



Street Children in Kosovo

AGM Report January 2011

Registered Charity Number 1070646 (England & Wales)
SC041706 (Scotland)

THE AGM

6TH JANUARY 2011

For the second year running, Clifford Chance kindly supported SSSK's AGM, by lending us a room high up on the 30th floor, with views of the London night sky, drinks and totally excellent canapes! The trustees welcomed members from Edinburgh, St Paul's and St Paul's Girls' School, Bristol, and although no branch members from Cambridge or Oxford could make it, we did have a few alumni members there, including Claire Ambrose, who visited one of SSSK's partners Seed, in Kolkata last year. We also had a member from the Moroccan Children's Trust with us, who wanted to learn about SSSK.

Most people at school or university first meet SSSK as a fully functioning, professional outfit. A few others know of SSSK from friends at other universities, and gallantly attempt to set up their own branches. SSSK branches start anew often every year, when one committee passes over the branch to the next, or when new committees are formed or revived at new universities. We started the AGM by looking back at the journey SSSK has made.

Summer 1997

- After their plans to travel to Vietnam fall through, two students, Ben and Johnny, set off to work in Calcutta with street children. Johnny has previously worked in Colombia with Let the Children Live!
- The staff at the project, OFFER, are committed and skilled, and the street kids are extremely resourceful. Ben and Johnny pretend to be helpful but mostly just get in the way.
- Ben attempts to dress like a local by wearing a lungi, but is instead assumed to be either Scottish or asked why he is wearing a skirt.
- Johnny attempts to impress the locals with his street style by wearing ripped jeans but is instead met with gasps of horror at showing his

knees, pity that someone from England can't afford unripped clothes and offers from elderly women to sew them up for him.

1997-8

- Ben and Johnny return to the UK and set up SSSK in Oxford and Cambridge. The first organisations it supports are OFFER, Calcutta and Let the Children Live, Medellin, Colombia.
- When we say they 'set up' SSSK, we mean that they turned up to other people's meetings and asked 'who wants to join'. Despite the fact that at this point the organisation has no publicity material, no money, no bank account and hasn't been registered as a charity yet, loads of people say they'd like to help.
- The loads of people who say they would help vanish within weeks, leaving a few doing all the work.
- Money is raised through pub-crawls, sponsored events, student unions and faith groups.
- Some bloke is asked to organise registering the charity but manages to keep filling in the wrong boxes and takes a year to do what should take a month. Finally, SSSK became a registered charity No. 1070646 on 22nd July 1998. (And registered in Scotland in 2010 with charity number SC041706)

13 years after that fateful summer in 1997, and where are they now? Johnny has returned from Colombia where he was working for Christian Aid, and has joined the Overseas Development Institute. Johnny has written a book called 'The Trouble with Aid: why less could mean more for Africa', and would be an excellent choice should branches need ideas about who to invite to speak at an event! Ben now lives in Bangkok, where he works for Save the

Children and regularly blogs at <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/blogs/author/bphilips/> Previously Ben lived in Delhi for about 5 years where he worked for Oxfam India.

This year:

- SSSK celebrated its first Rendezvous wedding: Rendezvous is a blind-date style event which has been SSSK's key fundraiser for several years, The Edinburgh Branch has provided some top tips about Rendezvous following this article.
- Two trustees visited our partners in India to see how they were getting on,
- one trustee volunteered at the Street Child World Cup in Durban South Africa, and
- two friends of trustees visited Hope Village, a partner organisation in Cairo, Egypt.
- The trustees recreated the photo exhibition and re-designed our website. Please let the trustees have your feedback on our new look, and have a read about our partners overseas.
- Finally, last year at the AGM, we celebrated a fundraising total of more than £100,000, allowing SSSK this year to give away more than £25,000 in grants. Some of the money came from an 'In Memoriam' fund set up for Ollie Shilling, who had energetically supported SSSK before he very sadly lost his fight to cancer in 2009. You can read more about our finances in our Annual Report and Accounts which are included on our website.

Trustee Adam O'Boyle asked why people had come to the AGM, to which there were two themes of reply: to find out where the money you raise goes, and to share ideas and find out what other branches were doing. The AGM provides a chance for all of us to get together, share tips about raising money and awareness, to hear about the work of SSSK's partners overseas, and to remind ourselves why we volunteer for SSSK. It allows us to celebrate our achievements, and to think about what we want to achieve in the future.

