Terre des hommes

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Children in Street Situations

Sectoral policy – January 2010

Founded in 1960, Terre des hommes is a Swiss organization which helps to build a better future for disadvantaged children and their communities, with an innovative approach and practical, sustainable solutions. Active in more than 30 countries, Tdh develops and implements field projects to allow a better daily life for over one million children and their close relatives, particularly in the domains of health care and protection. This engagement is financed by individual and institutional support, of which 85% flows directly into the programs of Tdh.

Terre des hommes

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Table of Contents

I

Children in street situations
as defined by Tdh

1) The issue of "Children in Street Situations"

The phenomenon of children in street situations has multiple facets with interrelating consequences, making it very difficult to point to causes, and unhelpful to try to identify a single cause that can provide a blanket explanation for the phenomenon. The dynamics in local contexts are determined by the different combinations of economic, social and political factors at play. Urbanisation causes huge problems for social relations, education, health and housing, overburdening the capabilities of a weakened public sector. Slum areas and poor districts grow up without any basic infrastructure and, in some cases, are pervaded by urban violence, contributing to people living on the streets.

For economic reasons, children are forced to choose between domestic and community violence in the slums and public violence[1] on the street. Children move to and fro between these two worlds. These children are so mobile that reliable statistics are difficult to establish. They are not permanently on the streets: they may also spend time in prison or in institutions, they may go back to their families for a short time, they may take part in project activities, or they may move from one town to another or be forced to move. The literature uses different categories such as "street children", "on the street", "without shelter", "at risk", "in conflict with the law" and "in especially difficult circumstances". These are distinct but overlapping categories that can neither be equated nor unified.

It is therefore very difficult to put an exact figure on the number of children living in street situations. However, it is vital to evaluate their quality of life by encouraging them to express their own opinions. This makes it possible to identify different profiles of children – a necessary stage in understanding the social dynamics affecting them and offering them the appropriate interventions to help them improve their daily lives. The CSS issue is directly related to the quality of the existing relations between these children and the people in their immediate environment. That is why Terre des hommes prefers to use the term **"Children in Street Situations"** (CSS), since the problem is not "the street child" but the situation causing the child to be in the street.

It is therefore not that the child is, to whatever degree, in the street (as in the categories "street child" "in the street"); it is, on the contrary, that the realities of the street are, to varying degrees, an integral part of the child's life. And these realities range from the positive, such as immediate solidarity, to some of the most flagrant violations of human dignity. Living on the street is a combination of restrictions affecting the child and the child's own survival strategies, which will vary according to the situation. It is essential that these realities are characterised with the involvement of the children who experience them, rather than it being done on their behalf. That means that it is necessary to have qualitative tools that involve the children themselves.

The street situations that children are living in are far from uniform, and the impression the children form of their situation is complex: their subjective world is shaped by the interpersonal relations that they have established on the street or with other places and other people. In this sense, children may be living on the street but feel subjectively that they are in a family or community; on the other hand, children may be living in an institution, in a community or with their family, but feel subjectively that they are on the street with "their group". This is borne out by the fact that some children who work on the street are extremely proud of it, while others do it against their will, and others again do not see themselves as either "street children" or "children living in the street" but as workers. It is important to recognise that children who are excluded from their family, community or school create a new identity with their street group.

In this respect, identifying the different situations on the street is much more relevant than identifying what one would call "the real street child". The time spent analysing the qualitative situation is never wasted, as long as a network gives sufficient space for coordinated interventions relating to different categories of children experiencing different situations on the street. Our approach therefore encourages the establishment and strengthening of networks by sharing a common approach.

This common approach starts with a definition of CSS that stresses the social-player model: **children in street situations are social players**, and not just victims or offenders. They are not only victims, they are also players. As is always the case for those on the margins of society, these children not only adapt to the situation, they actively try to overcome their

difficulties by joining another world – the street – and creating their own world – their street.

It is essential to look beyond the numbers and ask: for whom, since when, how and why is living on the street a problem. The problem of CSS requires that we also educate those who are in contact with these children, because they are part of the problem, and, it is to be hoped, part of the solution. When they talk about these children, people routinely analyse the situation through the perspective of their own values, positions and interests. For some, these children are crooks, while for others they are victims. Some inflate the statistics, and in doing so they possibly increase the feeling of danger, which is then used to justify operations to "clean up" the streets. Others underestimate the problem or simply refuse to discuss the subject.

This calls for a **strengthening of prevention and promotion options**. For, given the decline in the public sector, the problem is likely to get worse. Inadequate education policies (direct and indirect schooling costs, shortages of apprenticeships) and a repressive and overly rigid juvenile-justice system lead to innumerable children in conflict with the law being deprived of their liberty, with laws often only partially applied[2]. Non-official standards, influenced by public opinion, are often preferred, reinforcing power relations and coercion – as are measures that have only a limited or even non-existent basis in law[3]. In most countries, the general attitude is to see children's physical and emotional survival strategies (work, theft, drugs, sexual relations) as symptoms of the social pathology of the poor, seen as a "dangerous class". That sets in motion a vicious circle of deviance and repression: as soon as vagrancy is considered an offence, the criminalisation of children in street situations leads to even greater crime. At first, children commit small crimes just to survive, and then, since they have already been labelled a criminal, they assume the role of a real criminal, and ends up making it their career. Repression keeps children on the streets.

However, prompted by occasional contact with these children, "public opinion" shifts between solutions that range from pure and simple repression to measures to empower. Placing children in institutions, which is still commonplace in many countries, just serves to hide the symptoms without addressing the causes. The task is so enormous that only the **network approach** recommended by Tdh has any hope of

making a difference, provided there is a shared, common perspective.

Under pressure from all sides, starting with the macro-social level, families fall apart. A typical scenario involves the frustration associated with under-employment, unemployment or bad working conditions, often aggravated by alcohol and drugs, and children sometimes involved in trafficking or other informal survival strategies. When a community is destroyed by the fight for survival, any family breakdown has an acute effect on the status of the children. The mother, most closely linked to family life as a result of gender roles, finds herself forced to find "protection" with another man, who most often reacts to the weakening of his own economic role by violently rejecting any children that are not his own. Trapped in a situation of disintegrating family ties, children are forced to take to the streets or to create their own survival strategies. Although teenagers tend to run away from their families when they are maltreated, the situation for girls is much more critical, as gender roles prevent them from developing the same degree of independence that is generally attributed to boys. As a result, the risk of being caught up in underground physical and sexual exploitation networks is greater for girls than for boys, as in the hidden case of "little maids". Child abuse, child trafficking and other shocking violations of the *International Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC, 1989) are therefore not without links to economic policies.

However, the concept of "poverty" does not in itself explain street-living. Not all poor children live on the streets. The affection that the majority of poor families still manage to show their children is admirable. However, slum children are often not taken into account publicly until they have become "street children" – in other words, a public and visible problem. Family breakdown and domestic violence may be the immediate triggers causing children to run away, but they are not the real and underlying causes of living on the streets. Poverty is just one condition increasing the likelihood of taking to the streets, but it is not the cause. Destitution is a "symptom", a state in which one finds oneself, the real causes being the factors leading to impoverishment – and these are, above all, linked to economic policies. The greater the concentration of wealth (economic capital and land ownership) and power, the greater the inequalities in status and access to dignified standards of living (and working).

However, given the general confusion that exists between symptoms and causes, it is the "deviant behaviour" of poor children and their families that is treated and not the macro-social dynamics that produce this behaviour. The real problem is the crisis in social integration, which can be defined as the adjustment in relations between individuals and groups (erosion of social ties), based on a "social contract" that links them through mutual and legitimate rights and responsibilities. Society stigmatises "street children" by associating them with all the dangers associated with the street in the public imagination. But children for whom the street is the environment in which they live or survive are themselves more likely to be subject to violence

2) Reasons to act

Terre des hommes is active in the issue of children living in street situations because these children have had their most basic rights disregarded and are especially vulnerable to all sorts of phenomena likely to endanger their life, their survival and their development. These include child-labour exploitation, child trafficking, sexual abuse and exploitation, involvement in drugs trafficking, involvement in armed conflict, involvement in suicide attacks, drug abuse and participation in criminal activities. All the situations are likely to endanger the child or even bring about the child's death.

