



Street Kids in Kolkata, India, set about building a house

## Report to Branches Spring 2009

## A WORD FROM THE TRUSTEES

During 2008 all our SSSK branch committees succeeded in handing on their job/s to new groups, all of whom (as you can see from the reports) have tackled the issues with great enthusiasm. A similar process will be going on in the coming months to establish new groups to carry on the work into 2009/10 and beyond. Branch sustainability is a key issue for SSSK and it is great that branches are able to continue with new talent and ideas.

The reports which follow will tell the story about what has been happening in the different branches. In addition, there's an article about the work of the Consortium for Street Children, of which SSSK is a member organisation. This means that we are part of a network of nearly 60 groups, all working for common objectives in terms of working for children's rights, and giving children the opportunity to fulfil their potential - something that most of us take for granted because of where we are in our educational and social system.

There's also an article on Advocacy, which is another potential activity for SSSK branches alongside those of awareness raising and of collecting funds for the NGOs we support.

The Trustees have been very active throughout the year, and we meet regularly every 4-6 weeks. Apart from keeping in touch with branches (a vital function), we are responsible for submitting the SSSK accounts to the Charity Commission, showing that we have mechanisms in place to ensure that all the funds are ethically handled and properly accounted for. We also organise the AGM in January for everyone, and we meet in the summer to decide on the grants to be made. Several of the NGOs we support have been suggested by student members who have personal experience of what they do. We aim to provide sustainable support where needed, and we keep in contact with the NGOs, so that, as far as we can, we monitor their work and development.

We are delighted that the establishment of a new branch at Lancaster University is being considered, and hope that SSSK members who have friends or contacts at other universities will see if it is possible get other branches going in new places.

The work of the branches is the centre of everything we do, and the Trustees would like to express their thanks for all the hard work and innovative thought that goes into everything that happens.

Gordon Couch  
SSSK Trustee



## THE CONSORTIUM FOR STREET CHILDREN

In 2007 Students Supporting Street Kids became a member of the Consortium for Street Children: the only global network protecting and promoting the rights of street children worldwide.

With the collective voice of nearly 60 organisations working in 100 countries worldwide, CSC aims to end the discrimination and abuse that prevents street children from exercising the rights granted to them under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Aiming to make positive systemic and sustainable changes to the lives of street children around the world, CSC supports its members through:

- Advocacy (local, national and international)
- Organisation Development
- Action Research

Amongst its achievements over the last two years are:

- Publication of the first ever report on street children entitled State of the World's Street Children: Violence which is now used by policy makers, activists, community leaders and service-providers to take effective actions to prevent and reduce the violence experienced by street children
- Training of police officers in Ethiopia which will result in the sensitisation of 36,000 police officers to reduce the number of abuse cases by police against street children and increase the conviction rate in child abuse cases overall
- A commission for the Government of Tanzania to advise ministers on the situation of the country's street children with a view to reallocating budgets and resources to improve the lives of these children
- Positioning of street children on the international HIV/AIDS agenda for the first time

## SSSK AND THE CONSORTIUM FOR STREET CHILDREN

CSC's Director, Alex Dressler, was the guest speaker at this year's AGM (Please see the following report on the AGM). He highlighted the importance of SSSK's role as a member and fellow advocate for street children. As well as acknowledging the great work already being carried out by our branches, Alex stressed other ways in which SSSK could be supported by, and support, CSC.

There are many ways that CSC could help SSSK members and volunteers in their branch work, career development and volunteering opportunities. Its resources are extensive and available for free. Not least of all, there are plenty of opportunities to volunteer at the CSC office. If there are current issues affecting street children which you feel need immediate action then you can contact CSC directly for advice on how to make a real difference.

## CHALLENGING ATTITUDES: TRANSFORMING LIVES

To find out more please contact SSSK trustee Kate Bretherton on [kate@streetchildren.org.uk](mailto:kate@streetchildren.org.uk)



# THE AGM

5TH JANUARY 2009

## CHRISTIAN AID OFFICES, WATERLOO

The 2009 SSSK AGM was held on 5th January at the Christian Aid offices in London. The focus of the evening was on volunteering, and 4 guest speakers all shared their experiences, knowledge and thoughts on volunteering.

