depending on the size of the town/city it may not be possible to cover the whole geographical area, so an informed selection has to be made as to which areas to focus on. This requires detailed mapping of the area dividing it into manageable zones with strategies for approaching the challenges.

The agency/organisation leading the headcount should have very good knowledge of where the majority of street-connected children and youth are to be found both during the day and night, in which case the decision on what areas to count can be done relatively easily. In other cases where the knowledge is less firm, it may be necessary to conduct some preliminary research by visiting different areas where it's thought likely that street children can be found. It is necessary to visit the same places at different times of the day and night to gain a full perspective. Draw on local street workers' knowledge and talk to street-connected children: ask where they are during the day and where they stay at night.

The area to be counted is then divided up into zones. A zone needs to be walkable on foot at a slow pace over a period of 4-6 hours. Use this as a guide as to how many zones an area is required to be divided up into. If the area to be counted is the city centre of a small town that can be walked in 4-6 hours, then it may not be necessary to divide it up into zones. However, if the headcount is in large city then a careful consideration of the areas to be counted and how these are divided up into zones needs to be done.

2.2 Selecting the counters, team leaders and supervisors

The selection of the teams who are going to do the headcount is the second step. A minimum of two teams of 5-6 people is required for the process. Each zone that has been identified needs to be assigned a team. If both day-time and night-time counts are scheduled you may require two teams for each zone: one to count during the day and one to count during the night.
2.2.1  Who can be a headcounter?
Ideally, everyone in the headcount team should be a local street worker. However, this can
be difficult to achieve due to the lack of sufficient established street work in many areas.
Where it is not possible to create a full cohort of street workers to do the headcounting,
participants should be from the local community who at the very least has some working
knowledge of street-connected children in the area.

During the headcount training, participants should practice how to observe, count and also
how to arrive at agreement for the counting of the children they have observed. A key skill
is observation, e.g. how to identify and classify street children. The headcounters should
ideally all have taken the StreetInvest Introduction to Street Work training module. If not,
then prior to the headcount training the team should receive the Introduction to Street
Work course to help them better understand street-connected children, child rights, street
work and headcounting. For example, it is useful to take the session on active listening
from the Introduction to Street Work course and apply it to the headcount training –
participants must practice actively listening with each other to improve the quality of
communication so that the discussions validating the number of children observed are of
the highest quality and can reflect most accurately the reality on the street.

2.2.2  The role of the headcounter
Observe, count and record
To work as a team
To report any issues or challenges to the TL and, if necessary, to the supervisor.

**Required Skills, Knowledge and Attitudes**

**Skills**
- Objective observation
- Discrete recording
- Responding appropriately to heightened risk
- Ability to focus on the task in hand (for example refer incidents that might require
  intervention to the street work team in the area)

**Knowledge**
- Know the importance of headcounting
- Knowledge of street children generally
- Knowledge of children in street situations in the areas in which the HC will take place
- The methodology of headcounting
- Ability to describe the advantages of HC compared to other survey methods
**Attitude**
- Non-judgmental
- Openness to the views of others - crucial to reach a common understanding of the categories
- Commitment and stamina - the process of headcounting is demanding and will take at least 4 days on the street (or may be 4 nights). A single walk for a count can take 4 - 5 hours and possible more if the TL or supervisor identifies additional issues.

The headcounters work in groups of five or six and one person in each group is named as the team leader; although this is not hierarchical, the nominated team leader should be able to facilitate his/her group on the streets and in the discussions. Ideally, this person should have more experience of working with street children.

### 2.2.3 The role of the team leader
Although not hierarchical the nominated team leader will:

- Read and direct the use of the streetmap
- Manage and direct his/her team on the street - ensuring the team know and fully cover the designated zone
- Facilitate team discussions on the data
- Ensure all team members are heard
- To work closely with the team and the supervisor
- Compile the summary data sheet to be submitted to the supervisor.