Tdh recognises that children in street situations, as a result of their life experiences and independence, need specific strategies to reintegrate them socially. To this end, such strategies must respond to their need for affection, protection, care and education and must be appropriate to the realities that they have experienced and come to accept.

Children in street situation are therefore one of the Terre des hommes Foundation's priority targets for intervention[4].

Priority areas	Priority targets	Cross-sector approaches
Health	• Mother and child health/nutrition • Specialist care • Water, sanitation & hygiene	• Prevention and fight against all forms of child abuse • Advocacy • HIV/AIDS • Gender • Psychosocial approach • Safety
Protection	• Trafficking and exploitation • The street situation, lack of family support • Juvenile justice • Humanitarian crises and armed conflicts	

Its reason to act is therefore a strong motivation to provide concrete help to children in difficulty and a sense of outrage at the conditions that they face. Without help, children in street situations have a greatly reduced quality of life and life expectancy. They are exposed to all sorts of abuse – physical, psychological and social. In the absence of viable alternatives, it is more than likely that daily reality for these children will be maltreatment and crime. They are victims of injustice and inequality and, since they are unable to have any influence on social structures, they perpetuate and accentuate the effects of their condition. **What we need to do, therefore, is facilitate a change in their status from that of criminals bound by social exclusion to** **that of players engaged in moving towards social integration.**

Consequently, the help that Tdh offers these children consists of reducing their distress, empowering them, and, wherever possible, getting involved with their families and communities. At the same time it also seeks to have an impact on the structural causes (government, institutions, culture etc) that force millions of children around the world to have to survive on the streets. The key to our strategy is, on the one hand, direct action both on behalf of and involving the children, their families and their communities in order to help them survive and empower them and, on the other hand, intervention in social structures (govern-

mental, institutional and cultural) through advocacy and training from a social-development perspective[5]. Indeed, the one does not work without the other: help with survival and empowerment is pointless without changes in the causes of social exclusion; and there can clearly be no social development without individuals who, over and above survival, are able to develop on a personal level. The actions that form part of our strategic policy framework are implemented at different "speeds": help with survival constitutes an urgent humanitarian need; empowerment takes place over the medium term; and prevention of related abuses and promotion of rights is a long-term endeavour (see "Model of action" on page 21)

3) The context of our interventions

a) Players

The issue of children in street situations is a highly complex one and the children experiencing these violent situations are very diverse. It is therefore essential to involve and coordinate all the various players from the rights-protection system, public institutions, private institutions and associations in order to help create the right environment for social improvement, prevention and protection (in the street and when (re)integrating children into families and the community).

The children themselves are players who can alter and co-construct community life. Children in street situations have usually acquired numerous skills, including those developed on the street in order to survive. Strengthening infant-juvenile protaganism in projects leads to their active participation in social changes to safeguard their rights.

1) Children and young people: Empowering children and young people will enable them to create networks where they can become involved in operations to defend and promote their rights.

2) Families and communities: Working to bring about family and community empowerment and to identify and promote resources and existing sources of support, while strengthening existing mechanisms.

3) Local and national governments: Numerous state, legislative, executive and judicial departments and organisations must be involved in order to bring about full protection. We should note that while in some cases governmental bodies are involved in improving the living conditions of children in street situations, in many cases, due in part to cultural pressures, stigmatisation and the view of these children as criminals prevail, with maltreatment being just one of the consequences.

4) Non-governmental organisations and local associations involved in the rights-protection system.

5) The media in their role as opinion formers are essential players in helping to change the way society perceives the issue of children in street situations, as well as they way it perceives the children themselves.

6) Employers: For children who go on to the street as a way for them or their families to survive, small employers are likely to respond to requests for professional training and income-generating activities.

7) International organisations, UN organisations, international NGOs and departments for international cooperation and humanitarian aid are also involved in the street-situation struggle, each with one or more focuses and specific objectives.

8) The "exploiters": there is no shortage of people willing to take advantage of the situation of children on the street. This includes child-labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, drugs and arms trafficking, gangs, criminal groups and adults on the street. It is essential to gain an understanding of their motives and how they act in order to map out strategies that are in the interest of the child.

b) Tdh offers expertise at local and international level

Terre des hommes set up its first project aimed at protecting children in street situations in 1986 in the north-east of Brazil. Since then, Tdh has been increasingly concerned about the enormous vulnerability of these children and has expanded its involvement to other urban areas in the world particularly affected by this problem either by supporting local partners or by carrying out actions of its own.

In these 20 or so years, Tdh has acquired a considerable expertise in the field, on the one hand through the actions it has implemented in very different contexts[6], and on the other hand through its use of theoretical work. Tdh combines academic knowledge with practical knowledge to improve its interventions.

Tdh offers support or strengthens already existing actions so that children can live in a protective environment, with the emphasis on empowering both the children and those around them (family and community) – something that is considered essential to successfully implementing an effective system of protection.

Tdh's advocacy work[7], combined with its in-depth experience and international-level analysis, has gained the organisation the recognition of its peers. One example is the relationship with UNICEF, UNESCO and the ILO through discussion platforms and network implementation. Another is the invitation in 2007 by the International Institute for the Rights of the Child to co-organise a seminar with the International Social Service and share its experience on "Children in Street Situations: Prevention, intervention, and respect of rights." Tdh also contributes to shadow reports for the UN Committee on the Rights of the

Child with the participation of children and young people, in accordance with what is individually possible, reporting on their view of how their rights are applied / violated.

On a national and local level, Tdh helps build local and national capacities to ensure a system of complete protection; acts as a catalyst in network advocacy; and encourages participation in organisations that defend and promote rights and draw up and present public policies.

What makes operational organisations like Terre des hommes special is that they are often in a position to promote and facilitate the Convention's implementation plans through specific actions and projects on the ground. Tdh is able to facilitate the flow of information between players on the ground (state and non-state) and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, United Nations bodies and the community of NGOs.

Footnotes section I

[1] *By public violence we mean that children are subjected to various kinds of duress and serious violations of their basic rights.*

[2] *See sectoral strategy "Rights of the Child", Terre des hommes, Bernard Boëton, December 2000, p.2, point C.*

[3] *Public order interests often undermine Article 3 of the international Convention on the Rights of the Child (the best interest of the child) and related procedures (evidence-obtaining procedures, separate detention of adults and minors etc.).*

[4] *See the Terre des hommes Foundation strategic plan 2005-2009. The 2007 mid-session review sets out health and protection as priority areas.*

[5] *See strategic policy framework and targets A and B.*

[6] *Such as Brazil, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Vietnam, Burundi and Madagascar.*

[7] *For examples of advocacy in action see section III, point 1-c, Working plan: Advocacy.*

II

Tdh intervention

1) Tdh's guiding principles

Tdh's strategic plan sets out the Foundation's vision and principles. By "guiding principles" we mean the principles that inform Tdh's interventions both in general, in the overall field of protection, and in particular, in the work we do with children in street situations.

• Terre des hommes Charter. The Foundation aims to rehabilitate children's lives in accordance with their rights. Tdh achieves this objective by: (a) offering direct aid to children and families suffering the worst forms of distress and (b) acting as ambassadors to local and national government bodies and international organisations. Specifically: on the one hand, helping children survive and become empowered, and on the other hand, influencing changes in social structures.

• Approach based on children's rights and needs. Tdh adopts an approach based on human rights / the rights of the child to combat exclusion and psychological, physical and social violence. An approach based on human rights / the rights of the child describes a situation not only in terms of human needs but also in terms of social / governmental responsibility in applying the rights of the individual. What is needed, therefore, is not charity or dependence – creating aid, but empowerment and protagonism. The basic rights of children in streets situations are violated and measures must be taken to combat it.

• The best interest of the child[8] informs all our actions, from analysing the situation of children in the street to choosing alternatives after they have come off the street: the child's welfare always comes first. This principle covers all aspects of children's lives and must respect children's own view of themselves.

• Using a systematic approach. A child's development is considered to be a complex process based on constant interactions between individual, family, community and society. All these factors are interconnected, each affecting the other, and are in constant flux. Interventions help create an environment in which people are given a sense of responsibility and can have an impact on the systems and situations in which they live. Individuals are players.

