

International Annual Report

2023



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES

As a child, you need someone who truly sees you – who stands by you no matter what. But today, **1 in 10** children and young people are separated from their families, abandoned, neglected or forced to live in an abusive environment, growing up without the support they need to prepare themselves for their future. It happens in every country, rich and poor – in every city and in every community. For the child, the effects often last a lifetime, which can create a harmful cycle that repeats itself from one generation to the next.

We exist to change this.

Truly
bonding
with a **child** has the
power
to change the world.

Child message

Diane, aged 14, is passionate about her country's culture. She is a member of the SOS Children's Villages cultural club in Burundi and is one of the club's best dancers. Thanks to her leadership skills, Diane was recently appointed president of her local children's rights club.

"My message to decision-makers around the world is this: violence against children is a daily experience for millions of children in many countries around the world, including my own country, Burundi. This violence takes many forms: physical, psychological/emotional, sexual, economic, etc., and has serious consequences on the lives of the children and young people who are the survivors/victims of this abuse committed against them.

Unfortunately, some of those who commit this violence are aware of it and many others are unaware of it. It's a shame to see the consequences of this violence on children. I would mention, for example, the thousands of children who are killed, physically or mentally disabled, terrorized, homeless, deprived of food, playgrounds and leisure activities, to name but a few of the services that are essential for children's development. In all conflicts, children are always the worst affected because they are unable to defend themselves. They always need responsible adults to protect them.

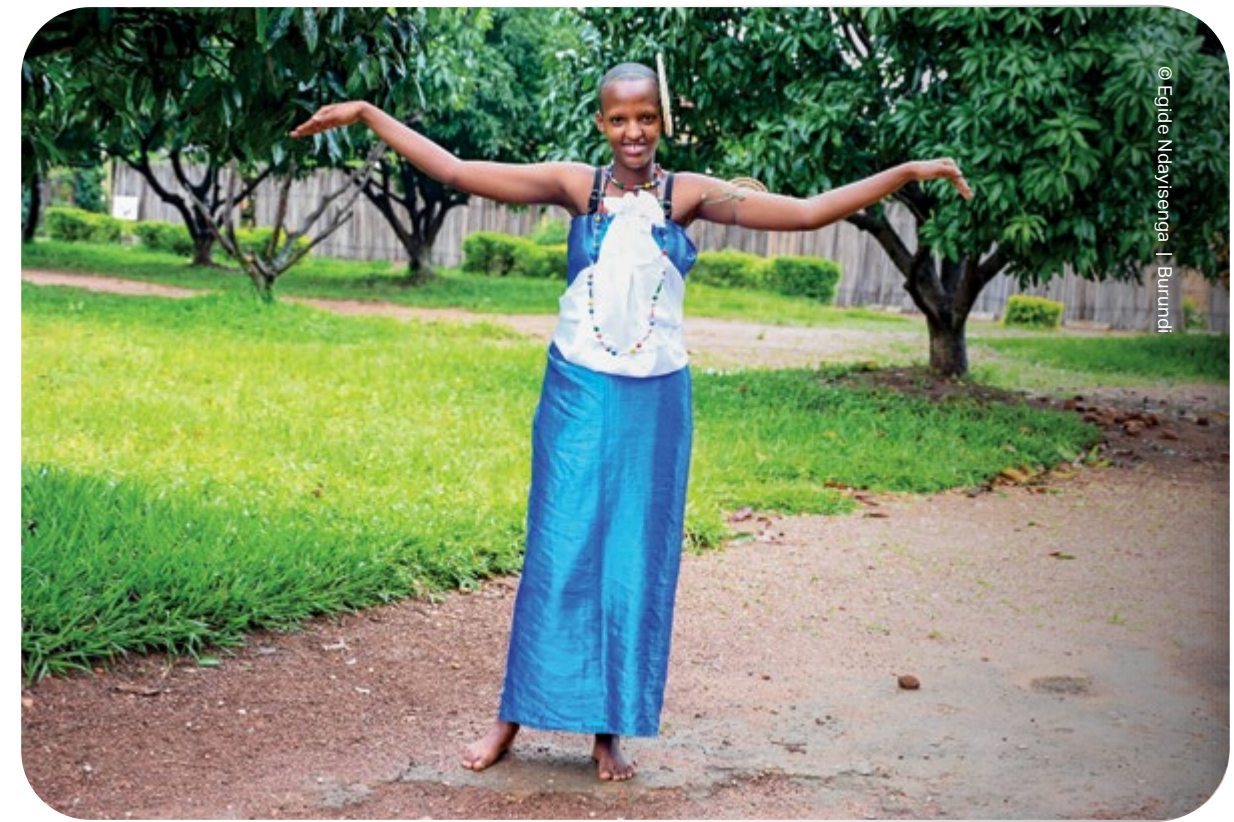
I call on everyone, especially governments, to do more to eradicate this violence against us by raising awareness, introducing laws to punish all forms of violence against children and young people and effectively punishing anyone who endangers children's lives. It's true that many laws and international conventions exist to protect children against all forms of violence, but they are not effectively implemented. I'd like to see every state in the world move towards zero tolerance of child abuse.

Violence against children does not only affect these children, but can extend over several generations. There can be no lasting peace in this world if children are not protected and cared for by adults.

Finally, my message is addressed to children and young people in particular, so that they too can participate in their own protection, first and foremost by knowing their rights and lodging complaints if they are violated."

”

There can be no lasting peace in this world if children are not protected and cared for by adults.



Management message



Dereje Wordofa
President

Today, after 75 years of existence, the federation of SOS Children's Villages is present in 136 countries and territories, working with partners to ensure that no child grows up alone. Our approach is founded on the firm belief that in order to thrive, children need – and have the right – to grow up in supportive and nurturing family environments, with secure and trusting relationships. Bonding with a child or young person creates a positive ripple effect, benefiting not only the individuals, families and communities, but also the next generation of children. Evidence from our recent **75 Years of Impact** publication confirms this (see more on page 8).



Angela Maria Rosales R.
Chief Executive Officer
(interim)
Chief Programme Officer

But the ability of families to provide safe and nurturing environments for their children is under threat in all corners of the world – whether due to forced migration, rising poverty levels or parental mental health issues. We are deeply concerned

by conflicts and violence that children and young people are experiencing today – directly and indirectly. In places such as Palestine, Sudan, Syria and Ukraine, children have lost the care of their mothers and fathers and are facing the trauma of war alone. As more and more children lose – or risk losing – the care of their families, the mission of SOS Children's Villages remains crucial: preventing unnecessary child-family separation and protecting children and youth who have lost parental care.

Our work evolves in response to today's realities. Recently, we have been focusing more on mental health, whether working with parents to heal a trauma so they can better care for their children, or with young people experiencing mental health issues due to painful childhoods. We have also increased our focus on advocacy, working for systemic change in policy and practice. In 2023, 107 associations engaged in advocacy around the world.

Since our founding, we have been a federation of locally rooted and locally managed independent member associations. Members lead their operations and make decisions through their national governing bodies, delivering programmes based on a deep understanding of the realities, resources and challenges of the communities they serve.

As a global federation we are currently undertaking a multi-faceted and holistic reform to ensure that our governance structure and decision-making processes cultivate this contextualized expertise while at the same time maintaining a shared foundation of clearly defined values and standards. Building on recommendations from the Independent Special Commission, appointed by our International Senate, we are updating our federation bylaws and reviewing our governance architecture to enhance accountability and strategic oversight and to further democratize decision-making at the federation level. We are simultaneously strengthening members' capacities to deliver quality services, comply with minimum standards, and practice good governance. The reform also includes revising the mandate and role of the General Secretariat so that it can operate more efficiently and is in a better position to foster innovation and collaboration among federation members.

We are committed to providing more opportunities for the children and young people we work with to participate in decisions that affect their lives at the global, regional and national level, including their meaningful engagement in the current reforms underway.