**Required Skills, Knowledge and Attitudes**
The Team Leader (TL) should have all the Skills, Knowledge and attitudes expected of a counter and the following:

**Skills**
- Managing groups
- Motivational skills
- Facilitating critical discussions that lead to common understanding and agreement

**Knowledge**
- Know how to refer challenges to supervisor or above
- Know appropriate contacts to initiate street work intervention

### 2.2.4 The role of the supervisor
The supervisor needs to be someone with experience of headcounting and project management, have excellent knowledge of street children and be a good facilitator for
group discussions. As long as trained headcounters think critically at every point of their count (while planning, during the count and evaluating afterwards) the risk of errors is reduced. Counters debate their data sets with each other to further refine the results and reduce the variances between each other’s figures.

This self-regulation reduces the time needed and costs of external monitoring. However, the supervisor must ensure this critical thinking happens. Equally, the discussions can only be as rich as the actual observation and so a supervisor must ensure that each group spends the requisite amount of time on the street.

This methodology hinges on the counters collecting accurate information and critically evaluating their findings with their colleagues. Power-relations within the groups could impede critical discussion. Team selections need to consider balance of power-relations within each group.

To oversee the work of all teams in the designated area the supervisor will

- Implement the logistics planning
- Edit the standard data collection sheets to reflect the agreements reached by the HCs in their training and prepare those forms for use in the final observation walk of the HC training as well as the actual counts.
- Be available at all times to provide support and advice to the counting teams
- Walk with the teams
- Manage disagreements and resolve disputes
- Ensure the methodology is correctly applied
- Listen actively to groups discussions of observed data
- Monitor team discussions to ensure all counters actively challenge their own and colleagues’ input
- Complete Risk Assessments
- Resolve personnel conflicts
- Compile data submitted by each team
- Report to the report writer

**Required Skills, Knowledge and Attitudes**

In addition to the Skills, Knowledge and Attitudes expected of the counters and TLs the Supervisor should also be

- Able to Negotiate with community stakeholders.
- Available at all times. You do not leave the street until the last counter has left.
2.3 Training

The training of the headcounters must be scheduled and should ideally take place immediately prior to the headcount itself. It is important that the training affords sufficient time to reflect upon the effective principles of street work, and reinforce the rights-based and child-centred approach which underpins them. For example, it is key we go to the streets with an open mind and that we remain non-judgemental.

The selection of headcounters to be trained can be staff from the agency/organisation(s) leading the headcount, from, agencies and organisations in their network and other stakeholders. The key issues to keep in mind when selecting the team is that they should have some knowledge and experience of street-connected children, and all members of the team should be available for the duration of the headcount, able to focus all their attention on the task and not attempt to combine it with their regular day jobs.

Two headcount trainers are required for each Headcount Training. The trainers may be hired from StreetInvest or they may be local staff that have been through the StreetInvest Trainer of Trainer of course which enables the local organisation to undertake headcounts and the required trainings independently of StreetInvest. For headcounts in multiple locations and areas, it is recommended that the local staff are trained as headcount trainers and supervisors.

Each team of two trainers will be able to train between 18-24 headcounters for a specific area. You should, therefore, plan for two headcount trainers for each area and more if an area needs more than 24 counters. The trainers need two days for each training to prepare teams in time to count simultaneously. See example deliver plan.

Avoid extreme weather periods or those with several festival days or national holidays. The count is more difficult in school holidays adding to the difficulties of decision making for the counters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normal base delivery plan</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of days needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the training the team will confirm the mapping of the zones to be counted, nominate team leaders, confirm the definition of street-connected children to be employed for the count and what categories and age ranges to should be used.
2.3.1 Logistics for the training
- Finding suitable venue, (this should be as close as possible to where the actual HCs are going to take place)
- Identifying and risk assess the practise observation walks (ideally these will be the same as the headcount zones)
- Resources, sufficient copies of HOs, HBs stationery) etc (eg is PowerPoint available? If not, you will need to prepare copies of the slides from the Resources book as identified in the Headcount Training Manual).
- It is essential you allocate time for Planning the training sessions (co-trainers must be given time to meet, plan and rehearse.). Arrange meeting room and access to resources.
- Miscellaneous, refreshments, transport, etc.