• Viewing the child as a player. Tdh adopts a multisector approach and puts the child at the heart of its analysis of the problem and its response to it. This "child-centred" approach holds as fundamental:

- The right to participate. All children develop their own representations of their situation and the context in which they find themselves. For interventions to be effective, children must be listened to, encouraged to express their opinion and encouraged to participate in the decision-making process in all matters concerning them (art. 12 of the CRC) whether on a personal or social level.

- Psychosocial support for children that takes into account and develops resilience. All children have personal and social resources that they employ at different times in their lives: this is what enables them, for example, to create strategies for surviving on the street. Interventions focus on recognising, promoting and developing both internal resources (personal and social) and external resources (from the environment).

• Involving the family in project activities wherever possible. The psychosocial wellbeing of the family and extended family has a direct impact on that of the child. The family is the place where child protection and socialisation can best take place. In order to strengthen family ties and guarantee that the child develops in a positive direction, the family needs to be given due recognition and offered appropriate support in times of difficulty. Its involvement in interventions with children contributes to the quality of child-parent (responsible adult) relations.

• Strengthening existing community support bases. In order to cope with the realities of social exclusion, communities develop protection mechanisms and community support bases. Community-based interventions – whether to help prevent violence against children, re-establish family well-being and / or strengthen family ties during family reintegration – must consult and involve the groups of people concerned, identify community resources and help strengthen these resources. This is an undeniable right and a basic mark of respect.

• Encouraging governments to take responsibility. Protection is one of the biggest responsibilities a State has towards its people. In partnership with local and national players, Tdh's principal role is to use dialogue, training, advocacy and, if necessary, stronger forms of pressure to support / encourage govern-

ments to take responsibility in executive, legislative and judicial spheres. It is only where governments cannot take on this responsibility that NGOs need to intervene and supplement existing activities.

• Facilitating dialogue between key players. Tdh works with other governmental, non-governmental and international bodies to build multidisciplinary networks with the aim of: offering access to or creating alternatives for children and their families; increasing project efficiency, replicability, and coverage; and strengthening advocacy work and professional skills. The proposed actions are based on the principles of complementarity and subsidiarity[9].
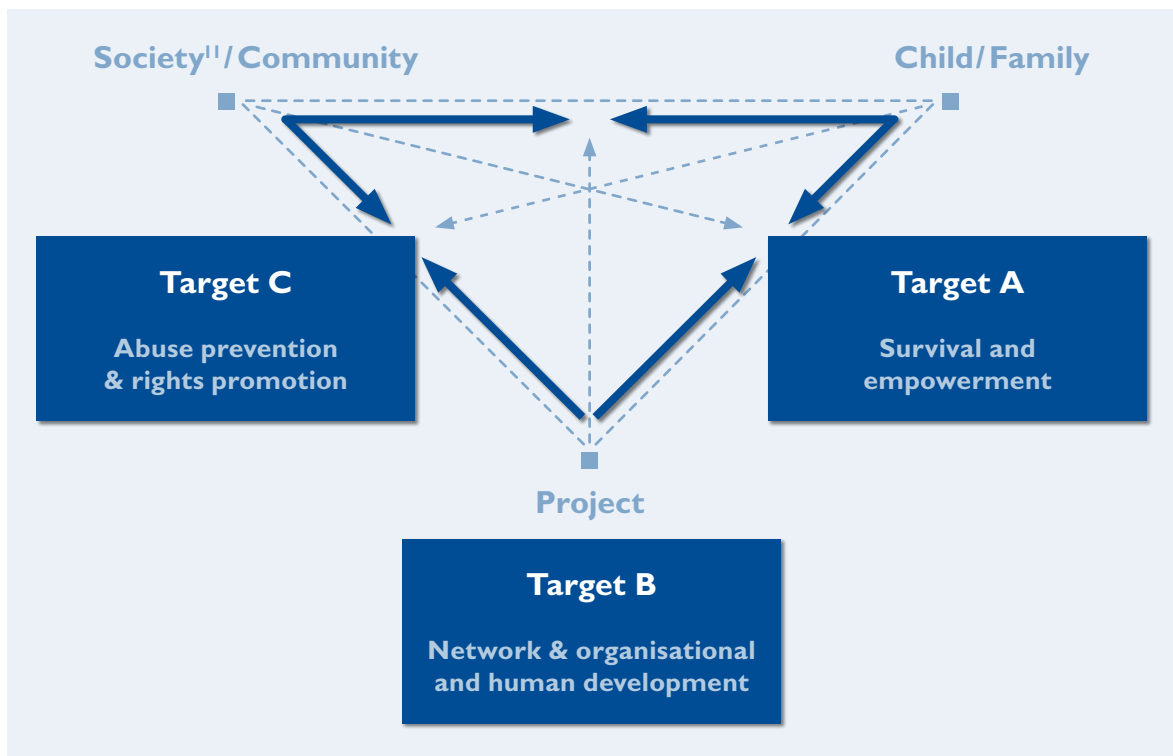
• Facilitating access to services. Thanks to its direct contact with children and awareness of the issues, Tdh is able to facilitate access to existing basic services such as health, education, legal recognition, and housing (or property).

• Taking account of gender. A gender-based approach should encourage the effective and fair participation of women, men, girls and boys, and ensure equal access to opportunities and resources. It is essential that projects take gender into account to ensure that actions are effective and that the appropriate changes take place.

2) Policy framework for CSS[10] projects

The model below, which acts as a policy framework, is a systemic model. The systemic approach enables one to look at how elements that make up a system influence each other: any change at one level affects the balance of the whole. Here, the system we are looking at is the intervention system (targets A and B), and its effects (C), which in turn influence the system.

Society[11]/Community   Child/Family

Target C

Abuse prevention & rights promotion

Target A

Survival and empowerment

Project

Target B

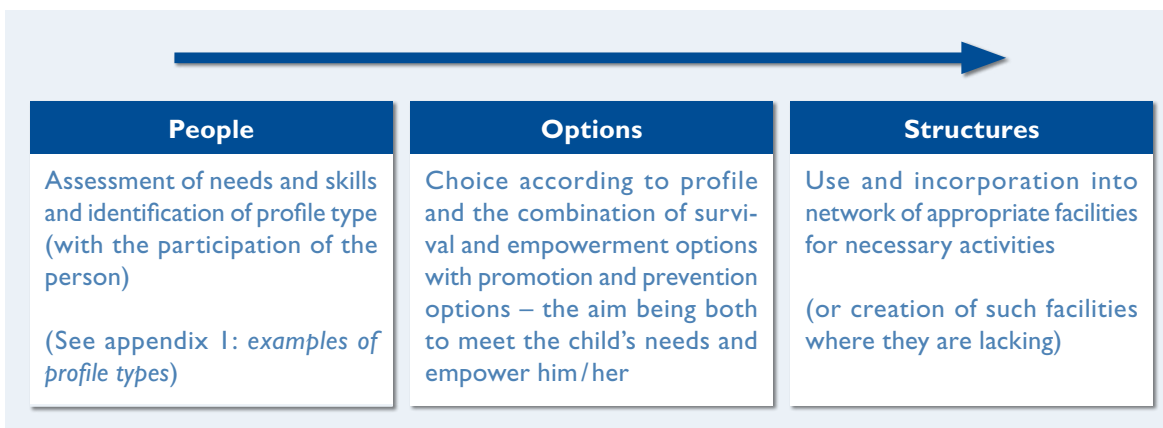Network & organisational and human development

In this policy framework, the solid arrows represent concrete interactions, while the dotted arrows show the possible influence of one player on the interaction between the other two. As a player in the intervention system, the project/network can only set out what it wants to do and how it wants to do it from within the relationships in which it is directly involved: with (A) the child/family on the one hand and with (B) various players in society/the community on the other. The project/network has neither the capability nor the authority to dictate how social integration (C) should take place in specific daily activities. It can only influence this relationship in terms of a reciprocal change (empowerment) through activities (A) and (B): supporting children/families and preventing other abuses within the family through the promotion of rights.

The systemic approach enables one to see that things do not happen in parallel, but, rather, that one thing may, at least in part, happen through another: it is not a question of simply empowering individuals and at the same time creating the right cultural and structural conditions (society/community) to enable individual capacities to flourish. Because in this case it is still the project/network responding to needs or ambitions. It is a question of seeing that it is through empowerment that users can also become agents in promoting rights and preventing abuse, thereby becoming project/network "players" and not just "recipients".