Working alongside partners, in 2023, the members of the SOS Children's Villages federation directly reached nearly 3 million programme participants worldwide and contributed to significant policy wins (see more on page 35). These efforts were provided by 40,690 staff members worldwide, thanks to the commitment of 4.4 million donors and supporters. As we mark 75 years of this global movement to uphold the rights of children and young people growing up without, or at risk of losing, parental care, let us continue to work together for a world where each child and young person has the support they need to become their strongest self.

Dereje Wordofa
President

Angela Maria Rosales R.
Chief Executive Officer (interim)
Chief Programme Officer

75 Years of Impact

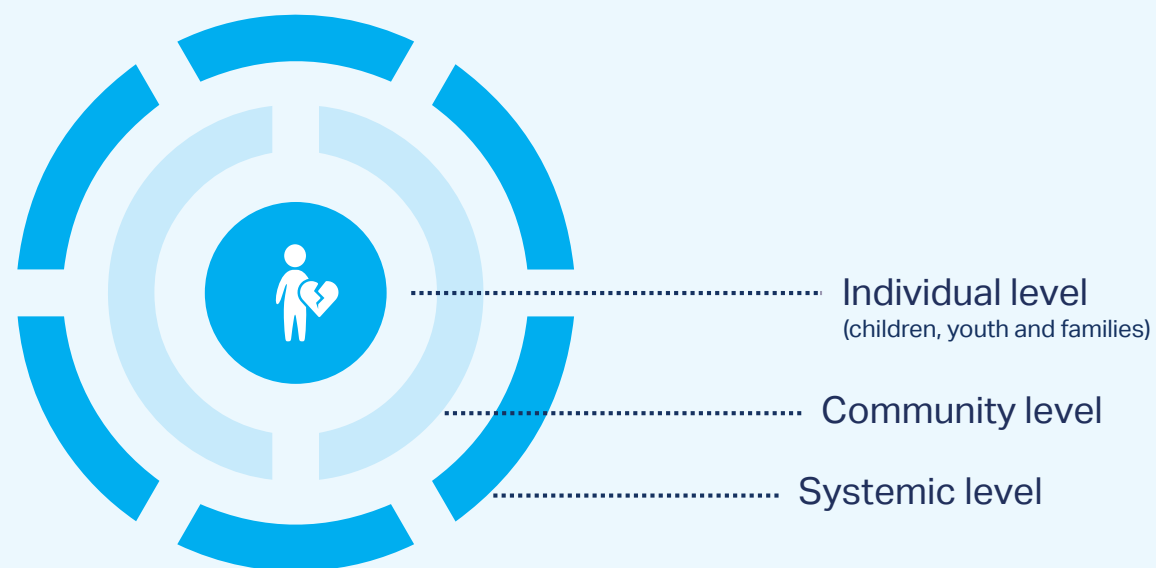


Children need nurturing relationships to grow and develop. The lack of positive interactions in early childhood can harm brain development; neglect, abuse and child-family separation can have long-term consequences for physical and emotional well-being in adulthood.

Preventing this harm requires a multi-faceted approach, one that addresses children's individual needs but also provides the frameworks and resources that strengthen their families and communities.

Since our founding in 1949, SOS Children's Villages has been dedicated to ensuring that children grow up with the supportive relationships they need to become their strongest selves. Over 75 years, as society and our own understanding of child and youth development have evolved, so have our responses to the issues faced by the children we work with. The first three decades of our existence were devoted to directly caring for children and youth who were without parental care. Then in the 1970s, as we learned more about the reasons for children being placed in alternative care, we began our prevention work, supporting families at risk of breaking down to stay together. And in the early 2000s we began coordinated advocacy work at the international level, aiming for systemic change in policy and practice to improve the situation of children and youth without parental care or at risk of losing it.

Today, SOS Children's Villages works along three main levels in order to maximize our impact: the lives of individual children and young people, working also with parents and extended family; the support systems of their communities; and the policy frameworks that affect the trajectories of their individual and collective lives.



In April 2024, as we celebrated the 75th anniversary of the start of a movement for children without parental care or at risk of losing it, we released our **75 Years of Impact** publication. Adding data from five countries to the findings we released in our 2019 report, the publication brings together the outcomes of our social impact assessments over the last two decades but also broadens the discussion to include the results we have contributed to with our advocacy.

The social impact data includes the outcomes of our 2002–2008 Tracking Footprints studies and social impact assessments conducted since 2015 based on a methodology we developed to fit the context of our family-like care and family strengthening services. As part of the assessments, external researchers conduct interviews and focus group discussions with former participants of our family-like care and family strengthening services. Information on their situation before they entered the programme and benchmarking against indicators is applied. The methodology is novel for our sector since we try to locate former participants one to six years after the services have ended to see how they are doing and whether the services have had a sustainable positive impact in their lives. The findings represent the outcomes of research conducted with former programme participants and community stakeholders across 40 countries.

The following pages present results along the three levels of our impact:

- impact in the lives of individuals
- impact in communities
- impact at the systemic level, as well as social return on investment

More Information

For more on our impact, see our [75 Years of Impact](#) publication. Read the QR code on this card.





Impact at the individual level

We work directly with children, young people and families to ensure that children and young people can grow up in a nurturing environment with strong and trusting relationships – whether in their families of origin or in alternative care.

The figures below represent consolidated findings on the long-term impact in the lives of individuals who received our family strengthening or alternative care services (for more information, see page 8 of [75 Years of Impact](#)).

External research, including interviews and focus group discussions, was conducted with 4,488 children, young people, and parents and other caregivers. The interviewees, representing 40 countries across all continents, received our services between 1986 and 2019.



Care and relationships

92% of former participants are doing well: they have strong relationships with friends and family, are well cared for (if children), and (if adults) give good care to their own children, passing down the care they have received into the next generation



Self-reliance through education and employment

59% of former participants are doing well in terms of education, skills and the ability to secure their own livelihood



Securing basic needs

72% of former participants are doing well in terms of accommodation, food security and health



Social and emotional well-being

82% of former participants are experiencing social and emotional well-being and are safe from discrimination and other harm

Impact at the community level

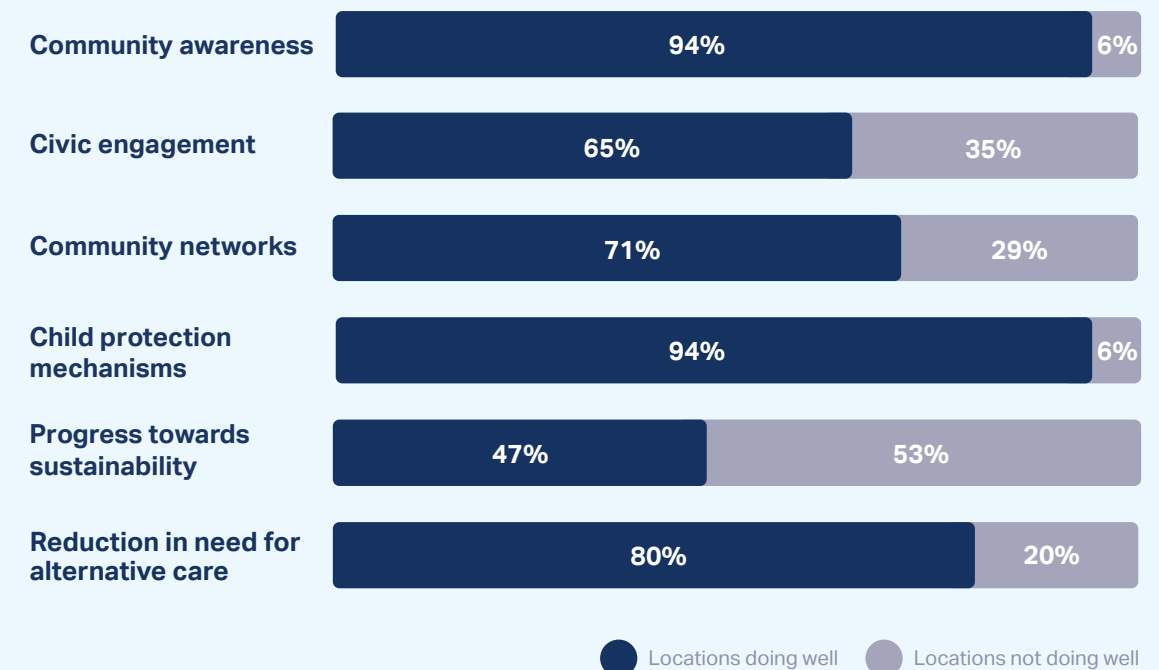


Beyond the impact our services and projects have in the lives of individuals, we also work at the community level to improve the situation of children without parental care or at risk of losing it. We design our programmes so that support systems for children and their families are strengthened. Our aim is that communities are strong and can serve as a safety net for children who are on their own or families who are at risk of breaking down.