Trustee Kirsty Thomson highlighted SSSK's considerable achievements in 2008: SSSK sent a fantastic £25,000 in 2008 to 12 NGOs, and received an award for our work for Children's Rights from the NGO we have been supporting in Kosovo. The role of trustees was explained; trustees provide branches with contact, advice and support, and ensure that ethical management and behaviour is maintained and the requirements of the Charity Commission are met.

SSSK is a member of the Consortium for Street Children (CSC) (<http://www.streetchildren.org.uk>). Alex Dressler, Executive Director of the Consortium was invited to the AGM to explain the work of the Consortium and highlight possible volunteering opportunities. CSC was founded in 1993 by a small group of NGO's who recognised that working together they would have more of an impact, and CSC is now the world's leading organisation acting on behalf of street children. Alex described the work and structure of the organization: there are 4 full time employees who co-ordinate and support its 58 members. In 2007 CSC compiled the 'State of the World Report on Street Children' using information gathered by 50 graduate volunteers from around the world. This paper provided the first major report of the global issue of street children and their welfare.

CSC's lobbying and advocacy work has led to recognition by the International Aids Conference that the rights and needs of streetchildren must be recognized; streetchildren will be included on the international Aids/HIV agenda for the first time at the next conference in Durban. CSC is now working with the Tanzanian government to develop a national strategy to tackle the issue of street children.

Alex was keen to stress the important role volunteers play within the organisation. CSC is in a transitional stage, becoming increasingly volunteer based, with 11 volunteers in the London office, as well as many graduate researchers gathering information for reports and papers. CSC can provide resources for its members including information and research to support dissertations and thesis. Volunteering opportunities overseas and in the UK can also be suggested by the CSC.

Trustee Charlie Malston reiterated the importance of SSSK's branch members, reminding us all that membership is in itself a form of volunteering. It is crucial to remember that volunteering follows many forms and that it does not have to be abroad. UK based volunteer work is just as important and valuable. Charlie did point out, though that by volunteering with an NGO abroad, SSSK members can begin to appreciate the true value of our work and Alec, a former member of the St Paul's Boys branch of SSSK and the next guest speaker, recounted some memories of his trip to Bangalore to Peace Child India.



Alec's report was followed by an informal Pub Quiz covering facts and figures on street children. The format of the quiz can now be translated to a fundraising initiative for branches.

Jenny Dawkins, project manager of the Street Child World Football Championship, then event which will include street children from 8 countries, and take place in Durban in March 2010. The tournament will provide street children with a rare opportunity to voice their feelings as well as learn about their own rights. Jenny highlighted the need for volunteers both in the run up and at the event itself, and encouraged anyone interested to contact her directly. (<http://www.streetchildworldcup.org/>)

Ben Collins, from Christian Aid's ControlAltShift magazinespoke of the volunteering opportunities available through the magazine. Control/Alt/Shift is aimed at the 16-25 market and looks at issues such as gender and inequality, poverty and conflict; contributions in the form of articles and photos are always wanted. <http://www.ctrlaltshift.co.uk/assets/html/about.html>

Trustee Ed Bretherton rounded up the AGM by thanking the speakers, and then pointing out everyone has different skills to bring to SSSK . As a lawyer Ed had previously felt he might not have much to offer, but now realizes how useful his knowledge and expertise have been in his role as trustee.

Thank you to all those who attended the AGM. Hopefully the evening made you appreciate that the success of SSSK lies in the commitment and enthusiasm of all of the members in branches across the UK. We hope you enjoyed and learned from the evening and look forward to seeing you again next year.