2.3.2 The training programme
All headcounters, team leaders and supervisors must have had up to date headcount training. If you are not sure about this you can contact StreetInvest for guidance. Although there is background and theory the training is mostly practical. It includes:

- Observation exercises and 3 practise observation walks
- Using experience and discussion of observations made on the practise walks to arrive at a common understanding of categories of children to be counted and codes to be used
- Complete a risk assessment for the headcount areas
- Team building
- Meeting challenges
- Planning on how to count around zone boundaries
- Finalising the detail for the data collection sheets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-day headcount training programme</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th># participants</th>
<th>Training capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-day headcount training of trainers programme</td>
<td>Trainers, facilitators and supervisors</td>
<td>Max. 20</td>
<td>x2 participants (working in pairs) can train 24 counters per course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-day headcount training course</td>
<td>Counting teams</td>
<td>Max. 24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two day training programme is an essential part of the headcount process. It will ensure all counters have been involved in confirming the categories to be used (guided by
the management's needs) and how to interpret those categories and any codes to be used. This process generates the detail for the data collection forms.

**Note:** It is the supervisor’s responsibility to edit the standard data collection sheets to reflect the agreements reached by the counters in their training and prepare those forms for use in the final observation walk of the headcount training as well as the actual counts.

**Risk assessment**

Children, and the counting teams, are in public spaces which can present physical risks both to the counters and to the children themselves. All counters are trained in recognizing and managing these risks.

There is the methodological risk associated with the location and timing of headcounting, for example, counting at night. These risks will be identified and mitigated through the training workshops which specifically address risk assessment of the methodology used.

**Note:** It is the supervisor’s responsibility to ensure child safeguarding and risk assessments are complied with.

### 2.4 Target group, categories and age ranges

The fourth step of the planning is to agree the definition of the target group, categorisations and age ranges. Through training the headcounters will confirm the definition of street-connected children. Secondly, the headcounters confirm the overall categories and what type of activities falls under each category. They will also have the opportunity to add additional categories and activities as required.

#### 2.4.1 Definitions

The headcount methodology use the following definitions for who should be included in the count, from the UNGC21 on children in street situation:

a) Children and youth who depend on the streets to live and/or work, whether alone, with peers or with family; and

b) A wider population of children and youth who have formed strong connections with public spaces and for whom the street plays a vital role in their everyday lives and identities. This wider population includes children who periodically, but not always, live and/or work on the streets and children who do not live or work on the streets but who regularly accompany their peers, siblings or family in the streets.
Further, a headcount will usually attempt to differentiate between those that were:

a) **Working on the streets**: Activities that street-connected children and youth are compelled to engage in for survival in the streets. These activities mainly support them to meet their basic needs, especially food. In most cases they engaged in such activities as car washing and car parking, begging, scavenging, sex work, vending of small goods or food.

b) **Living on the street**: A situation in which a child or youth spends most of his/her waking hours in the streets, meaning his/her survival is controlled by the streets. This definition includes street-connected children and youth that permanently live/sleep on the streets and street-connected children and youth that could be spending significant time on the streets with no responsible adult. The number of street-connected children and youth permanently on the streets was verified during the night count, between 8:00pm and 12:00am.

2.4.2 **Categories and age ranges**

Typical categories are:

- Fixed business - a business which has a fixed location but not necessarily a permanent structure
- Moveable business - a business which moves around
- Begging
- Jobless – not working at the time of counting
- Commercial sex work
- Children permanently on the streets / sleeping on the streets

The age ranges can be broad or narrow. A broad age range could be children under six, and children and youth over six. Narrower age ranges could be 0-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-18, 18+.