Picture right, Art workshop at the Street Child World Cup,



(C) Wilf Whitty/Amos Trust

SHARING IDEAS

You told us what you had got up to in your branches so far this year.

Edinburgh

The Edinburgh branch took over from a very organised committee the year before, who put them in contact with the BLT, helped them to organise where to get SSSK flyers from, and amazingly organised an event so the new branch could hit the ground running.

*****Top Branch to watch for sustainability*****

The event booked by the committee the year before was a 'Chav Night' at a local club, and was booked for the Autumn way back before everybody left for summer holidays (the trustees are amazed at this feat of organisation). Clubbers got £1 off the entry fee if they said SSSK on the door, which quickly got the name out there, and door takings were given to SSSK, raising £400. The night was promoted by friends of the committee, which was a great way to get them interested, many of whom later were keen to get more involved.

Rendezvous followed the chav night. They sold tickets to boys and girls who were keen to find love (or at least make a new friend) through SSSK. They organised for boys and girls to get to know each other across tables, raising £450, and winning the flatmate of SSSK co-president Ed Prosser a girlfriend in the process!

Finally for the winter term, a fairtrade cafe in Edinburgh asked SSSK to be their chosen charity, donating nearly £100 raised from sale of their fairtrade biscuits and cakes.

Upcoming events include asking the film society to screen a film about street children and donate the takings to SSSK for that week, and a comedy night at the student union, a prime opportunity to also talk to a captive audience about street children on a more serious note.

St Paul's Girls School.

SPGS were keen to avoid the pitfalls of last year, where SSSK was run by a lone president and a huge bank of volunteer cake bakers, and this year have shared the committee jobs of SSSK around more widely. They have held bake sales twice a week at which the younger girls bake and sell cakes for SSSK, and the committee dressed as fairies to sell and deliver candy canes around school at Christmas. The committee also tried to organise a face painting event.

Despite difficulties of school bureaucracy which make it very difficult for the committee to stage events at school, they have managed to raise £350 so far. For next term the girls are planning a cake baking competition, a film screening to raise awareness, and an event to get teachers involved.

St Paul's School

SPS specialise in sponsored sporting events, raising money from walking back from a school event, and the annual bikeathon, cycling laps around Richmond park. Due to the inclement weather, the boys had to postpone their bikeathon before Christmas, but hope to do one later this year.

Like SPGS, SPS have also had to fight hard to continue SSSK, without support from the school itself, and without permission to raise money on school premises. The determination of both schools is very impressive. It should be noted that leavers from St Paul's School are key members of SSSK branches at many universities.

Bristol

The Bristol Branch has been dormant for a couple of years. Eddie Fryer, (a SPS leaver) is doing a great job trying to re-start SSSK there. So far, he has negotiated web space, got SSSK accredited with the Union, formed a small committee, and in conjunction with

another university society, signed a declaration about working children's rights.

Eddie has strategic plans for the future, thinking big by doing small events. Eddie's strategy is to persuade 1000 people to give £2 each to SSSK, raising a lot of money from a lot of people, each giving a small amount.

*****Watch this branch for strategy*****

Oxford

Nobody from the Oxford branch was able to attend the AGM, however they did pass on this message via the Trustees.

"We began the term with a couple of fundraising events- lucky dip prize bar crawls that made the most of the drunk student audience and made plenty of money! Our main event for the term was a Blind Date show, where we charged for tickets and refreshments at a comedy matchmaking event. We found it difficult to drum up a large audience but it was well attended in the end a good way to raise money because the theatre and contestants did not incur any charge. We are in the process of organising a fundraising workshop to be hosted by an ex Balliol member who is now a professional fundraiser."

Cambridge

Nobody from the Cambridge branch was able to attend this year, but Catherine Kemp, an alumna of the Cambridge Branch who now works at the Cambridge 'hub' reported that although the Cambridge branch have got off to a slow start this year, they have put on several small-scale awareness raising events, including

a film showing of Salaam Bombay.

THINKING ABOUT THE ISSUES

After sharing tips and ideas, Adam led everyone in 'the spectrum game'. Everybody stood together in the centre of the room. We walked to the right if we strongly disagreed with a question Adam asked, and to the left if we strongly agreed, standing in the middle if we were undecided.