Our starting point, therefore, is to make sure we pay great attention to children's needs and capabilities (profiles), and these require appropriate facilities where they can be met. To that end, we need instruments for understanding the reality directly affecting the child, and we also need to draw up individual strategies with children. It is this participation of children in the choice of actions and appropriate facilities that will empower them and enable them to become social players. That is why listening to children in street situations is our top priority. We can then construct a typology of child profiles. This approach, which starts on the ground and moves from people to structures, is outlined in the following diagram:

People	Options	Structures
Assessment of needs and skills and identification of profile type (with the participation of the person) (See appendix 1: *examples of profile types*)	Choice according to profile and the combination of survival and empowerment options with promotion and prevention options – the aim being both to meet the child's needs and empower him/her	Use and incorporation into network of appropriate facilities for necessary activities (or creation of such facilities where they are lacking)

According to this approach, social development is a process in which people's existing and desired capabilities help change social structures. This process of social change is based on the CRC principle of the child's right to self-expression. Putting people and activities first, rather than structures, gives more weight to what the child has to say and less weight to institutional interests. This also increases the chances of changing structures constructively. That is why, according to our strategy, all empowerment options can be enacted in different places: the street, the family, a drop-in centre, a hostel. The options for promotion and prevention add two more levels, which are in fact "virtual places": local networks and international networks.

3) CSS projects aims and target groups

a) Aims

The aim of "Children in Street Situation" projects developed or supported by the Terre des hommes Foundation is as follows: **Individual and social resources are developed in order to give CSS and their families increased capacity to choose; in addition, concrete alternatives to the street situation are created within society to ensure that CSS and their families are integrated socially.**

Social integration comes about through an interactive adjustment between the individual and society. Society / the government has rights that it must secure for individuals, and individuals have duties towards society. The social integration of children in street situations results from the existence of real alternatives to the street situation, the empowerment of players and the implementation of policies that enable them to exercise fully their rights. This approach can be found in the policy framework model where the project or network: on the one hand, empowers children and families and aims to understand their reality and be proactive in transforming it (target A), and on the other hand, addresses prevention and human-rights promotion (target B) – these two targets influencing each other and being mutually reinforcing.

This aim is achieved through practical activities that are mutually reinforcing (targets A and B). In order to increase individuals' capacity to choose, it is necessary to work simultaneously at the individual level and collective level. Indian professor Amartya Sen (winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics) believes that human beings are not just moved by personal interest: he highlights their capacity to react when faced with someone else's difficult situation, and to unite to fight against discrimination, torture, misery and poverty[12]. Development cannot be reduced to access just to material resources. He recommends considering the choices that people can make: we need to pay attention not to material wealth but to the real lives that people can choose[13]. In short: we should always think about the capacity of society to improve human capacities[14].

This transformation is similar to the idea of "empowerment", in the sense of transferring power from a team of stakeholders to users. For us, "empowerment" is the process whereby a person's general abilities can use social processes to construct new social relations. This occurs when participation, personal ability, self-esteem and awareness are raised. However, we prefer to talk about "developing the capacity to choose", which is more specific and currently better understood than "capacity building" or "empowerment". Put simply, and humbly, our objective contains the basic idea that the capacity to choose results from both personal empowerment (target A) and social opportunities (target B).

b) Target groups

Tdh offers intervention in particular to any child in a street situation **who is living and / or carrying out activities on the street likely to harm his / her development (see below)** – in other words, contrary to the child's best interest. Any assessment of the child's best interests clearly must not interfere with the exercise of his / her rights and must be understood on the basis of the image that the child has of him / herself and his / her situation. It must, of course, be taken into account that adults have roles to play and can influence decision making. That means that in carrying out our work, we develop actions based on actively listening to children and taking into account their opinions in any decision affecting their lives. The best interest of the child must be considered throughout the project cycle and by all players / partners involved in Terre des hommes projects. When analysing the situation, listening to what people have to say (children, families and the various players active in the field of childhood) will play an important role in selecting target groups when setting up the project.
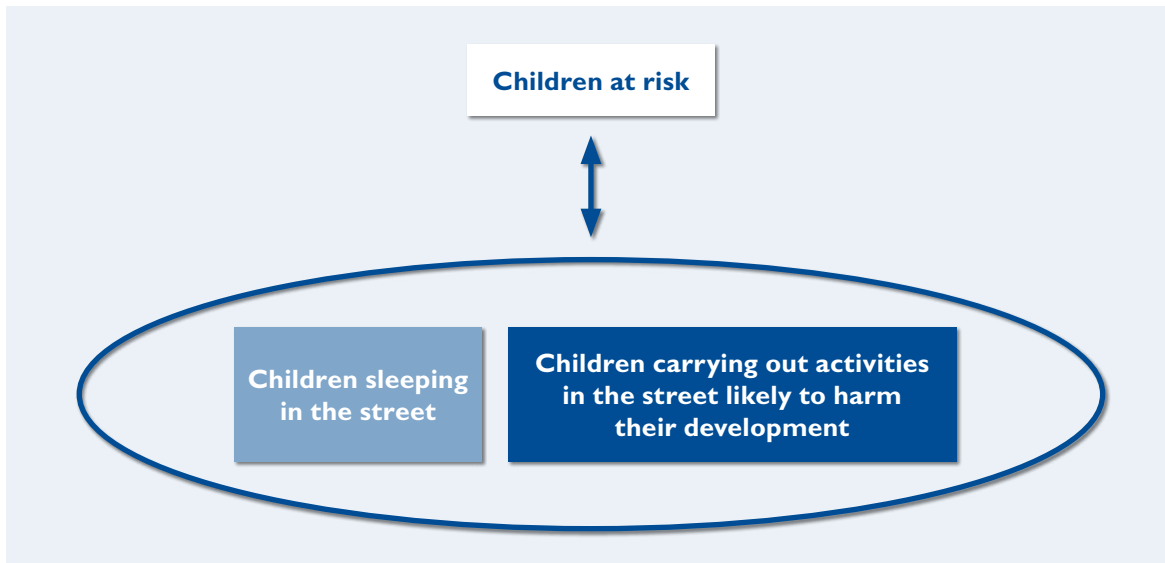
What characterises CSS projects is the fact the children are identified on the basis of the street. The main target group is children living on the street, but it also includes children carrying out activities on the street likely to harm[15] their development. Children at risk of taking to the streets are seen as falling within the target groups in terms of prevention and will benefit from the Foundation's child-protection interventions. Given the importance that the family (biological family, extended family or foster family) and the environment in which the child lives (community, district) have in terms of the child's protection and psychosocial development, CSS projects will include these players and support their empowerment.

Other organisations may constitute target groups in relation to training and institutional empowerment (see section I-3a *Players*).

4) Strategic targets

Tdh develops child-protection strategies that aim to increase the independence of people and communities who are or might be affected. The priority for these strategies is to promote independent organisation, encourage participation in solution-finding, improve living and working conditions, strengthen rights, and increase the possibilities for the people concerned to exercise control over their lives[16]. These strategies also aim to build the capacities of players involved in this particular issue, and in the area of childhood in general, in order to empower them and increase opportunities for target groups, and in particular children. The main targets are based on the policy framework model for CSS projects. The relationships between child and family, programme and society form a complete system:

a) Target A: Survival and empowerment

Organising actions related to the capacity to choose (empowerment) takes places according to the needs and capacities of the children and their families (initial street phase, getting out of the exploitation of which the child is a victim, individual and social empowerment, choosing and implementing individual strategies with the player) and has as its aim family and / or social reintegration. Reintegration is achieved when ties are re-established, allowing the child to develop a sense of belonging.

b) Target B: Network[17] and organisational and human development

Network working occurs across all project intervention target areas – direct action, advocacy and training – in the presence of local, national and international players in order to provide full, high-quality care to children in street situations and offer them real opportunities as alternatives to the street. The complexity and diversity of situations involving rights violations and physical, psychological and social violence experienced by children make it difficult for one single organisation to provide the responses required.