Our social impact assessments measure the changes in the situation of communities brought about by the programme. The below six dimensions are assessed, such as the community's awareness of and engagement for children in need of protection and families at risk of breaking down. We also measure the ability of communities and partners to sustain activities if the support of SOS Children's Villages were to end and whether the number of children placed in alternative care has reduced since the services started.

The results below represent the findings of assessments conducted from 2015 to 2022 in 17 countries across 18 locations (for more information, see page 25 of [75 Years of Impact](#)). Researchers carried out interviews with experts in the community and government and assessed against benchmark data.

Average community scores across 18 locations



Impact at the systemic level

We advocate for systemic change that improves the situation of children and young people without or at risk of losing parental care. These long-term efforts enable us to have impact beyond the people we work with directly.

SOS Children's Villages has engaged in international advocacy since 2003. Engagement in developing the 2009 [UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children](#) was our first major international advocacy effort, giving rise to valuable partnerships with like-minded organizations. Work to contribute to the dissemination, financing and implementation of this and other fundamental child rights frameworks has continued ever since, at the international, regional and national levels.

For example, in 2018 we worked with UN member states and agencies as well as civil society partners and young people to introduce a [General Assembly resolution](#) on the rights of the child – the first ever to focus on the rights of children without parental care. In 2019, drawing on the resolution, SOS Children's Villages partnered with UNICEF and the African Child Policy Forum and successfully advocated for the addition of children without parental care on the agenda of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. As a result, the Committee conducted a continental baseline [study](#) on children without parental care, which found that over 70% of African countries lack explicit child protection policies to implement key provisions in their constitutions and laws. These findings are being used to develop a General Comment on Children without Parental Care in Africa, which will provide policy guidance within the framework of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

At the national level, we work with governments to address critical gaps in child protection systems and collaborate with partners, networks and coalitions to raise awareness and build momentum for improvement in policy and practice. Our national associations have contributed to laws and guidelines on issues such as foster care, child protection reform, prevention of unnecessary child-family separation, and prevention of violence against children.



Julián Peinado Ramírez

Member of the Colombian House of Representatives and supporter of Law 2089

In 2021, with technical guidance from SOS Children's Villages and specialist Colombian organizations, Colombia introduced Law 2089, which prohibits physical punishment and cruel, humiliating and degrading treatment of children and adolescents.

"When societies improve the ways in which they interact with children, they gain an investment not only in their human capital but in their economic situation."

Photo: Diana Carolina Ruiz

Social return on investment

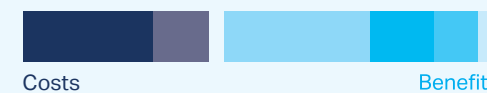
As part of our assessments, changes brought about by our programmes are quantified in financial terms by comparing the cost of a programme to the financial value of its expected benefits for individuals, the community and society. Assessments from 18 countries show that for every €1 invested into our programmes, society reaped an estimated €4.50 in benefits.



This estimated overall cost-benefit ratio is a weighted average of costs and benefits associated with providing family-like care and family strengthening services. Estimates by each service type and a breakdown of costs and benefits are shown below (for more information, see page 42 of [75 Years of Impact](#)).

Family-like care

1 : 1.50



Family strengthening

1 : 20



- Programme costs
- Individual costs
- Overhead costs
- Next generation
- Caregiver income
- Impact of local expenditures
- Other

Activities 2023

Children have the right to grow up in a supportive family environment. Everything we do is aimed at making this a reality.

The following section presents the challenges faced by the children and young people we work for, as well as activity highlights and individual stories. Our work is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, and contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals.





Three pillars of action

SOS Children's Villages is dedicated to improving the lives of **children and young people without parental care or at risk of losing it**. Our work evolves in response to the specific issues this unique group faces, and as society and our understanding of child and youth development evolve. In recent years, for example, we have expanded our work to include "young people" (ages 15-24) because we have learned how important it is for this age group to have someone by their side as they transition into adulthood.

By "children and young people without parental care," we mean those who are temporarily or permanently growing up without the care of their families: children in residential care, in foster care, children who are living on the street. By "those at risk of losing parental care," we mean children and young people in families that are struggling to stay together and where parents are having difficulty providing the care, stability and connection their children need.

We are passionate about ensuring that children and young people have the support they need to become their strongest selves. We were founded as a practitioner organization in 1949. Today, we leverage our experience for the greatest possible impact. Our efforts are geared toward working directly with individuals, partnering with others to extend our reach, and working to change things for the future. We follow three main pillars of action.



Prevention

Keeping families together and preventing child-family separation

If possible, the best place for children to grow up is within their family. Our activities range from working directly with families and communities, to research on the reasons for family breakdown, to developing and sharing training materials related to parenting and mental health.



Protection

Ensuring care and protection when there is no family or it is not in a child or young person's best interest to stay in the family

Our activities include directly caring for children and young people, also in emergencies; working with partners to train foster parents and with governments to implement care standards; supporting young people to become self-reliant, and much more.



Advocacy

Changing policy and practice to improve the situation of children and young people without parental care or at risk of losing it

This pillar of action focuses on systemic change. Among other activities, we work with partners to create platforms for children and young people to bring the issues they face into discussions at the local, national and global level.

Prevention

The problem

For the vast majority of children and youth who are placed in alternative care, one or both parents are living. By investing in strengthening families before they break down, the number of children in need of out-of-home care can be significantly reduced and families better prepared to support children through childhood and as they transition into adulthood. Reducing rates of child-family separation also decreases costs for governments and minimizes strain on public services, ultimately creating an enormous return on investment and stronger society for the future.

Understanding the root causes for family breakdown is crucial for developing solutions that keep families together and for creating long-term change. What we are learning is that the reasons for family breakdown are complex and often interlinked. They vary from country to country and from family to family. It is often a combination of factors.

The reasons for family breakdown include:



Our response

If possible, the best place for a child to grow up is in their own family, or extended family where the bonds are strong and when this is in their best interest. We work at the individual, community, and systemic level to ensure families have the support they need to stay together, and that children and young people are cared for and protected.

In our direct work with families and extended families, we offer a range of services, such as parenting workshops, livelihood support, counselling, and support in accessing social services. The aim is always to foster the family's own resilience. Parenting workshops are tailored to local needs and include topics such as preventing violence in the family, improving communication with children, and positive discipline. Some parents who have gone through difficult experiences themselves also take advantage of mental health support. Livelihood support may include entrepreneurship and vocational training; seed funding or equipment; and direct financial, food or housing support.

Additionally, we work with communities to strengthen existing social networks and structures, so that communities can recognize and support families at risk of breaking down. And in emergencies, our humanitarian action projects work to keep families together, or retrace families when they have been separated. Our overarching goal is to raise awareness about the need for family support services in every country so that child-family separation can be prevented, and we partner with local and national governments to achieve this.

The year 2023 was another year of polycrisis that continued to increase the pressures on families. The climate crisis in particular is exacerbating the drivers of child-family separation, such as forced migration and poverty. In 2023, we were able to directly support 103,500 families in 114 countries to stay together through our family strengthening services. We also made advances at the systemic level through our advocacy work with partners in countries such as Bolivia. Finally, we continued to leverage our expertise in child care and development by providing trainings for communities and social workers, including digital offerings to expand our impact.