Local context and national legislation might dictate some boundaries such as school attendance age, but otherwise the scoping should determine whether to use broad or narrow ranges and agree the upper age limit. A broad age range may not give you the desired detail. While a narrow age range may sometimes be difficult to assign an observed child to an age range based purely on observation.
3. Implementation

The observational headcount methodology is a method of counting where teams of counters visit pre-determined areas and count the number of children in street situations they see. The approach is purely based on observation and relies on local participants with knowledge of the areas and zones to be counted and experience of the street-connected children in these areas. No form of sampling, estimations or averages are used.

During the planning stages a geographical area may have been divided into different zones and as many teams of headcounters as required are allocated to these zones. There must be a minimum of two teams that count the zone(s). The teams will move on foot and count in four rounds of counting. There may be separate teams counting a zone during the day and during the night.

After each round of counting the teams meet to discuss and verify the numbers. After the second round of counting teams swap zones and the teams go back to their original zones and do a last count. It is the data from the fourth round of counting that is used as the final numbers.

3.1 Observation

“Count what the eye sees”

The headcount methodology use ‘overt non-participant observation’: Non-participant observation is a research method where the researcher watches the subjects of his or her study, with their knowledge, but without taking an active part in the situation under scrutiny. It is overt because the street-connected children and youth are aware they are being observed - though they are not necessarily aware of the purpose of the observation. There is no interaction with the children and youth, and as such, the observational skills and experience of the counters are of critical importance. However, it should be made clear that team members can talk to children when they are doing the counts, especially if they meet children they know, it just does not form part of the data collection process.

The advantages of using an overt non-participant observational method is that it allows the counters to see what goes on with their own eyes as an outsider looking in to more easily allow them to make judgements. It is more ethical if done overtly, as there are less ethical issues if people are aware they are being observed. Disadvantages are that people may act differently if they know they are being observed (the Hawthorne effect), and it may be difficult to get accurate results when watching from a distance, particularly when it comes to placing the subjects in the correct age brackets.
3.2 The counting rounds

Headcounts should be conducted simultaneously across all the designated zones of the headcount. This minimises the risk of double counting children who may find themselves in different zones at different times. It allows for an aggregation of all zones, comparisons to be made, irregularities identified and explained. The counting is done in four rounds of day-time and night-time counts.

Table 1: Example of a counting rhythm for a headcount

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counting Rounds</th>
<th>Area A</th>
<th>Area B</th>
<th>Area C</th>
<th>Area D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Group 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Group 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>Group 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1st Count

Teams set out and conduct a full headcount of children in street situations in their given zone. Then they meet as a team to agree the figures they are going to submit. The purpose of the 1st count is to

- Confirm the scoping exercise and detailed street mapping
- Confirm logistics and planning
- Confirm the number of counters in each team according to the demands of their zone
- Provide opportunity for supervisors to analyse team dynamics
- Give counters the opportunity to identify further risks and challenges

To count an area the team moves into their designated zone. They may wander slowly and follow different paths but always be within sight of other colleagues. They will stop and observe. When they feel they have captured the immediate surroundings they will move on. They find a discrete place to note down their findings. Following the 1st count the supervisor meets with the team to explore if anything needs to be changed to improve the process.

2nd Count

Each team visits their assigned zone for the second time, informed and adapted by the 1st count if required. On return the team discuss the observations and agree the figures for the team leader to compile for their zone. The team leader submits the summary sheet as well as the individual counting sheets to the supervisor. At this stage there is no discussion between groups.
3rd Count
This is the swap count. Teams swap zones and conduct another full headcount, at the same time for the same number of hours and on a similar day, e.g. if the 2nd count was done on a normal weekday then the swap count should also take place on a normal weekday.

Example
It is important to recognise local factors that can skew the count. For example, in Mombasa the scoping team identified Fridays as an issue. With Friday being a prayer day for Muslims who are generous with alms the scoping team knew that many families from the surrounding areas of Mombasa come to the city streets with their children to engage in begging. In the local context these children would not be considered included in the definition of children to be counted so this would skew the results.