In order to guarantee the consistency and quality of its actions, Terre des hommes adopts an approach based on a continuous process of learning from experience – in group training, individual coaching, and replication – and contributes to local and national empowerment by generating and transferring its institutional knowledge.

c) Target C: Prevention and rights promotion

Prevention and rights promotion are two of Terre des hommes's major concerns. Preventing the street situation involves empowering families and communities in order to help create a protective environment for children. Systematic advocacy actions[18], developed within the network on a basis of law, aim to encourage local, regional and national governments to promote and implement social policies, and encourage society to rethink attitudes that perpetuate, for example, discrimination, criminalisation and the "normalisation" of injustice.
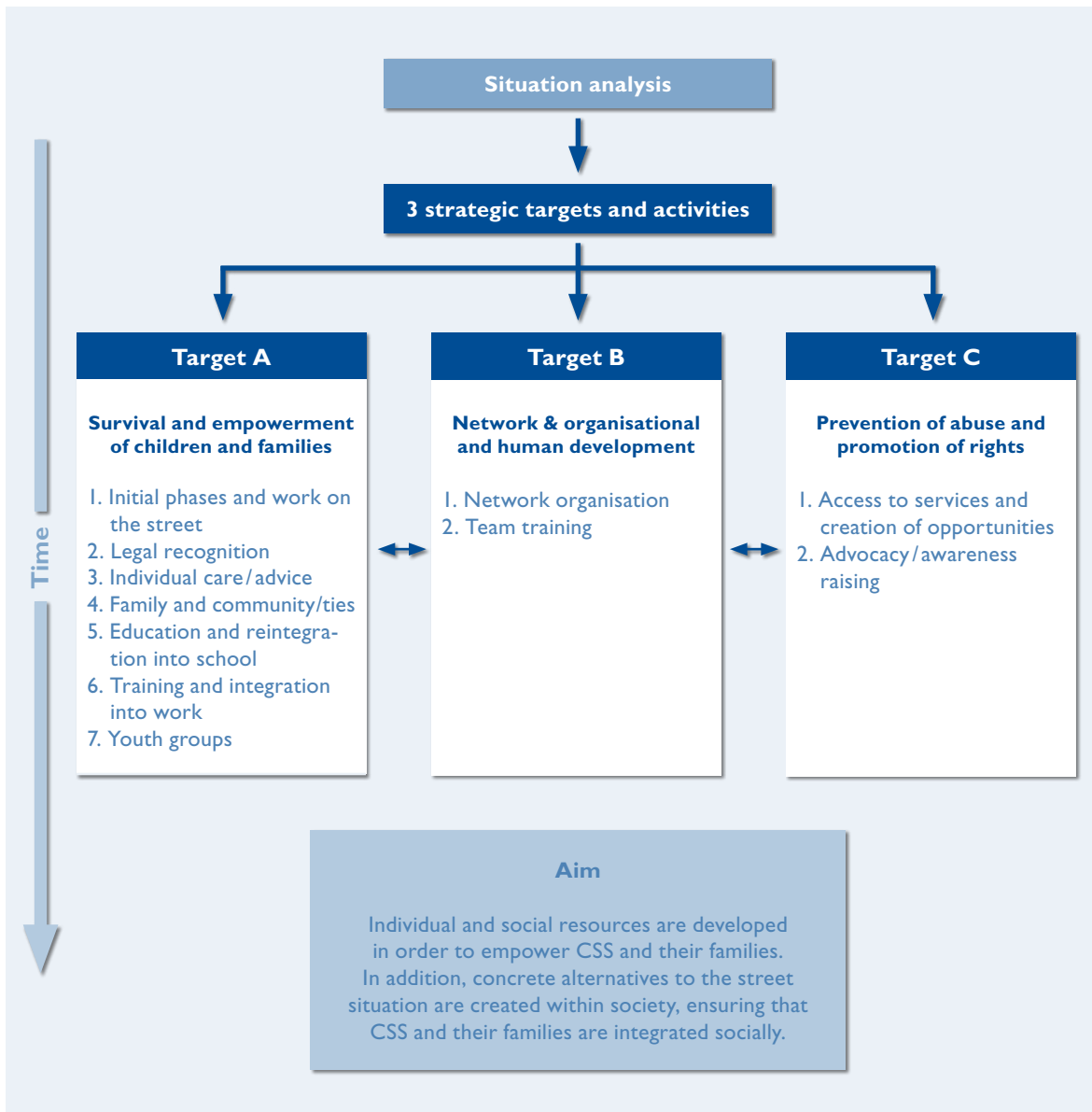
5) Model of action

Tdh works to defend and promote children's rights, and, wherever possible, works towards a negotiated integration of its activities into regional / national government policies on protection. Where these are inadequate, it tries to develop them through advocacy. In parallel it also contributes to the strengthening of child-protection systems in and by communities themselves. Terre des hommes aims to make its actions viable and lasting, and to this end invests in empowering all players including CSS, their families and their communities.

In accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity, rather than try to replace existing government and non-government actions, Terre des hommes has developed the following way of working. (see diagram on next page)

Situation analysis

3 strategic targets and activities

Target A

Survival and empowerment of children and families

1. Initial phases and work on the street
2. Legal recognition
3. Individual care/advice
4. Family and community/ties
5. Education and reintegration into school
6. Training and integration into work
7. Youth groups

Target B

Network & organisational and human development

1. Network organisation
2. Team training

Target C

Prevention of abuse and promotion of rights

1. Access to services and creation of opportunities
2. Advocacy/awareness raising

Time

Aim

Individual and social resources are developed in order to empower CSS and their families. In addition, concrete alternatives to the street situation are created within society, ensuring that CSS and their families are integrated socially.

Endnotes section II

8 *Best Interest of the Child, according to article 3 of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

9 *On the basis of a situation analysis, and depending on the players present, Tdh will either develop actions, where they are needed but lacking, or will support actions in partnership with others to prevent and combat the street situation.*

10 *This model has been used in the policy for combating child trafficking and the policy for protection in emergency situations.*

11 *Governments, civil institutions, culture.*

12 *Amartya Sen, "La liberté individuelle: une responsabilité sociale" [Individual freedom: a social responsibility], in L'économie est une science morale [Economics as moral science], Paris: La Découverte, 1999, pp. 74-75.*

13 *Ibid. pp. 63-64.*

14 *Ibid. pp. 64-65.*

15 *Activities that are not in the best interest of the child (article 3 of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child): see above "Tdh's guiding principles".*

16 *Taken from "Combating child-trafficking" Tdh sectoral strategy.*

17 *Tdh's definition in the PCM: Web of players (individuals or groups) interacting with each other. These players may be linked by rules or common objectives. Or it may be that what links them is their belonging to the same environment. To define a given network, one may also start with one individual and identify the relations linking him/her to other individuals or groups. There are formal and informal networks, informal ones being extremely flexible and in constant flux.*

18 *For Tdh, advocacy is all the planned actions aimed at influencing a target group towards positive change in the child's environment.*

III

Tdh at work

1) Putting strategic targets into practice

Terre des hommes's CSS projects support local and national capacities. Actions are based on both the organisation's values and the commitments contained in the policy framework; they are also linked to general values and standards contained in the CRC, the *Tdh Charter* and the *Tdh Policy on Prevention of Abuse* (*Tdh Policy on the Protection of the Child*)[19]. Countering the street situation and achieving positive and lasting social (re)integration require broad intervention in relation, on the one hand, to the family and/or community, in order to improve relationships and re-establish ties and feelings of belonging, and, on the other hand, to society (governments and civil society) in order to adapt/create public policies towards CSS and protect children against all rights violations. The CSS issue is directly related to the quality of the existing relations between these children and the people and institutions in their immediate environment.