Key data

- Globally, 6 in 10 children under the age of 5 regularly endure psychological aggression or physical punishment at home.¹
- 117.3 million people have been forcibly displaced from their homes.²
- 1 billion children are at "extremely high-risk" of impact of climate crisis.³

¹ UNICEF, <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/violence/violent-discipline/>

² UNHCR, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>

³ UNICEF, <https://data.unicef.org/resources/childrens-climate-risk-index-report/>

541,500

people reached through family strengthening

8,300

people reached through community strengthening

114



countries with family strengthening programmes

1,385,800

people reached in emergency response



Active Fatherhood approach

To extend the reach of this intervention, an [online course](#) was developed in 2023. The approach uses fatherhood as an entry point for working with men to promote men's active, nonviolent and equitable involvement in the lives of their children.



Supporting young families

In Tanzania, the Children with Children project, funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, offers vocational training and skills building to young parents. The three-year project has so far reached 600 adolescent mothers.



Raising awareness in the community

Our training centre in Bulgaria has expanded its reach and now trains the local community on topics such as child rights, child protection and social services – in addition to other courses for parents, foster parents and care practitioners.



Policymaking in Bolivia

Alongside partners, we successfully advocated for the country's first "Comprehensive Right to Family Law," which will establish a national framework for action against child-family separation. Approval is expected in 2024.



Gaza Strip and West Bank

In 2023, our humanitarian action project supported 3,370 children and adults to cope with the crisis through various activities, such as providing cash and vouchers to meet immediate needs, and mental health and psychosocial support.

Prevention

Personal Story

© Mijhail Calle | Bolivia

In Bolivia, more than 80% of single parent families are headed by women. 65% of these face economic hardship. 19-year-old Rebeca is mother to four year-old Maria as well as a student of early childhood education. The SOS Children's Villages family empowerment project for young mothers helps Rebeca and others like her to balance motherhood, work and their studies.

175

young mothers in the family empowerment project

"When I give my daughter affection, she knows that she is loved, protected and safe."



Support for young mothers

Rebeca, Bolivia

"I became a mother at 15. Maria, now four years old, has given me purpose and strength ever since. My daughter has taught me to take responsibility and motivated me to move forward in life and achieve my goals. Being a young mother is difficult. You need resources to support your child, you need to study and build a livelihood. I study early childhood education and dream about opening my own children's center one day.

The family empowerment programme offered us training on child nutrition and development – on how to care for children to keep them healthy and safe. We talked about how to raise them properly, educate without shouting, and how to bond. I discovered that when I give my daughter affection, she knows that she is loved, protected and safe.

Now I am doing a project and have a tablet to help me do my work. In another project they taught us about contraceptive methods. In my future, I plan to enter the university for social work. In the meantime I will get out, continue to generate income and save, obviously. To instill values in my daughter for the future."

Prevention

Personal Story

© Peterik Wiggers | Ethiopia



Supporting widowed fathers

Zewde, Ethiopia

"I try to follow in my wife's footsteps remembering her dedication and how well she cared for our children. I fall way short though, I am not able to do it like she did. Supporting a family is a very heavy burden. I face countless daily issues like the price of onions, cooking oil, sugar, and other essentials. In the end I run out of money only to find I cannot afford charcoal to cook. If I were to pass away like their mother did, no one, not even my father would manage to provide a home for them.

The support I'm getting from SOS Children's Villages is a big thing for me. I'm thankful. I consider it as if my father and mother would have helped me. In the future, I plan to educate this family to ensure that my children reach a certain level of knowledge and skills. Their success is very important to me. I am not an educated man, but I will consider myself successful if they are successful. My relationship with my kids is great. We laugh, eat and drink coffee together. And they are doing well at school. They enjoyed the love of their mother and they loved her. I want to keep that memory. Like trees have leaves, they have me and I have them and we have each other."

After his wife of 19 years died suddenly, Zewde was not sure he would be able to care for his five children. Despite daunting challenges, he has kept his family together, becoming a role model for the men in his community. Our programme supported Zewde in coping with his new reality by providing parenting classes, educational support, food and hygiene parcels, and financial advice.

"Like trees have leaves, they have me and I have them and we have each other."

103,500

families in our family strengthening programmes

Protection

Alternative Care

Highlights 2023

All children have the right to care and protection, even when their own family cannot care for them. Our concern is to make sure this care is of the highest possible quality, and to ensure that all children and young people grow up with supportive relationships, a sense of security and belonging, and the same access to opportunities as their peers.

Crucial to high quality care are services that are tailored to the needs of each individual, and that take a trauma-informed approach. Children and youth should have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. The rights of those in care should be championed and legal protections and support should be in place for young people after they officially “age out” of care.

We care for children directly through a range of programmes, also developing materials and trainings to help others improve their care services and conducting research to inform policymakers. Each child and young person who is placed in our care programmes has an individual development plan and we make sure biological siblings are kept together unless it is not in their best interest. We continuously assess the child’s situation, always with an eye toward reintegration with the child’s family. Even when there are no living relatives, we work towards family- and community-based approaches.

We also provide temporary care for children while we work with parents to strengthen their capacities – or, in the case of humanitarian emergencies, until families can be reunified. In 2023, we responded to 32 emergencies around the world through humanitarian projects that reached 775,000 children (see more on page 38). Whatever the timeframe and circumstances, we endeavour to build trust with each child and support them on their path to independence, encouraging contact with their family of origin wherever possible. Young people leaving care have started creating networks to support one another in the transition to independence and to advocate for after-care policy reforms with their governments. In 2023, we supported such care leaver networks across 30 countries.

Key data

- Only 14% of the world’s children are fully protected in law from all corporal punishment.¹
- 1 child in every 5 is living in or fleeing from conflict zones.²
- 47 million children under age 18 have been forcibly displaced from their homes.³

¹ End Corporal Punishment, <https://endcorporalpunishment.org/countdown/>

² OCHA, <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/world/global-humanitarian-overview-2024-enar-fres>

³ UNHCR, <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>

69,000

children and young people cared for in a range of care options

30

countries where we supported care leaver networks

97

countries included mental health actions in their annual planning



32

emergencies responded to with child protection activities: tackling abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children



Biennial International Conference on Alternative Care for Children in Asia

The 5th edition of this conference took place in Nepal in September. A care leaver from our programmes spoke up about the need to prioritize family-based care in child protection systems and uphold the right of siblings to stay together in care.



Talking about mental health

SOS Children’s Villages in Latin America launched a new podcast, “Empatías – Hablemos de salud mental,” in which internal and external experts discuss different ways of supporting the mental well-being of those in alternative care.



Digitalization for improved care

“Rafiki” is an artificial intelligence-based virtual assistant who helps caregivers and youth with questions on parenting, education, mental health and more. Available in six countries in Africa, Rafiki was used by 920 caregivers in 2023.



Research to support advocacy

SOS Children’s Villages conducted research in 20 countries in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean to map the policies and services that are in place to support youth as they transition out of care and into self-sufficiency.



Supporting children in crises

Our humanitarian action project in Sudan provided support to 150 families fostering children without parental care and 515 children through child-friendly spaces; we were also able to reunify 25 children with their families.

Alternative Care

Personal Story



Serhii and Olena became foster parents eleven years ago and are now raising five children. When their hometown was occupied during the early months of the war in Ukraine, they decided to leave for a bigger city, where they established contact with SOS Children's Villages.

Foster family care

Foster parents Serhii and Olena, Ukraine

Serhii

"We don't want to change the world or perform heroic deeds by raising children in a foster family. Not at all. We simply love, care for and take care of our family day by day so that our children grow up to be good and decent people. This is our little world, and it's our great responsibility.

I used to work in the institutional system, thus my own experience proves that an institution is absolutely not an option for a child left without parental love, care and the prospect of growing up in a family. Taking children into our family is definitely one of the best decisions we've ever made in our lives. It gives meaning and strength to our lives, enriches us mentally. We constantly learn from our children, grow as parents and as people. Sometimes it can be challenging, but it is because of these difficulties that we become stronger and

better versions of ourselves. We are very grateful to SOS Children's Villages, which actively helps and supports us in every way on this path."