Kirsty Thomson  
SSSK Trustee





## SSSK IN THE RECESSION

The NGOs SSSK supports face an increasingly difficult future as the value of the pound slides. Let the Children Live ([www.letthechildrenlive.org](http://www.letthechildrenlive.org)), an NGO we've been supporting since SSSK was set up has suffered badly in recent years from exchange rate changes.

Father Peter Walters founded the UK registered charity Let The Children Live! following his 1982 trip to Colombia. Let The Children Live! provides funding for crucial services for street children in Medellin, Colombia's 2nd largest city. Colombia's street children have traditionally been the targets of death squads paid to dispose of them. Now more hardships are on the way, this time due to the world's worsening economy. LCL are currently struggling to maintain the services they provide for street children. For many of the children, on Medellin's streets, Casa Walsingham, the Let The Children Live! funded centre, is invaluable. In 2008 Casa Walsingham had to close for three weeks over the mid-year holidays. The centre's community programme - which usually serves 200 children and 60 families in the shantytowns - was terminated.

The cause of this new hardship, says Father Peter Walters, is the collapsing value of the pound and dollar against the Colombian peso. In July 2006, one pound was equal to 5,030 pesos. By June 2008, the value of the pound had depreciated by nearly 33% and was worth only 3,337 pesos. Taking into account inflation, the purchasing power of the pound in Colombia dropped more than 45% in 23 months.

Let The Children Live! has not been able to keep pace with this prolonged and increasingly rapid decline in the value of the currencies in which almost all its financial support is received. To compensate for global economic problems, the charity needs to increase its monthly income by at least £15,000. For a small charity, this presents an enormous challenge, and, with economic trends continuing in the same direction, the challenge looks set to get bigger. Small organisations like LCL rely on sustainable income from regular donors; that's why it's crucial that SSSK branch members continue to fundraise and encourage others to get involved. SSSK's members need to focus on remaining sustainable and active in 2009, so we can give consistent support for the NGOs which benefit from our fundraising.

The above information is from an article published by Sarah Skilton on 24Dash.com.

"BECAUSE THE GAMINES (STREET CHILDREN) HAVE NO ONE, THEY REALLY BELONG TO US ALL."

FATHER PETER WALTERS - FOUNDER OF LET THE CHILDREN LIVE

## ADVOCACY

SSSK has always been active raising awareness, as well as funds, for street kids around the world. In the past branches have held photograph exhibitions, film nights, debates at student unions and all-night sleep outs, but this year, one branch did things a little differently.

Oxford University ran a very successful advocacy campaign this Autumn 2008, persuading the Home Office not to abandon street kids who may be forced into modern day slavery, after being trafficked into the UK.

Interest was sparked when the Oxford branch became aware of the government's decision to abandon the Metropolitan Police's 'Human Trafficking Special Unit'. Thousands of people are trafficked into the UK every year, with many ending up effectively imprisoned in brothels, forced to have sex with any number of clients a day. The Special Unit are based in London, the gateway of trafficking in the UK, but their work extends across the country. The news of the close of the Special Unit followed recent successes in combatting trafficking, only as recently as Autumn 2008 they secured the convictions of a gang of 6 men who had been importing Slovakian teenagers for the sex trade. Girls as young as 16 who had been sold and abused repeatedly. Clearly, street children are particularly vulnerable to this kind of exploitation.

Inexplicably, the Home Office had forced the Met to close down the unit due to spending cutbacks. They stated that the level of funding for the only specialist team combatting this modern-day slave trade was unsustainable in the face of other police duties.

Oxford SSSK helped to raise awareness alongside other campaigning organisations. They held a film-showing and letter-writing session when 125 letters were signed and sent to MPs. They are happy to report that the decision has been reversed, at least for the coming year.

Branches should keep their eyes peeled in order to take action on similar issues in the future. Do share your advocacy ideas between branches to raise the scale of the protest, or even voice your concerns to the CSC, (of which SSSK is a member) who might be able to take immediate action lobbying the Government!

## BRANCH REPORTS 2008-09

### UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

In October we organised a music night at the intimate venue of Mr wolfs. The night was a great success with free tapas and three bands ranging from funky folk to indie playing top tunes to help us raise money for SSSK.