It is necessary to coordinate different activities developed according to children's needs and capacities in order to empower them and bring about (re)integration into the family, school, community and society. This should be independent of the physical space in which the activities are developed. Certain principles define and guide these activities:

• Identifying and promoting players' individual and social abilities (acquired on or off the street) and increasing empowerment and independence, with the aim of providing a strong basis for better living conditions and promoting the rights of the child and civil society. Contributing to the perception of the player as capable.
• The project's human and material resources include the skills of the children themselves, their families and communities.
• Children are free to participate in project activities; however they should be constantly stimulated in the choice process.
• Involving players directly in the drawing-up of support strategies and monitoring processes.
• Creating forums for listening and expression. Promoting and maximising children's participation in all areas of the project; encouraging their contribution to decision-making.
• Having a playful attitude in interactions with children: a playful attitude should be the overriding tone of all empowerment activities. Being able to play is not only a child's fundamental right, it is also essential for social development, as playing is the best and most

direct way of understanding rules. Understanding the rules of games instils an awareness of the rules of social games.
• Encouraging children to express their perceptions and defend their rights. Increasing public awareness of the perceptions that children have of other players such as the police, organised criminal networks etc. and of the perceptions they have of justice/injustice and the rights of the child.
• Empowering children to transform individual conflicts into positive collective actions through the development of symbolic skills (language, ability to negotiate) in order to gain better access to basic social services and/or achieve greater independence.
• Developing a gender-based approach in project actions in order to promote the social development of women. Lack of equal opportunities for women is an important part of the problem.

a) Target A: Survival and empowerment of children and families

Initial phases

The work on the street starts with the identification of children in street situations and the observation of the dynamics of their environment. This is achieved by going to where the children are. It involves establishing links with children, understanding their view of reality and encouraging them to initiate the active process of coming off the street. In other words, children decide to come off the street because they have taken stock of their reality and want to change it. However, this cannot happen unless children see concrete and acceptable alternatives (advocacy). It is usually not a "definitive" decision but more a leaving process involving coming and going to and from different places. This process can entail a painful switch in behaviour (norms and values), and severing of relations with the group and from support groups on the street, as well as a return to the world of marginalisation, discrimination, stigmatisation and exclusion. In order to make the step, children must feel empowered: empowered to do, empowered to have and empowered to be.

In some cases, children cannot contemplate leaving the street, the degree to which they belong to a gang, their dependence on psychoactive substances, their links to crime, or their painful experiences

having obliterated any perception of a life not on the streets. But by continuing to monitor the child, sharing what it is still possible to share, without any expectations, there is always the possibility of reaching a key moment.

✏️ Tools used in this area:
• Sports activities and other forms of play valued by the child (verbal, artistic, theatrical etc.).
• Activities that enable the child to express him/herself.
• Legal support, where necessary.
• Tool *Octagon, Children in Street Situation*, Tdh, 2005.
• Manual *20 Games with a psychosocial aim*, Tdh 2007.

Individual monitoring/advice

During all the lead-up phases to reintegration, children are offered support in overcoming the numerous challenges they will have to face. They are also offered individual monitoring involving the child directly, giving them the opportunity to reflect on themselves and their life plans, and helping them make their own decisions. Individual strategies are designed with children and negotiated. They take into account the environment in which the children are growing up and the restrictions placed on them (by family, society or culture). Identifying and giving value to children's abilities and showing respect for their experiences and choices increases the chances of successful socialisation.

Listening closely to children is essential in this kind of guidance work, and in some cases psychological help may be necessary.

✏️ Tools used in this area:
• *Child Protection, Manual for intervention in humanitarian situations,* Tdh, 2007.
• *Child Protection, Training manual (toolbox),* Tdh, 2008 (pp. 49-59).
  - *Who is important.*
  - *My personal file.*
  - *My life plan.*
• "Jogo Pedagogico" to collect information on children's life situation, Brazil, 2008.

Family and community/ties

This involves all activity leading to mutual attachment, offering children security with other adults: in other words, the right to family and community life.

The street situation is often associated with a history of violence, abuse or family or community abandonment. Getting away from the punitive view and offering support in partnership with the family is a challenge that takes account of the fact that situations of great vulnerability constitute a real threat to children's well-being. It is necessary to: invest in the family through empowering them; work **with** the family by involving it in the reorganisation of its internal and external relationships; and work with the family to find solutions and resources available from family, community and social networks or from public authorities. These actions help the family gain independence and construct a space of protection and attachment for their children.

Wherever possible, and with the agreement of the child, ties with the family (single-parent, nuclear, extended, foster family) should be encouraged as a matter of priority. It is through emotional family ties that the child can develop physically, psychologically and emotionally.

Interventions aimed at bringing about sustainable family reintegration require mediation with and between the child, the family and the community. They also need to ensure that all parties accept their responsibilities and to obtain the support of the community (leaders, persons of influence, religious leaders, neighbours, associations etc.).

Where required for legal reasons, the approval of the placement by child protection services must be obtained.

However, family reintegration is not always possible, the best interest of the child always being the ultimate priority. In these cases, other solutions must be considered with the child, depending on age, development and environment, such as:

• Temporary foster home.
• Sheltered accommodation.
• Community support.
• Integration into a job.

✎⟩ Tools used in this area:
• Home visits.
• Meetings / activities with families with the aim of empowering them.
• Family participation in project activities.
• Mediation in child / family relationships (with possible use of a genogram).
• Involvement of the family in finding housing and / or employment solutions, where necessary.
• Coordination meetings with network partners.
• Identification of support bases and strengthening of community ties using formal or informal community leaders.
• Community therapy.

Education and (re)integration into school

The emphasis is placed on two kinds of process: personal-development training and preparation for entering a public school or supplementary system. These two kinds of process overlap and reinforce each other.

This personal-development training[20], which is fundamental to any education process, enables children to acquire the capacity to reflect on the world in which they live (acquiring independence) so as to contribute to their transformation in a responsible way. This must be carried out with the understanding that the child is a being in its own right, and not just a passing phase on the way to adulthood. Considering oneself "capable" means being capable of reflecting on one's actions, seeing and correcting mistakes, cooperating, and developing respect for oneself and others. The education process starts with complete acceptance of the child (empathy) and guidance work towards changing attitudes. What the child is and knows must be identified, valued (taking into account abilities) and used as the foundation on which to base the development process. An educational environment must be positive, open and encouraging. Gender will be taken into account in all activities.

(Re)integration into school is a necessary step on the road to long-term change in children's lives and is essential to gaining access to new opportunities. In order to take this step, children must be prepared to enter a system that will be very different to their experiences and pace of life on the street (and aware that it will be so). A transition phase is almost always necessary, depending on the profile of the child.

✎⟩ Tools used in this area:
• Psychosocial activities, games, sports, artistic activities, reading and creating stories / narratives, directed discussions, free activity areas, etc.
• Activities at school that highlight the child and his / her abilities (shows, traditional festivals).
• Gradual participation, taking into account the child's development and cultural context (Hart's Ladder of Participation).
• Youth groups based on a common aim.
• Raising awareness among families so that they recognise the necessity of going to school and participate in their child's school life.
• Promoting the creation of (non-formal) school facilities based in the community, where there are no teachers or public schools available.
• Meetings with school authorities to raise awareness about the right of all children to go to school. Discussions and cooperation with headteachers to encourage the inclusion of CSS in their schools.
• Setting up working groups for school staff and providing training to raise awareness of and develop skills in teaching children who have been in street situations.
• Administrative, legal and financial support is sometimes necessary to make school reintegration successful: obtaining official documents where required by headteachers, and making grants of educational materials and money to cover the hidden costs of attending school (transport, meals etc.).
• Manual *20 Games with a psychosocial aim*, Tdh, 2007.
• Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE).
• *Handbook for Teachers*, J.Annan, L.Castelli, A.Devreux, E.Locatelli.

Professional training and integration into work

Professional training involves developing specific skills relevant to the world of work and building knowledge of a particular career, as chosen by the child. This will depend on the possibilities for integration either into the formal labour market or into some kind of informal income-generating activity. Any such activities must not contravene the rights of the child. Training is encouraged for children who have reached the legal age, according to the country in question and ILO recommendations, either as part of official training courses or alternative training schemes.

Professional training must take place after family and community reintegration, where possible, and in a protective environment. Children exposed to the street should not treat professional training as their primary focus. The first step is to meet their basic needs (cf. Maslow's Pyramid) and to enable them reflect on themselves and their life plans – in other words enable them to plan for the future.

Training and subsequent professional integration require a different set of abilities to that experienced on the street. Children must therefore be offered individual guidance and opportunities to learn how to meet the multiple challenges that they will face. During the whole of the training and professional-integration process, it is essential to listen to the child. Respecting the child's choices increases the chance of lasting success.

Having a job should enable the child or young person to achieve independence and live in conditions that enable him/her genuinely to break off from the street situation or exploitation on the street. With this in mind, a study of the society's needs should be carried out before launching a project aiming to give a child economic independence.