Olena

"We and our children really like it here. The SOS Children's Village has everything for a happy and active life. Tutors helped our children overcome difficulties in various subjects, like mathematics or the Ukrainian language. Our children enjoy visiting the Youth Centre, going on excursions, and participating in various creative and developmental activities. We are very grateful for all these opportunities because supporting talents and instilling self-confidence at an early stage is crucial."

145

children and young people supported by the foster care programme of SOS Children's Villages Ukraine

(some relocated to neighbouring countries as a result of the war)

The transition to adulthood can be a daunting process for any young person. Becoming self-reliant means adapting to the loss of support networks and structures; learning how to cope alone with everyday challenges; entering the world of work and becoming financially independent. This can be particularly challenging for those leaving alternative care (at age 18 or even earlier) and for those in families struggling to stay together, who lack adequate support at home.

We work directly with youth to prepare them for this transition, offering mental health and psychosocial support, and vocational and soft skills training; with partners to set up employability and entrepreneurship initiatives; and with governments worldwide to improve aftercare provisions (see more on page 35). We also focus on digital access and learning for young people, helping them to stay connected, build skills for employability and entrepreneurship purposes, and navigate the internet responsibly.

Most importantly, we connect them with mentors and wider support networks to guide them on their unique path. Across all our programmes and initiatives, we promote the meaningful participation of young people – in the decisions that affect their lives and in shaping our work to support them.

In 2023, our YouthCan! employability and entrepreneurship programme continued to expand, reaching 17,800 young people, a 25% increase compared to 2022. The results of this initiative are promising: over 2,800 young women and men started a job or their own business during the year of their participation in the programme. Our YouthLinks Community platform – connecting young people with each other, mentors and opportunities – is also growing, with more than 3,600 registered users by year’s end.

Key data

- Worldwide, 21.7% of young people aged 15-24 (269 million) were not in employment, education or training in 2023.¹
- Young women were more than twice as likely as young men to be not in employment, education or training (NEET).²
- More than 10% improvement in NEET rate globally since 2005.³

¹ILO, <https://lostailo.org/blog/charting-progress-on-the-global-goals-and-decent-work/>

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

100



associations implement YouthCan! or other employability initiative

nearly
200%

increase in YouthLinks registered users

52,000

young people & adults in YouthCan! or other employment & entrepreneurship training

89

national SOS Children’s Villages youth councils led by young people from our programmes



Addressing the digital divide

Through our “Robotics Club” in Honduras, young people can use virtual simulators for job interviews, access mentoring opportunities and complete certified training courses to improve their digital skills. 400 people took part in 2023.



Individualized professional mentorship

In Sweden, care-experienced young people aged 16-25 are paired with mentors who help them work towards their short- and long-term goals. The programme, funded by the EU and the Swedish government, reaches around 80 participants each year.



Digital Villages

This project equips children, youth and families with digital access, training and knowledge to develop their employability and entrepreneurship skills. The project doubled in reach in 2023, with 59,830 people in 81 locations worldwide.



Youth employability roundtable

Young experts from our programmes spoke up at this policy roundtable attended by EU institutions. They informed policymakers about the challenges faced by young people without or at risk of losing parental care when looking for a job.



Youth Power

This programme, organized alongside ChangemakerXChange, has empowered over 100 youth-led, SDG-focused local initiatives. Through this support to young changemakers, these initiatives have reached over 34,000 people.

Self-reliance

Employability initiative



Bridging the gap between school and work

YouthCan! partnership

For young people without parental care or at risk of losing it, bridging the gap between school and work can be particularly challenging. Without the support network often provided by a family, the risk of being not in education, employment or training is high.

YouthCan! is our global programme for youth employability and entrepreneurship. We work together with public and private sector partners to provide individualized support to young people preparing to enter the labour market. Employees of our private sector partners share their time, skills and own career stories, both online and in person. These volunteers offer training and mentorship sessions and are beside young people as they take their first steps into the world of work. YouthLinks Community, YouthCan!'s online platform, makes all this possible in one centralized digital space. The number of registered users nearly tripled in 2023.



YouthCan! reach 2023¹

17,800
young people

1,800
volunteers

50
countries

YouthCan! programme spotlight Learnio

In Benin, where digital transformation efforts are being stepped up nationwide, SOS Children's Villages partners with Learnio, a social enterprise providing digital and soft skills training to young people. Courses cover topics such as web development, digital marketing and graphic design and are intended to help prepare participants for the rapidly evolving job market.

Young men and women who have completed the training programme can stay on and act as peer trainers for the next cohort, sharing their own experiences and building networks. In 2023, the focus was on engaging young women; 43 young women from our programmes participated and over 90% of them have since graduated, some already in full-time work. Due to its success, the programme has already been extended to Zimbabwe, Niger and Mali, and there are plans to introduce it in other countries in 2024.



¹ For more information, see YouthCan! Facts and Figures 2023.

Advocacy

Introduction

All children have equal rights to care and protection, including the right to grow up in a safe and supportive family environment that fosters their well-being and full development. Along with partners, we defend and promote these rights on a global, regional, national and community level. Our work is designed to change policy and practice to improve national child and social protection systems, including provisions for those who have been displaced from their country of origin.

One of our main objectives is to help decision makers understand that investing in strengthening families can prevent unnecessary separation of children from their parents, other forms of harm and additional alternative care placements. When it is not possible or in a child's best interest to stay in their family, we advocate for a range of high-quality alternative care options and sufficient support to young people as they age out of care.

To bring about sustainable and large-scale change in policies and services, we raise awareness about children and young people without parental care or at risk of losing it and ensure their needs are reflected in high-level conversations. We speak up at national and international political forums and events; contribute to research and reports; generate and share knowledge; and provide technical guidance and recommendations to governments and policymakers to promote child-centred and rights-based approaches. We base our work on evidence, expertise and people's lived experiences.

Because collaboration and partnership with children and young people are fundamental to ensuring our advocacy efforts are inclusive, responsive, and meaningful, we work alongside them, listening to their perspectives, and involving them in the design and implementation of advocacy activities to voice their opinion towards governments and key changemakers.

In 2023, despite the shrinking space for civil society in many countries around the world, we were pleased to be able to contribute to significant positive developments for children and families. In Africa, our advocacy efforts alongside partners, which began in 2019, have culminated in the formal adoption of a [continental study](#) on children without parental care, whose findings will inform the development of urgently needed policy guidance that protects this uniquely vulnerable group of children. In the European Union, across the countries we work in, our associations are playing a key role in engaging children in safe, meaningful and inclusive participation via a new platform.

 **107** countries where we worked towards positive change in policy and practice



European Union Child Participation Platform

SOS Children's Villages is an implementing partner of a consortium that is co-creating a [platform](#) for children and teenagers to continuously contribute their views on the European laws and policies which concern them.



Children without Parental Care in Africa

In November, this baseline study was launched and formally adopted by the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The findings will support in devising policy frameworks that protect children without parental care.



Policymaking in Bangladesh

Along with Unicef and Save the Children, we facilitated development of the country's first National Gatekeeping Policy, which will help prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families and standardize alternative care.



Local advocacy driving change in practice

Community child protection groups in Nzerekore, Guinea successfully advocated for a dedicated child protection budget. These groups developed in the course of our PACOPE project, funded by the Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Improving the situation of migrant and refugee children

Following our submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review of Germany, the German government formally recognized recommendations to improve reception conditions, access to services, and opportunities for family reunification.

Examples of policy change achievements

Niger: New decree on foster care

SOS Children's Villages provided technical guidance on regulations for foster care, enabling this form of care to be formalized in the country. The decree was signed by the government in February 2023.

Kosovo: Extended support for young people without parental care

Four years of advocacy efforts with partners came to fruition in September 2023, when Parliament enacted a new law on social protection. It includes a provision for care leavers to continue receiving services until age 26, strengthening their ability to become independent.

International: 2023 UN Resolution on the Rights of the Child

SOS Children's Villages succeeded in ensuring that the unique needs of the people we work with – children and youth without parental care or at risk of losing it – were included in the resolution, which this year focused on children's rights in the digital environment.