In promoting Rendezvous, our main annual event, we held a cake stall, selling heart shape cookies and strawberry flavoured cupcakes to tempt people to buy tickets and it worked!! On the big night, Rendezvous, saw many students fill up restaurants and bars for their blind dates. Then everyone headed down to Warehouse, where they danced to an array of Latino music and chart pop with their dates.

We have film nights for our members which helps to raise awareness and get people discussing issues related to street kids.

Finally we have frequent bag packs in Sainsbury's which helps the Bristol community and gets the word out about SSSK.



### DURHAM UNIVERSITY



DUSSSK is undergoing somewhat of an transition at present with the vast majority of the Executive Committee, many of whom were founder members of the Durham branch, graduating last June.

It has been a tough few months for those left behind to try and formulate plans and fundraising activities to build on the past events varying from 'Dodgeball' competition, college formal meals, facepainting, sports challenges (including Ultimate Frisbee victories) to a successful music series.

The DUSSSK name has retained it's presence in the city through presence at the Freshers Fair in the first term and through using social networking sites to contact current and prospective supporters, as well as keeping 'alumni' up-to-date with DUSSSK. This avenue might be further explored to see if former supporters of the society maintain their links with the society and potentially provide a source of sponsorship for DUSSSK activities.

The focus now is to continue the 'Beat Surrender' music events which have been the flagship events for 'fund and awareness raising' for the society in the summer term. As important as this is to work on a plan to provide sustainability in support for the society by putting actions into place to help the formulation of a new exec for 2009/10 academic year.





## UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

We've had some great events at SSSK Cambridge so far this year, here are the highlights: We kicked off the year with a champagne breakfast held in Pembroke college, complete with live jazz piano and a luxurious buffet menu.

Then we turned our mind to awareness raising, and in conjunction with the Cambridge Hub (an umbrella organisation for the charities of Cambridge) we held a screening of the hard-hitting documentary "Children Underground" which follows the lives of a group of Romanian street-children who live in the metro system.

We had collections and small talks integrated into the chapel services of a number of colleges, notably Pembroke and Selwyn, and sold Christmas cards designed by students with drawings of Cambridge on.

This term we held our main event during One World Week, which was a Bollywood-themed formal at Clare college, based on the idea that SSSK supports NGOs working with street children in India. This featured Indian cuisine, Indian costumes, Bollywood decoration, and, as the finale, a 'Bollywood fusion' dance display. We also wrote an article about SSSK in a 'childhood' themed issue of the Cambridge student newspaper TCS (The Cambridge Student).

Coming up later this term we are hosting a talk from a woman who works for Christian Aid on one of their projects with street children. In the spring we intend to do a screening of 'Slumdog Millionaire'.





## LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

It is likely that the north west of England will soon have an SSSK branch based at Lancaster University. Discussions have been ongoing with a potential core exec team who are in the process of getting the society ratified with the Students Union and University.

Using success stories from existing branches a number of ideas are already floating about as to how best approach the students and residents of this campus based University. Lancaster also has a campus for the University of Cumbria with whom contact could be made to in order to increase scope for support.

IF YOU HAVE FRIENDS OR CONTACTS AT OTHER UNIVERSITIES WHO WOULD LIKE TO SET UP A NEW BRANCH, CONTACT YOUR BLT OR GET IN TOUCH VIA OUR WEBSITE. [WWW.SSSK.ORG.UK](http://WWW.SSSK.ORG.UK)

## EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY

The Edinburgh university branch has been very succesful in past years. A fashion show was particularly lucrative with a lot of the money raised going to SSSK.

SSSK also organised jointly a "Last man standing" pub crawl across Edinburgh with many students turning up to take part.

This academic year things have been a little quieter, but we are sure that with the Edinburgh branch, we only need to watch this space..