After the count teams return and compile their figures. The teams meet their swap partners, compare counts for the shared zone and analyse their approach and final figures. This leads to in-depth discussion to agree on reasons for any significant variations. As a result they may review their observations and where necessary agree on improved strategies for the final count.

Example
On a 3rd count in zone A, one team had recorded higher figures for children not working than its swap partner. The teams explored if there was a legitimate reason for the difference. They talked about routes “walked” and noted that the team with the higher figure had discovered a place in the market where a large group of children were resting and playing. The two teams agreed to ensure that the place would be included in 4th count in this zone.

At the end of the swap count discussions, the teams should have achieved improved strategies, improved co-ordination and improved management of the data. The teams then agree on the best strategies, the timing and how to manage bordering areas for the 4th and final count.

4th Count
This is the count that will be used for the report and will, unless there are exceptional circumstances, produce the final figures. This is because by this stage the counters will have improved their skills and understanding, used improved strategies and found ways to address many of the challenges. It will have produced the best-quality data.
Teams go to their original assigned zone and complete a full headcount. They return to base and compile their figures. This again involves critical discussion within the team. The team leader compiles the full data set and submits to the supervisor.

Supervisors will have been conducting quality control throughout the process, visiting teams on the street, analysing collated data at the end of each day and raising issues with the team leaders. They then submit the authenticated data to the reporting team for analysis.

If the 4th count is compromised in any way, for example, an unexpected public demonstration or heavy rain then the best of counts 2 or 3 can be drawn on. The supervisor should consult with team leaders so to agree on which count gives the most valid data. The report is written up from the aggregated data from all the zones. The simultaneous nature of all the counts means there is reduced chance of double counting a particular child.

3.3 Data Collection
Each member of the headcount teams will be assigned a category, sex and age range they are to count, and it is the team leader’s responsibility to ensure the team members stick to their task.

The different team members can each be assigned the task of counting specific categories. Each team member tallies the number for their assigned categories on their data collection sheet. When a round of counting is completed, the data collection sheets are given to the team leader who will compile the numbers on the summary sheet.

The counters will not initiate contact or engage in direct interference, but still allow for normal contact. The counters must be upfront and honest, always friendly and courteous or subsequent counts can be skewed. If possible, data collection should always be done away from the subjects to lessen interference and avoid raising of suspicion.

3.4 Methodology limitations and mitigation

Headcounting has its limitations. It is difficult to ensure that every child living and working on the street has been accounted for. What the observational headcount methodology can achieve is a representation of the street-connected children and young people observed in key areas of a location at specific moments in time.

The method has a risk of double counting children to some extent because children may move between different zones and areas, so they may be counted more than once. Furthermore, children may be double counted if they suddenly change activities because
different data collectors count children involved in different activities. Lastly, because the method is based on observation, children’s ages always need to be estimated judging from their appearance and, as such, will not always be precise.

The methodology could be criticised for its lack of participation with the children themselves. However, adopting a more participatory approach that includes street-connected children in the counting process, run the risk of the results being prejudiced by the children themselves. For example, a street-connected child may be predisposed to warn friends to make themselves scarce during the counting process or mislead the counters as to the areas the children frequent.

The below methodological limitations are considered and the following mitigating actions should be taken to minimise errors.

- **Use of local counters:** local partner organisations working with street children and youth must be engaged as well as other stakeholders such as government officers should participate in the headcount process and join the counting teams where appropriate. The counters should be familiar with the scene and better positioned to spot street children/youth and to differentiate them from children who have come to the city just for the day but would not normally be considered as children in street situations.
- **Daily debrief meetings:** After every counting session, a facilitated debrief meeting is held, during which the counting teams meet to discuss challenges and key areas to watch out for during the next counting round.
- **Recording of possible data affecting challenges:** Any observation made that could influence the count result is recorded and shared with the supervising team, which considers the field remarks as analysis proceeds. This process facilitates data validation of extreme values and final count results used for analysis.
- **Training and piloting:** All counters undergo a two-day training – exposing them to the headcount methodology, data collection tools, and possible challenges further engaging them in short practice counts where they employ the newly learned skills. This process ensures a uniform understanding of counting categories and methodology applied on the ground.
- **Group interactions, discussions, and consultations:** The teams are also trained on how to do comprehensive observations. The teams are given assignments on how to observe and memorise what they observe. After observations, the teams come together for group discussion and consults each other on how to go about the challenges that they have encountered during the exercise.
4. Reflection, analysis and dissemination