Advocacy

Personal Story

© Lydia Mantler | India



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Defying gender norms

Meena, India

In Meena's neighbourhood, gender norms are deeply entrenched. The SOS Children's Villages Children's Parliament and Street Theatre programme has helped her to escape these and find her voice. Meena uses the platform to speak up against gender-based discrimination and advocate for the rights of other children in her community.

"Where I live, even when a girl wears jeans or talks to a boy, the whole neighbourhood starts spreading rumors about her. Most girls my age just want to escape from this place because of how people think. Parents don't send their daughters to school – only the boys. Some children don't get the chance to study after school because their parents make them work for free in family shops. Child labour happens here because adults want children to earn money too.

When I joined the Children's Parliament, I was very shy. But when I participated in the street theatre, my shyness disappeared. I learned to present my point of view respectfully

without feeling self-conscious. When we all came together in the Children's Parliament, we felt that we could change the things we didn't like about our neighbourhood. Everything seemed easier when we did it as a community.

Through the street theatre, we want to tell people they should send their children to school because education is very important. Those who listen to us change their thinking considerably. Even when people ignore us, we try to reach them with our message."

"Together, we felt that we could change the things we didn't like about our neighbourhood."

15-year-old Meena is part of her neighbourhood's Children's Parliament and Street Theatre programme. The group gives children and young people the chance to speak up about the issues facing their community.

more than

3,000

children and young people engaged in advocacy initiatives worldwide

Humanitarian action

We respond to the urgent needs of children and families in times of conflict, natural disaster or mass displacement. As in all our programmes, our focus is on caring for children, protecting their rights and keeping families together – but in a crisis context.

In humanitarian crises, children and their families often experience severe, prolonged stress that can overwhelm their capacity to cope. Disrupted social support networks leave them even more vulnerable to adversity and family separation, increasing children's risk for long-term trauma. In 2023, an estimated 365 million people needed humanitarian assistance, mainly due to conflict, the impact of the climate crisis, and economic hardship.¹

Our humanitarian action focuses on strengthening families' resilience by helping them meet their basic needs, including food, medical care, water and sanitation, mental health, and education. This assistance can be provided directly or through cash and vouchers. We also help families and communities set up or strengthen community-based child protection mechanisms and mitigate specific risks threatening children's and young people's well-being, such as forced recruitment, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, violence, or displacement. For unaccompanied and separated children, our support focuses on arranging or providing temporary alternative care and helping trace their family members where possible. Our child-friendly spaces enable children to learn, make friends and receive support in a stimulating environment.

In 2023, our humanitarian assistance reached 1,385,800 people, 56% of whom were children under the age of 18. We responded to 32 humanitarian crises in 38 countries that emerged due to armed conflict and violence, natural disasters such as floods, drought, or earthquakes, and due to deteriorating political and economic situations.

Our largest humanitarian response in 2023 was in Ethiopia, Somalia and Somaliland, reaching nearly 880,000 people affected by drought and flooding. Our services there seek to prevent family separation and provide access to livelihood support, nutrition, health care, and water and sanitation for people who have been displaced and lost their possessions. Since the current outbreak of violence in Israel and Palestine, we have been providing humanitarian assistance in Gaza and the West Bank as well as in Israel. In Gaza, we provide psychological support and counselling for children and their caregivers, distribute cash assistance to cover families' food and non-food needs, and offer care for unaccompanied and separated children and shelter for internally displaced persons. In Israel, our humanitarian assistance focuses on distributing food vouchers and providing individual and group psychological support for children, young people and adults to help them cope with traumatic experiences.



© Saïd Bashir | Somalia



© Sarah Hosny | Palestine

2023

in detail

This section gives further insight into how we work in practice, including an overview of financial results and programme statistics, as well as the partnerships that make our work possible.

136

countries and territories where we worked





Safeguarding

Everything we do is guided by our commitment to provide a safe, secure and empowering environment for all. Our concept of safeguarding extends not only to the children and young people in our programmes but to everyone who engages with us – including our staff, community members and partners.

Throughout 2023, we continued implementing our Safeguarding Action Plan 2021-2024, which was initiated to strengthen safeguarding across the federation. Much of our effort has been dedicated to improving core policies and procedures. In 2023, the following policy documents were approved and are being implemented: an incident management regulation, which establishes streamlined incident management procedures; a new code of conduct; and a revised Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy. Implementation of materials introduced earlier, such as a values-based competency framework and a regulation to protect adults from sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, is well under way.

The development of the organizational ombuds system is picking up pace, building on the initial piloting completed in previous years. A Global Ombuds for SOS Children's Villages was in place as of May 2024, as were regional ombuds in most regional offices; national ombuds or equivalent external systems are operational in 14 countries so far.

In June 2023, the Independent Special Commission, appointed by our International Senate, released its final report on safeguarding and compliance failures and made recommendations for strengthening our policies and procedures. Member associations and SOS Children's Villages International are using the findings to improve safeguarding systems and hold those involved in misconduct accountable. Across all our work, the federation is raising awareness about safeguarding, strengthening the prevention of and adequate response to incidents and implementing plans to address misconduct or safeguarding gaps.

At the global level, our safeguarding effort is now managed by a dedicated safeguarding department, set up in September 2023. Run by its own director, it combines child and youth safeguarding, adult safeguarding and anti-corruption expertise. The recently introduced Safeguarding Strategy for the General Secretariat aims to mainstream safeguarding into management structures and work plans. With six outcomes and pertinent indicators to measure success, the strategy will guide us in transitioning from responding to acute issues toward embedding continuous preventive processes in everything we do. For more on safeguarding, please visit the [Safeguarding Info Hub](#) on our website.

Financial report

Our federation's financial information, detailed on page 46, is based on the global, combined total of reports provided by our member associations and by our umbrella organization SOS Children's Villages International. These reports are audited annually by independent and reputable auditors according to internationally accepted and/or legally required national accounting standards.

Federation revenue

In 2022, federation revenue increased by 10%, mainly driven by the massive contributions from our donors for our humanitarian projects in Ukraine and neighbouring countries. Despite a downturn in 2023, we managed to offset the decline with growth in other revenue streams, such as governmental subsidies for domestic programmes and contributions from private foundations. The preliminary data for 2023 indicates a slight 2% drop in overall revenue. While we are facing challenges in our established fundraising segments, we are also witnessing new opportunities for innovation and different business approaches, like blended finance, which focus on financial sustainability.

While Western Europe remains our main revenue contributor, our associations in Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, and Latin America continue to enhance their fundraising activities, increasingly covering programme costs through locally generated funds.

Federation expenditures

In 2022, we experienced a notable increase in expenditures of 14%, primarily due to substantial global inflation and increased investment in our humanitarian action projects. In 2023, overall expenditures have stabilized. Initial figures indicate a total spending of €1.6 billion, a modest 2% reduction when compared to 2022. It is important to note that this decline is not evident across all our member associations, particularly those in Asia and Africa where local currency expenditures remained consistent. The observed decrease is largely attributable to the fluctuations in exchange rates during 2023 which become apparent when we consolidate our finances into Euros at the global federation level.

With regards to 2023 programme expenditures, alternative care represented 59% – a slight decrease from 61% in 2022. There has been a steady increase in funds allocated to family strengthening initiatives, which rose to 16%, benefiting 103,500 families. Educational programmes received 15% of the spending, while 5% was directed towards various other activities. Humanitarian action took up 4% of the expenditures, with the majority being channeled to efforts in Ukraine and neighbouring countries, as well as in countries in the Horn of Africa. Lastly, health services constituted 2% of the spending, with nearly half of that dedicated to health care in Somalia.

Diversified funding

SOS Children's Villages works with a range of partners and donors to improve the situation of children and young people without parental care or at risk of losing it. Individual giving represents nearly half of our global revenue (46%), following by funding from governments for domestic programmes, and funding from corporate, foundation and institutional partners.