## OXFORD UNIVERSITY

We have a good (although small!) committee, but only one new member has come forward so far, and our stall at Freshers' Fair was sandwiched between UNICEF & Amnesty International both of whom are very well known. We have been reasonably successful in raising some money via college JCRs and via the RAG.

The highlight of our first term was running a very successful 'advocacy' campaign (you can read about this in detail on page 3). The campaign got people involved (which is a good thing) and next term we plan to continue to be alert to special issues that we can highlight to raise awareness from an advocacy side of things.

We also plan to stage Rendez Vous – although due to the limited size of our committee we will need a lot of co-operation from RAG, which hopefully will be forthcoming. We continue our quest for a well-known personality to speak on a subject relevant to street kids; the Oxford Union are very eager to hold a joint event with us to host Danny Boyle, the director of the award winning SlumDog Millionaire. We have been told by his agent that he is currently too busy with promotional work, and so we will try again in a few months. Fingers Crossed!

Our planned 'Pupils Supporting Street Kids' schools campaign has been postponed until the summer, when a number of schools have said they will be more free after the end of the national-curriculum syllabus for the year.

## ST PAUL'S SCHOOL (BOYS)

We have had to be hugely determined in our SSSK branch at St Paul's so far this academic year. The annual event for SSSK at St Paul's is the much anticipated bikeathon. This year the date was subject to hot debate, eventually a date was settled upon, only for many people to find out at last minute that they had a trial run for another sponsored run the next week! Nevertheless, showing true SSSK spirit, about 8 boys cycled round Richmond Park, in South-West London, on a quite beautiful day in early December. Sponsorship money is still trickling in, but the President is optimistic that they will raise a good amount per person, and maybe taking the total to over £1000!

Another victory came as a result of our advocacy on behalf of SSSK as we lobbied the internal St Paul's Charities Committee in order to allow our SSSK branch to fundraise on school grounds. Until recently, only fundraising organised by the school itself was permitted on school grounds. Due to the hard work of successive committees, SSSK has been 'recognised' as a long-running, positive attribute to the school and so we now have been given permission to fundraise on school grounds.

We hope to put together a few events for the second half of the Spring term, and have plans for a big event for the lower years in the Summer Term.





## ST PAUL'S GIRLS SCHOOL

Food glorious food, would have to be the number one tip as far as the hearts (and pockets) of the St. Paul's Girls school were concerned! The committee scorns convention, with a president, treasurer and chief baker rather than the more usual committee positions, and the chief baker clearly has done a good job; the first term of the 2008/09 committee saw weekly bake sales go ahead, with takings of £70 in the first week!

Food continued to be a success as refreshments were sold as a side dish to the main event of a sponsored rowathon. Many girls (and a few parents) were persuaded to break a sweat, with particular mention of the President's Dad, who did a gallant job rowdily calling upon the assembled crowd to throw in their pounds and pennies for SSSK.

At the Christmas fair, the SSSK committee had a stall at pride of place near the entrance, so that everybody entering was presented with the sight of a large, SSSK chocolate fountain.

However, awareness raising was not forgotten. The committee presented an assembly at the start of term, talking to the whole school about street kids, and building support for the cause, so that the membership of SSSK is large. With talk of film nights to come, the next two terms are full of promise.



## THE NGOS WE SUPPORTED IN 2008

During the year grants totalling £25,000 were approved for twelve different organisations in the following countries:



- Centre for the Working Girl (CENIT) in Ecuador
- Centre for Children's Rights, Pristina, Kosovo
- The Forum on Street Children Ethiopia (FSCE)
- Let the Children Live (LCL) in Colombia
- Nuevo Futuro, Peru
- SEED who work at Howrah Station in Kolkata, India
- Childhope Asia Philippines in Manila, Philippines
- The Pangarap Foundation, also in Manila, Philippines
- Society of St Vincent de Paul in Sudan
- Koto (Know one teach one) in Vietnam
- Golden Futures in Cambodia
- Hope Village Society, Cairo, Egypt

