



DECLARATION

On Optimising the Health, Wellbeing and Rights of Street and Working Children

Recognizing that:

- Working children and those living in street situations are among the most vulnerable to violence, exploitation and exposure to hazardous and toxic environments, and experience profound violations of their human rights, as articulated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC);
- The existence of street and working children and youth results from the complex intersections of political, social, economic, cultural, environmental and gender inequities: these may have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- As child health and social welfare professionals and activists, we have a responsibility to play a leadership role in advancing the rights, health and well-being of street and working children and youth, from birth through age 25, locally and globally.

We hereby collectively and individually commit ourselves to:

- Translate the principles, standards and norms of child rights into clinical practice, systems development and policies required to optimize the health and wellbeing of street and working children;
- Establish methods to define, enumerate and describe the epidemiology and quantum of the issue of street and working children using direct methods such as surveys, and indirect methods such as modeled estimates.
- Ensure the voices of street and working are heard and considered in all decisions that affect them, including decisions related to protection, promotion and participatory rights at local, national and international levels;
- Adhere to the human rights principles of universality, accountability, and interdependence of rights articulated in the CRC and other related human rights conventions;
- Ensure that street and working children are provided the health care required to optimize their health and well-being, regardless of the child's legal status and without discrimination based on any distinguishing characteristics of the child;



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- Implement systems and policies to ensure optimal access to sexual and reproductive health services for those on the streets, including access to continuum of care across prevention and early intervention through street outreach and drop-in centres;
- Plan and implement clinical and public health programs, systems and protocols tailored to the unique needs of street and working children that provide comprehensive primary care and referral to available physical, mental and social health services;
- Ensure that pediatricians and child and social health providers will have quality updated training to fulfill the promotion, protection and participation rights of street and working children;
- Operationalize the principle of the interdependence and indivisibility of rights by ensuring street and working children have equitable access to quality services in education, housing, justice, culture, sports, recreation and information;

We call for urgent action for street and working children and their families to improve the conditions in which they live, and to ensure they do not turn to the streets for their survival.

- Implement innovative research and program evaluation that provides best estimates on enumerating street and working children; documents health and developmental needs; and identifies interventions that work to guide policy and action.

WE CALL UPON:

- Global agencies, including the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), World Health Organization (WHO), International Labour Organization (ILO) and other public and private sector regional, national and international organizations to engage child health and social welfare professionals and groups as key partners in realizing child rights for all children including street and working children.
- Governments and relevant non-government agencies to establish systems of multidisciplinary care that serve the special physical, mental, public and social health needs of street and working children and youth, in a manner that consistently affirms their dignity and rights.
- All states and nations to advance *Health in all Policies* and *Universal Health Care* approaches and commitments to advance equity in the health and well-being of street and working children.
- Child health professional societies to prioritize the rights of street and working children to optimal health and well-being, support research and innovation, and employ evidence-based policies, protocols and practices to address the needs and advance the rights of street and working children to optimal health and well-being.



- Academic institutions to support all aspects of regional, national and global initiatives, including professional education, research and evaluation, and dissemination of knowledge and experience related to street and working children.