€1.64

billion in global revenue
in 2023 thanks to
donors and partners



Financial information

All amounts in EUR 1,000¹

Revenue				
	2021 final, audited	2022 final, audited	2023 preliminary ²	% change 2022-2023
Sporadic donations & legacies	387,804	429,196	373,785	-13%
Sponsorship/committed giving	336,937	356,722	349,167	-2%
Major donors	33,588	38,403	30,444	-21%
Foundation partners	40,628	46,568	49,869	7%
Corporate donors	58,802	89,562	80,128	-11%
Governmental subsidies for domestic programmes	494,050	525,896	540,673	3%
Institutional funding	41,745	53,153	50,317 ³	-5%
Other income ⁴	135,179	140,018	168,133	20%
TOTAL REVENUE	1,528,733	1,679,518	1,642,516	-2%

¹ Due to rounding, total numbers may not add up exactly.

² These figures, captured on 25 March 2024, are considered preliminary, as final, audited figures from our member associations are available only as of 30 September 2024. These figures are conservative as final figures tend to be 3-4% higher.

³ This figure represents the grant amount effectively transferred and earmarked for operations; in 2023, members of SOS Children's Villages International managed a total IPD project volume of €120 million.

⁴ Refers to operational income from schools, kindergartens, health and other facilities, events or merchandising, as well as interest and other income.

All amounts in EUR 1,000¹

Expenditures				
	2021 final, audited	2022 final, audited	2023 preliminary ⁵	% change 2022-2023
Programme				
Alternative care	694,087	757,939	704,880	-7%
Family strengthening	145,504	184,440	187,396	2%
Education	160,834	184,128	179,444	-3%
Other activities ⁶	41,300	56,654	57,039	1%
Humanitarian action	14,753	41,282	44,959	9%
Health services	15,086	16,332	18,163	11%
Fund development⁷	190,734	198,369	217,253	10%
Overheads^{7,8}	165,863	191,062	190,013	-1%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,428,162	1,630,205	1,599,147	-2%

¹ Due to rounding, total numbers may not add up exactly.

⁵ These figures, captured on 25 March 2024, are considered preliminary, as final, audited figures from our member associations are available only as of 30 September 2024. These figures are conservative as final figures tend to be around 5% higher.

⁶ Includes other types of support such as holiday camps and play buses.

⁷ Non-programme expenditure categories were redefined in 2022 from three cost types to two; Final figures for non-programme expenditures for 2021 have been readjusted to enable a 2021-2022 comparison.

⁸ Includes all costs not directly attributable to programme or fund development, such as management, HR administration, IT systems, office rentals and governance.

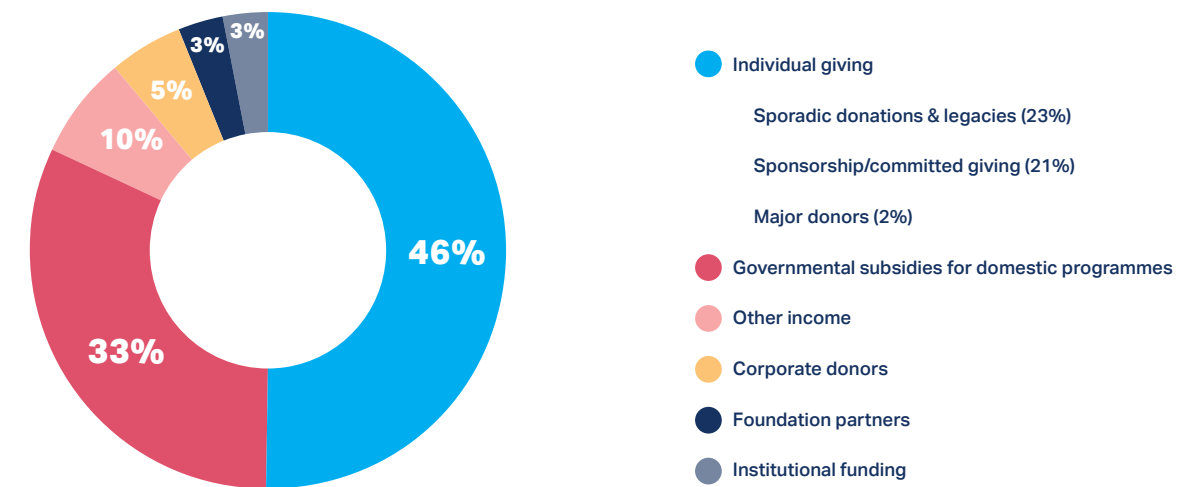
Accountability

As a member of Accountable Now and of the International Civil Society Centre, we take our obligations around management transparency and accountability very seriously. The foundation of our approach is our policy document Good Management and Accountability Quality Standards. Our activities and progress in this regard are reflected in our regular reports to Accountable Now, which are publicly available. The detailed financial audit report of SOS Children's Villages International is available on our website, along with links to the website of all of our member associations.

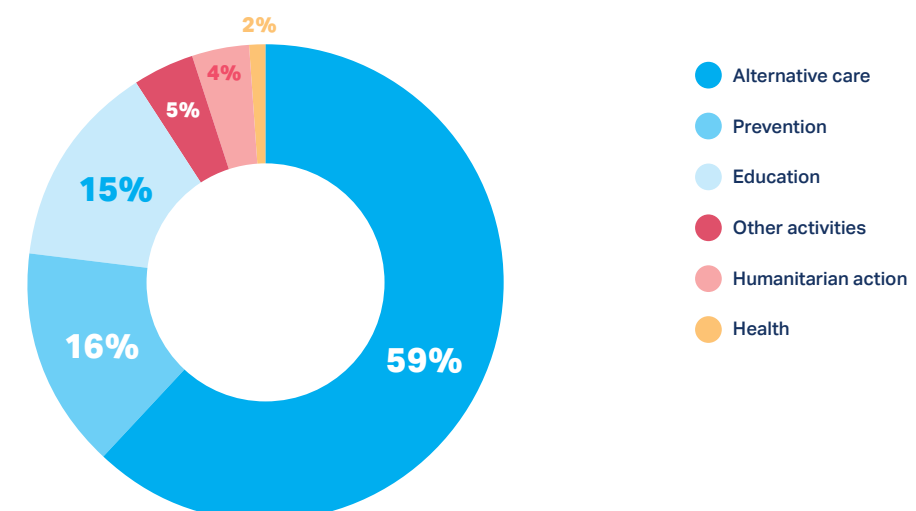


SOS Children's Villages does not tolerate corruption in any form, and we are committed to continuously improving our asset protection frameworks. In September 2023, an Anti-Corruption and Asset Protection unit was established as part of our new safeguarding department. An update of our Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Regulation is in the final stages. For more information, see the dedicated [anti-corruption page](#) on our website.

2023 Total revenue by type



2023 Total programme expenditures by type¹



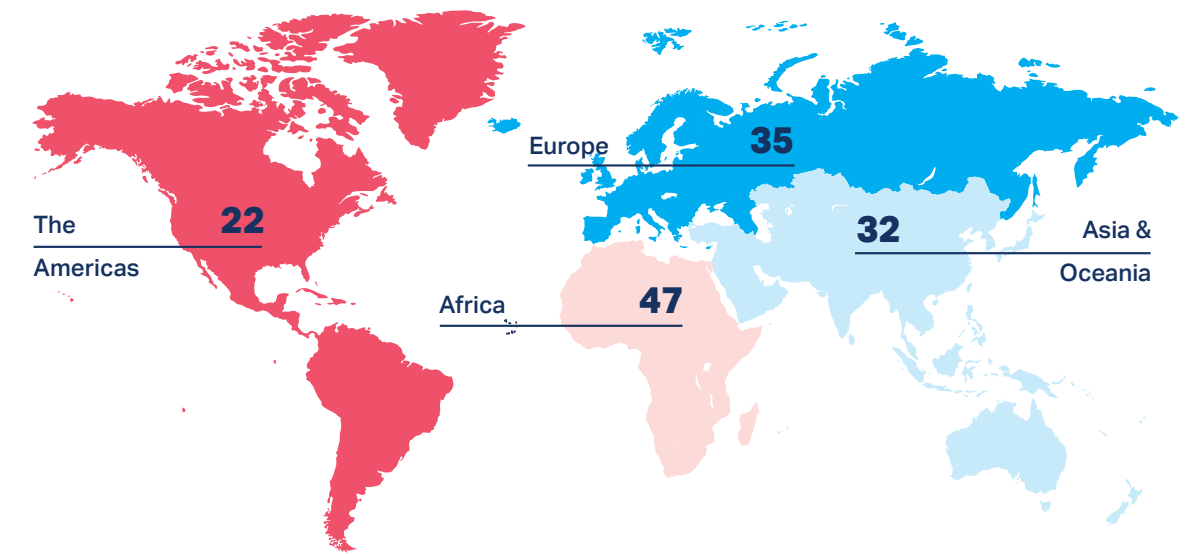
¹ Due to rounding, total numbers may not add up exactly.