*****Good activity for branches wishing to do a workshop about street children*****

(C) Wilf Whitty/Amos Trust



Picture right, Philippines team at practice at the Street Child World Cup,

Adam said: I know who SSSK gives money too

Most of you didn't or at least, only knew information about one or two of our partners, sometimes this was because you hadn't done the research from the SSSK website, but even the trustees felt that they knew about some partners more than others.

Adam said: I think awareness raising is more important than fundraising.

Most of you felt that, on balance, fundraising was more important because we directly helped street children. One trustee, Emma Wright, felt that awareness raising was more important, it was how she became aware of the work SSSK did, and was what moved her to help.

Adam said: I feel I am in touch with my Branch Liaison Trustee enough.

Some of you said yes the trustee help you had got so far was great, but you would like your trustees to visit you on your home turf, and you would like speedier responses to emails. Some of the trustees also felt that although they were in contact, they could do more.

Adam said: I want to visit one of SSSK's partners overseas.

You said: Yes!

Adam said: I want to work with street children for the rest of my life.

You were divided on this one. Some of you did not want to live in India and work directly with street children for the rest of your life, although you wanted to continue to volunteer for SSSK in the UK.

In discussion following the spectrum game, Adam asked, why street children, why not Oxfam, or Amnesty, or Save the Children or any other big non-governmental organisation? You said: Because street children are the most vulnerable. Because they slip through the gaps when big multilaterals like Oxfam provide big welfare programmes. Because every child deserves a childhood.

We watched some of the films made of the Street Child World Cup, held in Durban South Africa in 2010. A selection of these films are available to view on youtube, and you can link to them via the SSSK website.

Youtube videos of the street child world cup – great awareness raising material

TAKING STOCK.

Towards the end of the evening we reflected on what SSSK meant to us. Here were some of your thoughts.

Why does SSSK exist?

- Because there are children in need, without the basics, in a position of vulnerability
- Because we seek to improve their lives in the short term by raising funds, and to seek long term change by raising awareness.
- It's student run, student led, a student opportunity to contribute.
- Acknowledges that students are very privileged.
- Issues affecting street children touch on much wider problems.
- SSSK is run entirely by volunteers, with no overheads, and all running costs met out of the trustees own pocket: allowing every penny raised by branches to go to our partners overseas.

What are our aims?

- To expand SSSK by starting up branches at more universities.
- To help as many street children as possible.
- To support small, grass roots organisations.
- To raise the profile of street children.
- To de-stigmatise street children – they are

children like any others, and deserve a childhood.

- To bridge a gap, street children can be hidden when looking at the big picture. In trying to tackle the structural determinants of poverty, street children can fall through the gaps.

Reflections on the logo – Students' Supporting Street Kids.

- It brings joy, with the hands jumping out of the 'K' in kids.
- We are supporting street children, not patronising them. We provide financial support to partners overseas, we don't tell them what to do.
- The sun brings hope, and happiness.
- We are students, volunteering our spare time to support these street children, youth to youth.
- It is long, a bit 90's, and too many S's! (Maybe bad is good?)
- Bright, fun, and not too corporate.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS.

Adam suggested it was good to take stock by asking ourselves three questions.

— What do I love, what do I enjoy doing and want to do more of?

— What can I build on?

— What can I drop?

Here were some of your New Year's resolutions
“Donate more money individually. Use money spent on unnecessary things.”

“Do something actively useful when next on holiday in an area in need.”

“Have more committee meetings, and ongoing input”

“Greater co-operation with freshers”

“Small but regular events instead of one big one”

The Trustees really enjoyed chatting with those who run student branches over drinks and canapes following the AGM. With thanks to Adam O'Boyle and Emily Stephens (trustees) for organising this year's AGM.



Above, picture showing two of SEED's outreach workers talking to a child on the railway platform at Howrah station Kolkata. SSSK's January 2011 newsletter includes an article about SEEDs work, written by two SSSK alumni who spent several weeks visiting SSSK's partners in Kolkata.

AWARENESS RAISING

SSSK wants to raise awareness about street children and the problems they face, as well as directly support them through raising funds. Our new-look website contains information about us, our student branches, and our partners overseas, as well as information and links about street children and the challenges they face.

*****New SSSK Photo Exhibition
For Branches To Use*****

The trustees have created a new photo exhibition which was available to view at the AGM. It consists of 19 mounted photos taken by the trustees when visiting our partners overseas in India, Colombia, Sudan and the Philippines. A commentary on the photos provides a little context to each photograph and where it was taken.