When the final round of counting has been completed, and the results have been discussed, agreed and aggregated, the findings will be analysed and the report written. This process is led by headcount management team and the supervisors supported by the data analyst.

4.1 Documentation and validation

The headcount results are documented both on paper and through electronic data entry. The former captures both the individual counter’s results and the final summary sheets, and the latter captures the summary results concluded at the end of every count. Annex 2 shows the paper-based data collection sheets.

The first stage of validation takes place when the team concludes the final summary count for its shift. The summary sheet is filled in by the team leader. The summary sheet is then transferred to electronic data capture by the data analyst. The electronic data sheet is shared with the supervisory team. All paper forms are scanned for electronic data storage. Upon completion of the headcount, the paper records for the individual team members are compared with the summary sheet. This is subsequently compared with the electronic summary records.

4.2 Data management and analysis

Data from the 4th count is generally accepted as the final numbers and is the data used for analysis. The data from the previous three counts is used for validation of the final findings. Hence, it compares the data from the first three counts with the final count data to see if there were large discrepancies in numbers. At the end of data collection, the data is cleaned by addressing inconsistencies.

After data cleaning, the data is analysed using Excel or statistical software packages. The analysis is generally descriptive and involves one-way tabulations to obtain the distribution of the counts across categories of each variable. Bivariate analyses are conducted to compare the counts by sex, age, and type of activities the street-connected children and youth are engaged in. Results are presented in frequency distribution tables and charts.

Examples of data tables and charts are below, taken from the headcount in Mombasa, Kenya in December 2018.
Table 2: Totals of street-connected children by Age Group, Sex and Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>AGE GROUPS</th>
<th>0-6 years</th>
<th>7-10 years</th>
<th>11-14 years</th>
<th>15-18 years</th>
<th>19-25 years</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>FIXED BUSINESS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MOVABLE BUSINESS</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IDLE</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BEGGING</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSW</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB-TOTAL MALE</td>
<td></td>
<td>87</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>1,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>FIXED BUSINESS</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MOVABLE BUSINESS</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IDLE</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BEGGING</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSW</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB-TOTAL FEMALE</td>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAND TOTALS</td>
<td></td>
<td>156</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>1,757</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Ratios of SCC in Mombasa by Age Group, Gender and Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>AGE GROUPS</th>
<th>0-6 years</th>
<th>7-10 years</th>
<th>11-14 years</th>
<th>15-18 years</th>
<th>19-25 years</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>FIXED BUSINESS</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MOVABLE BUSINESS</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IDLE</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BEGGING</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSW</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB-TOTAL MALE</td>
<td></td>
<td>87(7%)</td>
<td>72(6%)</td>
<td>125(10%)</td>
<td>220(18%)</td>
<td>692(58%)</td>
<td>1,196(68%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>FIXED BUSINESS</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MOVABLE BUSINESS</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IDLE</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BEGGING</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSW</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB-TOTAL FEMALE</td>
<td></td>
<td>69(12%)</td>
<td>79(14%)</td>
<td>72(13%)</td>
<td>97(17%)</td>
<td>244(43%)</td>
<td>561(32%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3 Additional qualitative research

The observational approach of StreetInvest’s headcount methodology does not allow street-connected children to participate in setting the aims and agendas of the counts, in the data collection, or in analysing and disseminating the findings. This is, however, a critical feature of the methodology which recognises that street-connected children are often distrustful of adult intervention in their lives. It is therefore crucial that the numbers
established through the headcount is both supported by qualitative data and research which reflects the realities of their lives and experiences, and that it is used to develop a process through which these children can participate in the decision-making process.