✎ Tools used in this area:
• Pre-employment:
  - Support to ensure that the child is in a protective environment (family, group accommodation, employer accommodation).
  - Basic education.
  - Support in obtaining official documents so as to be able to sign a job contract.
• Professional training:
  - Long-term training should have priority and should include development of both technical skills and the personal and social abilities necessary to the world of work. Coaching in the workplace.
• After training:
  - Support in finding a position or help in setting up a small business.
  - Referral to microcredit agencies, supply of a tool box,
  - Establishing a monitoring system for at least 6 months.

Youth groups

Organising youth groups that have a common aim and take collective action gives children the potential to create and negotiate changes in their lives and social environment.

Children in street situations have usually already acquired the ability to be part of a group, an ability developed on the street in order to survive. Education and empowerment can enable children and young people to join together as part of a responsible project.

Participation leading to children and young people forming a group is a gradual learning process. The cultural context will to a certain extent determine how easy it is for adults to create spaces where children can really participate and get involved in making decisions and adopting strategies concerning them. Motivating young people to take part has various functions, such as: creating a feeling of belonging to a group (a typical need for CSS); creating a belief in one's abilities; encouraging children and young people to develop advocacy actions.

Through participating, children increase their psychosocial well-being and resilience.

✎ Tools used in this area:
• See tools for "Education and (re)integration into school".

b) Target B: Organisational and human development

Network coordination[21]

The effectiveness of all actions to combat the street situation depends on the synergies that are created between different players working to defend the rights of the child. Creating networks made up of government, non-government and community organisations is therefore a way of finding cross-disciplinary answers to this problem. Relationships between organisations are established on the basis of the principles of complementarity – in order to increase opportunities – and unitedness, so as to try to alter existing social structures and change the way CSS are viewed.

Networks exist on different levels, and they must also create synergies between each other:

- Primary: community level (CBOs, groups, families, children).
- Secondary:
  - at local level (NGOs, schools, social services, local authorities, private sector).
  - at national and international level (coalitions, platforms, NGOs, GOs etc.).

Some important points that enable network actions to succeed:

- Before organising a network, it is essential to analyse the context and the social reality in which the intervention is to take place, and identify institutional players responsible for public policies and civil-society initiatives.
- Networks need to agree upon and set out clear objectives, the scope of their actions, and the priority targets for intervention, as well as the values and principles that will guide their collective actions.
- Networks have a horizontal structure, but the way they work must be clearly defined. It will be necessary to take a measure of competencies and divide up responsibilities (time consuming).
- Planning, monitoring and assessing joint actions will be carried out as a group.
- An information and registration system helps with keeping track of children and families, monitoring joint actions, and strengthening internal and external relations.
- A coordinated training process helps achieve collectively agreed objectives so as to assess individual and collective intervention, optimise resources, and strengthen the network's image in the minds of its members.
- Networks must be able to show society what they are doing in order to gain credibility and become seen as the gold-standard in their field of intervention. They must also create synergies with other national and international networks/forums in order to increase their power of influence, enabling them to a) bring about change in a situation and b) exert effective pressure on authorities to make good their commitment to promoting and implementing the principles of the CRC.
- In order to function, networks need funds. Joint projects that respond to needs that have been jointly identified have more chance of finding resources as they optimise resources and maximise results.
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Quantity/quality of staff

Any project activity must be thought of in terms of an optimal balance between the number of staff and the qualifications required by the tasks in hand, as the viability of a project clearly depends on the qualifications of its staff. The difficulty is often, not finding staff, but finding staff trained to do a job that, as in the case of children in street situations, requires very high human and professional qualities. In the countries in which we offer intervention, social-work training is sometimes inadequate.

Staff training

Terre des hommes adopts a participatory approach to training where everyone, trainers and participants alike, can exchange knowledge, and where learning is considered a continuous process in which new knowledge is connected to past experiences. Training focuses on two basic elements: motivating professionals and promoting and developing skills – with the aim of developing high-quality interventions and effective child-support.

The training process includes:

- **Initial training** enabling participants to understand Terre des hommes's basic principles, get to grips with the complexities of the CSS issue, and map out actions to be carried out.
- **Continuous training**, following a yearly training scheme to guide professionals and reinforce their skills and knowledge so that these can be applied in interventions. Continuous training for staff should aim to create a balance between the three component elements of the intervention: looking/discovering – analysing/understanding – acting/intervening.
- **Supervision, or personal coaching**, which enables professionals to reflect on their work and helps them resolve problems or overcome difficulties. Supervision improves the quality of interventions and is a way of combating burn-out. It is an interactive process between supervisor and supervisee.

Staff capacity-building includes their participation in the PCM process.

c) Target C: Prevention and rights promotion

Advocacy / Awareness raising

Terre des hommes's advocacy work[22] is developed within the network on different parallel levels – community, local, regional, national and international – consistent with the complete-protection measures necessary to ensure the well-being of the child. They aim, on the one hand, to bring about the defence, promotion and implementation of social policies in the region or country of intervention, and, on the other hand, to bring about changes in attitude, such as discrimination, criminalisation and the "normalisation" of injustice. Advocacy actions also come within other of the Foundation's priority target areas.

As set out in "The importance of advocacy for the rights of the child" in the Terre des hommes Foundation's strategic plan 2005-2009: "The aim is to provide an effective way of increasing the application of children's rights. The reference in this matter is the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 3 of the convention sets out the aim of promoting the best interest of the child in all circumstances. The role of advocacy for the Terre des hommes Foundation is not just to denounce a situation, but to motivate and offer alternative solutions."

What we need to do is create links, lobby public opinion and political decision-makers about the serious rights violations suffered by CSS, and encourage the State to implement appropriate measures both to combat and prevent these violations. In order to be credible, advocacy must be backed up by specific actions in relation to CSS, their families and their communities. And these people must be involved in the various activities from the planning stage.

Advocacy actions can include:

• Getting involved with organisations that promote rights and that prepare public and social-management policies; taking part in meetings promoted by the government or bilateral discussions, with the aim of proposing and discussing measures that respond to the needs of CSS.

• Supporting local and national capabilities; supporting players who work in the field of CSS, or in social services, education (including universities), health and the judicial system through training, seminars and the exchange of best practice.

• Involving children and families to raise awareness and galvanise public opinion, with the aim of making people aware that the street situation represents a violation of human rights and that it is the duty of the State to come up with public policies that ensure or re-establish children's well-being.

• Mobilising the media, in their role as opinion leaders, so that the issue of CSS is approached ethically and responsibly and discussed publicly in a way that respects rights, with the aim of altering public perceptions.

• Denouncing abuses and violations of children's rights to judicial authorities, human rights groups, international organisations, UN bodies and the media.

Access to services and creation of opportunities

This activity involves convincing public authorities to guarantee that CSS and families will have access to existing public services. This access to services, which the project / network could offer in the way of palliative aid, must be demanded as a right. Having said that, the services on offer are not always adequate or suitable. It is therefore a question of convincing public authorities to adapt or create them. The opportunities made available to CSS and their families are essential to getting children off the street.

• **Health care.** The emphasis is put on awareness of and attention to physical and psychological well-being, through: Treatment, referral and health awareness, focussing on the main risks to physical and psychological health such as wounds, infectious diseases, respiratory conditions, drugs, sexually transmitted diseases (including AIDS) etc., with the aim of bring about changes in behaviour. Food aid to those suffering from malnutrition, and introduction to the importance of a balanced diet (proteins, minerals, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins). If food aid is offered in centres, children should be encouraged to participate in the shopping, production and preparation of meals.

• **Community and family life.** It is necessary to ensure that children have a secure and permanent place to live; this is achieved by supporting families or creating the right conditions where the child can live in a family environment. Temporary shelter is offered as a last resort (see family and community/ties).

• **Education.** The focus is on school reintegration and non-formal education. Teaching is adapted to children's abilities and the content of lessons is appropriate to their social environment.

• **Leisure.** The most important resource of all is to be found within children themselves: their profound desire to play (games, sport, dance etc.). Playing is a way of helping children in difficult circumstances to develop their own potential as human beings. Games are essential tools in enabling children to develop their own symbolic abilities (judgement, solidarity, interaction) and thereby achieve social integration. Play should not be ignored: playing is a very serious matter.