Part 2 of the photo exhibition consists of 12 mounted photographs of the Street Child World Cup. The Street Child World Cup photographs were kindly reproduced on permission of Wilf Whitty from the Amos Trust.

Please email sssk@sssk.org.uk, or ask your BLT, if your branch would like to make use of the photo exhibition.

One Big Voice

SSSK is a member of the Consortium for Street Children (CSC). CSC is an outspoken advocate for street children. CSC's advocacy programme aims to end the discrimination and abuse that prevents street-involved children worldwide from exercising the rights granted to them under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

They do this by influencing decision-makers by campaigning for the rights of street children locally, nationally and internationally and by amplifying the voices of street children so that their concerns are acted upon by international organisations, governments and the public.

You can read about CSC's advocacy work, and take part in any campaigns at:
<http://www.streetchildren.org.uk>



THE STREET GIRLS MANIFESTO

"We, the girls, living on the streets..."

Up to 30% of children living on the streets around the world are girls. Their gender makes them particularly vulnerable to some abuses, and street girls can come up with distinctive survival strategies. Some of these are ultimately damaging.

At the first Street Child World Cup, the organisers were delighted to welcome a group of bright, resilient, powerful young women, all between 14 and 16, from many different countries. They shared their stories with each other and with the organisers, and came up with this manifesto for change. The manifesto is being published as part of Plan International's *Because I am a Girl* report. The report says:

"Projects with adolescent girls need above all to listen to what the girls themselves have to say, and to use existing legislation to ensure that protection means they are protected rather than abused yet again."

In creating this manifesto, this group of girls were exercising their right to be heard. There is access to a pdf of the report, and of a summary of it, on the SSSK website.

We, the street girls, have the following rights and we want them respected:

- the right to live in a shelter and home
- the right to have a family
- the right to be safe
- the right to be protected from sexual abuse
- the right to go to school and get free education
- the right to good health and access to free health services
- the right to be heard
- the right to belong
- the right to be treated with respect and dignity
- the right to be treated as equal to boys
- the right to be allowed to grow normally.

We identified the following ways to be safe in our communities:

- step parents should love all children
- community leaders should punish people who abuse children
- adults should know about child rights
- there should be good lighting on the streets
- street children should be treated with dignity and respect

We identified the following factors that make us safe at national level:

- training for police to keep children safe
- tough laws on child abuse
- good relations between government and children
- put money into support workers who can pay detailed attention to children
- governments should build homeless shelters for street girls to feel safe in
- give us access to education – there should be better security in schools
- there should be more social projects

- get rid of corruption.

We declared that the following actions at a regional and global level will motivate our governments to protect street children:

- the whole world should recognise and protect street children
- all countries should have good child laws
- girls should be allowed to speak and be heard
- there should be awareness campaigns about street children
- there should be more awareness of the problem of violence”

The Trustees would be interested to hear ideas from Branches about how we can use the manifesto in our awareness raising activities.

TEAM NICARAGUA

The following is taken from the Casa Alianza July 2010 Newsletter, which is on the SSSK website under Street Child World Cup outcomes.

When Casa UK agreed to fund Casa Nicaragua's participation at the SCWC in South Africa, it did not take long before everyone realised that something very special was happening. The community saw the children not as street kids but ambassadors for their country. The children took training, nutrition and exercise seriously; many left the streets and came off drugs. We had to obtain passports, visas and parental approval - and for many, this was the first time that the children had seen their parents since they ran away from home in traumatic circumstances. Now the parents were seeing their children in a very different and positive light.

"I feel like I can do anything now, even fly"

Those were the words of Victor, one of the youngest members of the team.

The children came away having secured third place overall - but most importantly for them: they had placed Nicaragua firmly on the map in a country where Nicaragua was virtually unknown. As the semi finals took place, the Nicaraguan team saw South Africans wearing wigs in the colours of Nicaragua, proudly waving the Nicaragua flag and cheering them on - it was a moment of immense pride.

Each child came away with something that had changed them, had given them confidence in their own abilities and a realisation that the world was no longer just Nicaragua. The world is in fact a huge place, waiting for them to discover, to dream and to be whoever and whatever they want to be.