The headcount methodology is informed by the fact that the state has obligations set out under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to develop, in partnership with academia, civil society and the private sector, systematic, rights-respecting, participatory mechanisms to collect data and share disaggregated information about street-connected children; ensure that the collection and use of such information does not stigmatise or harm these children; integrate data collection on street-connected children into national data collection on children; and ensure national data do not rely solely on household surveys but also cover children living outside household settings.

4.4 The report

The final report should contain:

- Background and context of street children in the area
- Explanation of the methodology
- A summary of the process including: The definition of street children used in the headcount and justification for the categorisations of the street children
- How and when the headcount took place
- A narrative of the group interactions and discussions
- Challenges
- Map of the area for the headcount
- The results with a breakdown of the quantitative data using charts and graphs with a qualitative analysis of the data including any unexpected findings, see examples below
- Photos from the headcount, bearing in mind that consent from all persons present in the photos need to have given their consent for their picture to be used.

4.5 Using the results to inform practice

When the report has been completed it should be disseminated as widely as possible through the networks of the participating organisations, StreetInvest, local and national governments and the media. The management of the organisation that commissioned the headcount, and other participating organisations and stake holders should then review the results in light of the stated objectives of the headcount. It enables evidence based decision making by having a robust and up to date set of data to support structuring and improving the work with street-connected children.
The report is also a very strong advocacy tool to use to advocate for street-connected children's rights and access to services, and also provides strong baseline date for funding applications. StreetInvest considers it crucial that the findings from the headcount are disseminated as widely as possible to have the maximum impact.

APPENDIX: Checklist of Requirements
EXAMPLE PROVIDED IS FOR MAJOR CITY - 1 MILLION+ POPULATION
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREPARATION</th>
<th>REQUIREMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>Local - 1 city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope</td>
<td>8 zones in the city determined by lead agency in dialogue with key stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>8 teams of 6 = 48 counters - see budget example below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Local government, Child Welfare Committees (CWC), Police, Unicef, street children focused NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>Avoiding rainy season. Situational analysis conducted by lead partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legalities</td>
<td>Permissions from local government and police</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLANNING</th>
<th>REQUIREMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant selection</td>
<td>48 Participants selected from NGOs, CWCs, local gov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training planning and schedule</td>
<td>Training booked week prior to count, participants confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area mapping</td>
<td>Headcount management team do detailed scoping of areas to be counted prior to training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training delivery</td>
<td>Trainer(s) deliver two day headcount training including site visits and trial counts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team selection</td>
<td>Participants split into groups, team leader and counting area assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement of counting categories</td>
<td>Headcount management team provides list following scoping, confirmed by training participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REQUIREMENTS</th>
<th>REQUIREMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>Teams visit assigned sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>Team members note down their assigned category for counting, team leader transfer to electronic format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group interactions, discussion and consultation</td>
<td>Teams discuss numbers during and after counting, refine strategy for next count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk management</td>
<td>Continuous risk assessment by team leader</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>REQUIREMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data analysis</td>
<td>Team leaders report to headcount managers who provides initial analysis. Further analysis by StreetInvest and/or statistics agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Report by StreetInvest and/or statistics agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination</td>
<td>Report published through StreetInvest Global Alliance, local and national government and statistics agency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATIVE BUDGET TO COUNT 8 SITES IN MAJOR CITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 teams of 6 counters required. 2 trainers/ supervisors required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainers and supervisors for scoping, training, supervision and analysis*</td>
<td>5600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Lunch &amp; Refreshments for 48 participants and 2 trainers - USD 5 per day</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Venue</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per diems for 48 participants for 6 days - USD 5 per day</td>
<td>1440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>8140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>