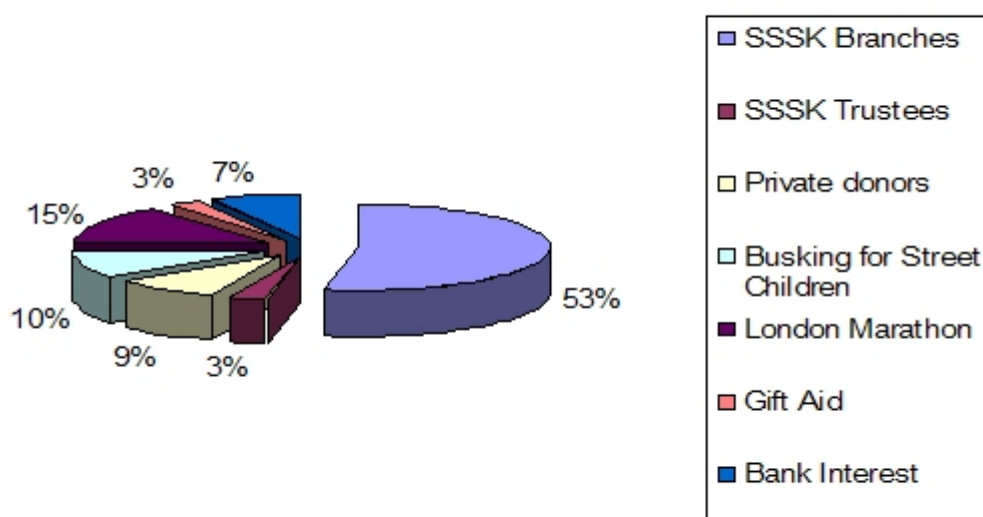
More information about the work of each of these NGOs can be found on our website:  
[http://www.sssk.org.uk/?NGOs\\_We\\_Support](http://www.sssk.org.uk/?NGOs_We_Support)

## SSSK 2008 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

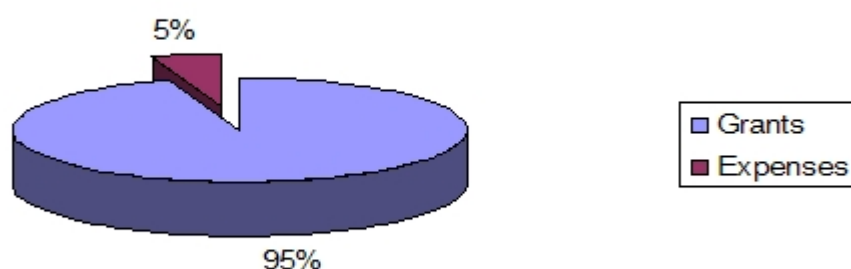
Once again the trustees have been impressed by the hard work and commitment of our branches. Our sincere thanks go to all those involved for making 2007/8 such a successful year for SSSK. As a result of your efforts we have once again been able to support the NGOs to which we have committed funds in previous years as well as being able to make grants to a number of other NGOs for the first time.

SSSK now has seven branches in schools and universities in the UK and it is predominantly the students involved in these branches who can be credited with the monies raised over the year. In addition we have a growing number of private donors who have heard about SSSK from branch members and trustees and who are vocal in their appreciation of our work.

Our income was generated as follows:



And our expenditure was as follows:



The membership fee for the CSC, website hosting and maintenance and the cost of a place in the London Marathon are included in this. To many 5% of our expenditure going to expenses probably seems quite high: and compared with other years it is! But please remember all expenses were paid for from trustee contributions and therefore all monies from donors and branches has gone directly to the NGOs we support to benefit the lives of street children.

STUDENTS SUPPORTING STREET KIDS IS RUN BY INDEPENDENT BRANCHES IN THE SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES ON THE MAP BELOW.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SET UP YOUR OWN BRANCH, CONTACT THE TRUSTEES VIA OUR WEBSITE;

[www.sssk.org.uk](http://www.sssk.org.uk)

Registered Charity Number 1070646



2009 STUDENTS SUPPORTING STREET KIDS

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