• **Employment.** Offering or creating the right conditions for children or families / relatives to enter the formal labour market or begin informal income-generating activities within the law; improving working conditions and excluding unacceptable forms of work; ensuring that physical and psychological well-being are respected; ensuring facilities for leisure and education.

> ✎ Tools used in this area:
> • WHO, "Working with Street Children: A Training Package on Substance Use, Sexual and Reproductive Health Including HIV / AIDS" (2000).
> • Experience-learning from the Vietnam project.

Endnotes section III

[19] See: "Keeping children safe".

[20] The standard is "Personal development training and empowerment" Humberto Maturana and Sima Nisis de Rezepka.

[21] Tdh's definition in the PCM: Web of players (individuals or groups) interacting with each other. These players may be linked by rules or common objectives. Or it may be that what links them is their belonging to the same environment. To define a given network, one may also start with one individual and identify the relations linking him/her to other individuals or groups. There are formal and informal networks, informal ones being extremely flexible and in constant flux.

[22] See the Terre des hommes Foundation's 2005-2009 strategic plan and the Programme Contribution Proposition 2009-2012.

Appendixes

Appendix 1

Examples of profile types

The way children experience their reality gives us the basis for determining profile types to help guide interventions. The following are some examples of characteristics of four different profile types. These characteristics were reported by children themselves:

Profile 1
Children who have a strong sense of identification with the street and with peers who have become their family. They play the role of leader, have initiative, can plan strategies, and have a good ability to read a situation and get the best out of it. Have a history of family violence.

Profile 2
Children who as workers feel responsible for contributing to the family income. Show good negotiation skills and can communicate well. Want to improve their social position through a change in their working conditions; are capable of taking the necessary steps to achieve this. Are aware of their rights. Analyse the dangers of the street that they use as their place of work. They maintain stable relationships with their family and friends

Profile 3
Children who are forced onto the street to help with the family income. They suffer stigmatisation from those who perceive them as "street children". Their self-image fluctuates and they find it difficult to make sense of their situation on the street. They have little control over situations and may accept adult impositions unconditionally.

Profile 4
Children who have been forced onto the street in order to survive by situations entirely out of their control (loss of one or both parents, abuse, exploitation by adults etc.). Develop isolation strategies as a defence mechanism. Alone, they have no protective base and their life on the street is violent and destructive. These children have little resilience, see themselves as victims and neither have the strength to change their reality nor feel capable of doing so.

Appendix 2

Examples of final outcomes and their indicators (see section III, Tdh at work):

The existence of opportunities and the **development of individual and social resources** in CSS and their families contribute to the active **process of the child coming off the street**[23] and being integrated into the family / community / school / work.	• x children have developed new social relations off the street and have constructed a plan for the future. • The child is capable of making independent decisions. • Parents and children can communicate peacefully, enabling the child to stay with the family for at least x years after reintegration. • The child has attended school regularly for x amount of time. • The child has stayed in the same profession or has the same source of income so as to be able to live independently. • Children who have stayed on the street are monitored.
Preventive actions **involving children and families** are developed in the children's own communities, reinforcing existing support bases.	• The community, x families and x children are involved in activities related to protection. • Families are aware of the existing support services in the community and use them. • x requests, chosen by the community, are referred to the relevant authorities by community networks.
Technical and methodological support to **build local and national capacities** is offered to help develop a system of complete child protection.	• x social players given technical and / or methodological support base their interventions on the international rights of the child.
Synergies are created between the various players at local, national and / or international level to guarantee consistent interventions that will ensure complete child protection.	• Protection-related problems are identified with players. • Joint basic procedures for dealing with at-risk children are set out. • There is a network of supplementary child-protection actions.
Forums for discussion between the State and organised civil society (NGOs, community movements etc.) are strengthened / created with the participation of children and families in order to help promote rights; the drawing up and implementation of **public policies**.	• Involvement of social-representation organisations (State, civil society and community representation) in events linked to ensuring the rights of CSS. • Cross-disciplinary State services and social organisations join a movement to promote children's rights and participate in discussion forums. • Children and families participate in discussion forums to formulate and present public-policy proposals. • Agreed public-policy proposals are taken into account by legislative and/or executive powers.
Media partners are established to raise public awareness and change perceptions of CSS (criminalisation x rights violations).	• Articles published by media partners reflect their commitment to defending the rights of CSS. • Rights violations of CSS are made public in the media. • The issue of CSS is part of media partners' agendas.

[23] *The active process of coming off the street means when the child, with or without support, takes the decision him / herself.*

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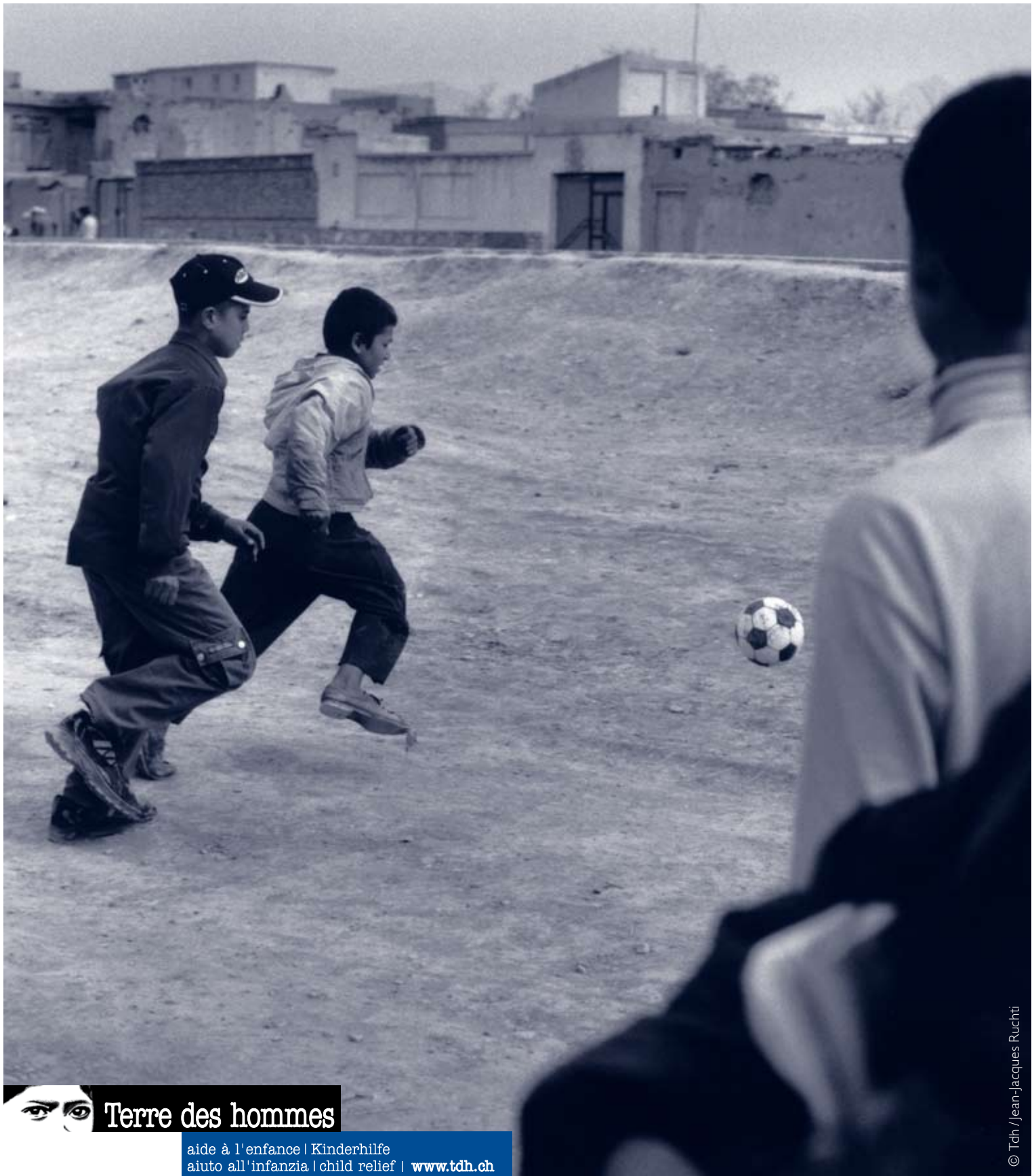
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