The arts and human rights workshops helped Wendy, Kevin, Juan Carlos and Milton overcome their shyness, let go of their inhibitions and share their deeply moving stories about their time on the street and with their

families. They were very emotional testimonies but ones which they came forward to share with workshop facilitators and the media because they wanted to raise awareness and most importantly, change the situation so that no more children should have to go through what they did. Wendy afterwards said to me:

"I've always hidden my story because I was ashamed. I'm now proud of it because I know how much my life and I have changed since then".

The art work that the children created alongside the other teams was proudly exhibited in the Durban Art Gallery - exploring the themes of shelter, family and what they would like their governments to change.

Nothing fazed these incredible kids. They made an effort to speak English; Marcia, who suffered an injury in the match against team India, forged great friendships with them and learnt words of Punjabi (!). The whole team could sing a song in Swahili after three days in South Africa and Jose Adolfo even learnt to count 1-50 in Swahili, whilst Santiago learnt traditional drumming into the middle of the night with the local professional drummers.

What makes our kids even more incredible is just how modest and mature they are. They have taken the whole experience in their stride - from being swarmed by local South African school children for their autographs, photos and promises to keep in touch, dealing with the international media attention and to being treated like the true football heroes they are. They left Nicaragua as proud representatives of their country and of Casa Alianza. They returned as champions, children that have made hundreds of people around the world so incredibly proud of them.

Collectively the experience has brought them all closer together, but has also served to forge stronger and better family relationships - which resulted in them all being successfully reintegrated with their families.

The Edinburgh SSSK team hosts a very successful Rendezvous evening for the last five years, with their 2009 evening raising £1000. So for any one who is thinking of putting together their own night of benevolent bonding then the Edinburgh Branch have put together a few tips.

- Rendezvous is an evening of fun where you can meet some new people, have a good meal and feel altruistic at same time. Inspired by a blind date, but without the potential for awkwardness, at Rendezvous you can sit with some friends and meet a few new people. It is also possible to make a special date request so you can try and finally meet someone you fancy from around your campus.
- Get together a team of from all different year groups, it makes the whole process from promoting to ticket sales to table plans much easier.
- Go all out on the love theme, sell roses in the restaurants and play with the theme. But remember that Rendezvous is a charity night and not exclusively for singles, let people know not to rule themselves out if they're already in a relationship – they might make a new friend.
- Try putting some icebreakers or games on the tables to get some conversations going.
- Don't be disheartened if the ticket selling is slow to begin with, the majority of tickets get sold in the last 72 hours or less, just make sure you are planting the idea in peoples' minds nice and early.
- Most importantly keep it fun, it's all for a good cause and it doesn't need to be taken too seriously. Rendezvous is something a little bit different, a night out of the ordinary where you can find love, friendship and fun. Go on, get ready.

And in case you needed any more encouragement, here's a poem, all about Rendezvous.

I know it's to help kids, and raise some money

But seriously, a blind date, are you trying to be funny?

Now I feel like a charity case...

Is my money and time just going to waste?

*On the day of Rendezvous I had butterflies
But my date turned out to be a nice surprise
The food was great and the drinks were fizzy,
Did I have too many, is that why I feel dizzy?
We got on well and we had some fun
Oh god... could he be the one?*

*I bought him a rose – it's for a good cause eh,
I'm starting to feel like its my lucky day.
I wasn't expecting this, though there was a chance,
And we went back to the club to have a dance.*

*I had some worries, I'll admit that's true
But I'm glad a went, it was something new.
It was as good as you said it'd be.
And now I'm waiting for him to call me.*

Poem by Katie De Klee – Edinburgh Branch
SSSK 2009-2010 committee

Poster by Bristol Branch 2007.

rendezvous

The Ultimate Blind Date...

GUARANTEED for just £5!

- ♥ A beautiful date*
- ♥ Meal deals at top restaurants
- ♥ Free entry to the after-date party at Reflex!
(* with ShagTag if your date's a minger)
- ♥ Tickets on sale from 19/11:
Refectory / halls /
ssskbristol@hotmail.com

Monday 26th November

UBU STUDENTS SUPPORTING STREET KIDS



2011 STUDENTS SUPPORTING STREET KIDS

Registered Charity Number
1070646 (England & Wales)
SC041706 (Scotland)

Contact: sssk@sssk.org.uk

www.sssk.org.uk

Make your donation at:
<http://www.sssk.org.uk/donations/>