Programme statistics

SOS Children's Villages is a federation of locally led member associations. Our programmatic services, tailored to the unique needs of a community, are designed to support children and youth without parental care or at risk of losing it and prevent family breakdown. These statistics represent our services for the calendar year 2023.

People we reached					
	AFRICA	THE AMERICAS	ASIA & OCEANIA	EUROPE	TOTAL
ALTERNATIVE CARE					
<i>Children & young people</i>					
Family-like care	13,100	4,800	13,600	3,700	35,200
Supervised independent living	6,400	2,300	8,600	2,600	19,900
Foster family care	1,100	600	100	4,600	6,400
Small group homes	500	200	700	2,100	3,500
Other alternative care ¹	2,900	600	100	400	4,000
TOTAL	24,000	8,500	23,100	13,400	69,000
PREVENTION					
<i>Children, young people & adults</i>					
Family strengthening	236,200	28,400	139,900 ²	137,000	541,500
Community strengthening ³	3,700	1,800	1,200	1,600	8,300
TOTAL	239,900	30,200	141,100	138,600	549,800
EDUCATION					
<i>Children, young people & adults</i>					
Early childhood care & development	10,400	11,500	4,400	4,000	30,300
Primary & secondary education	51,200	4,800	46,400	72,000	174,400
Employment & entrepreneurship training	23,700	3,500	4,200	2,800	34,200
TOTAL	85,300	19,800	55,000	78,800	238,900
OTHER ACTIVITIES⁴					
<i>Children, young people & adults</i>					
	85,300	7,900	200	2,100	95,500
HEALTH					
<i>Children, young people & adults</i>					
Health promotion & prevention	37,000	300	-	200	37,500
Medical care ⁵	614,000	-	100	3,000	617,100
TOTAL	651,000	300	100	3,200	654,600
HUMANITARIAN ACTION					
<i>Children, young people & adults</i>					
	944,400	13,800	147,800	279,800	1,385,800
GRAND TOTAL	2,029,900	80,500	367,300	515,900	2,993,600

Countries where we worked



Staff statistics (full-time equivalents)					
	AFRICA	THE AMERICAS	ASIA & OCEANIA	EUROPE	TOTAL
STAFF TYPE					
Caregivers, caregiver trainees and family assistants	2,360	1,890	2,560	1,670	8,480
Social workers, psychologists, teachers, and medical, humanitarian action and advocacy staff	5,100	2,620	4,530	6,800	19,050
Administrative staff including maintenance and general service	3,500	1,990	3,490	3,520	12,500
International coordination and programme support	150	80	70	360	660
GRAND TOTAL	11,110	6,580	10,650	12,350	40,690

1 Includes care in transitional settings for unaccompanied minor refugees awaiting legal decision and support to other service providers to improve the quality of their care.
 2 Includes 600 people reached through SOS CV (HGFD) funded family strengthening project in Iraq, run by partner (Better World Organization).
 3 Includes community outreach, education on children's rights and integration support.
 4 Includes services such as holiday camps and play buses.
 5 Includes 531,700 people reached through the Mother and Child Hospital in Somalia.



Thank you all

We are grateful to have so many supporters and partners around the world who are committed to genuine social change for children and young people. We say thank you to those listed on the next page as well as to the many thousands of others who make our work possible.



4.4 million donors and supporters worldwide

As of December 2022

Our work would not be possible without our partnerships with governments, corporations and institutions worldwide. As the world continues to be rocked by violence, conflict and natural disasters, they help us to stay true to our purpose of protecting children and young people, preventing family breakdown and advocating for the rights of the children and youth we serve.

Our partnerships take shape in a variety of forms and ways. Much of our financial support comes from individuals who make donations large and small, and who also donate their time. As well as this, we partner with universities to conduct research and with other child-focused organizations on advocacy efforts, such as effecting change in child protection systems or improving quality alternative care. Whether we are co-creating a new project with a corporate partner, cooperating with other organizations to inform policy briefs, or working with municipalities to improve the situation for children at the local level, we value the expertise, energy and new perspectives our partners bring.

Most importantly, we partner with the children, young people and families we work with – not only on the programmatic level, but also through advocacy and by supporting their ideas for change. This year, we continued to expand our role in facilitating youth-led initiatives and in ensuring that young voices are heard by policymakers.

Together, we will build a world where every child can become their strongest self.

NCBA Bank Kenya

Long-term national partnership

NCBA Bank is a leading bank in Kenya that offers a variety of financial services. Their partnership with SOS Children's Villages began in July 2012. Over the years, they have provided consistent financial support to children living in our alternative care in Kenya, ensuring that their housing, educational, nutritional and medical needs are met.

The firm's Corporate Social Responsibility programme places a strong emphasis on education, and the partnership extends to mentorship activities for young people in college, as well as for those trying to enter the labour market. In 2023, as part of their commitment to sustainable development, NCBA donated 100 tree seedlings to SOS Children's Villages in Kenya.

2023 Partner list

INTERGOVERNMENTAL & GOVERNMENTAL PARTNERS

African Union

African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC)

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

European Commission

Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations

Directorate-General for International Partnerships

Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers

Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs

Government of Austria

Austrian Development Agency (ADA)

Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs

Federal Ministry for Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection

State Government of Tyrol

State Government of Vorarlberg

Government of Belgium

Brussels International

City of Brussels

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (DGD)

Government of Canada

Canada Feminist Fund

Global Affairs Canada (GAC)

Government of Denmark

Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA)

Government of Finland

Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ministry for Social Affairs & Health

Government of France

French Development Agency (AFD)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Government of Germany

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)

Federal Foreign Office (AA)

Government of Iceland

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government of Luxembourg

Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

Government of Monaco

Department of International Cooperation (DCI)

Government of Morocco

Government of the Netherlands

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Government of Norway

Ministry of Health and Care Services

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

(NORAD)

Government of Spain

Madrid Town Hall

Ministry of Social Rights and Agenda 2030

Regional Government of Canary Islands

Government of Sweden

European Social Fund (ESF)

Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)

South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC)

United Nations

International Labour Organization (ILO)

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Global Compact

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

UN Women

World Food Programme (WFP)

FOUNDATION PARTNERS

Against Malaria Foundation

Akelius Foundation

Alembic CSR Foundation

Balder Foundation

Bechgaard Foundation

Big Heart Foundation

Canada-Ukraine Foundation

Captain Vassilis & Carmen Constantakopoulos Foundation

Cariplo Foundation

CMGP / Amane Foundation

Costas M. Lemos Foundation

Edith og Godtfred Kirk Christiansens Fond

Fondation de France

Fondation Roi Baudouin

Fundación Sus Buenos Vecinos

Fundacja Drzewo i Jutro

Grieg Foundation

Halyk Foundation

Harry Hole Foundation

Hempel Foundation

Institute Circle

Intesa Bank Charity Fund

Janusz A. Subczynski Foundation

KfW Stiftung

Maestro Cares Foundation

MAPFRE Foundation

MAX Burgers (Rättvis fördelning)

National Lottery Community Fund

Nine United Foundation

Nostos Foundation

Nurlan Smagulov Foundation

OAK Foundation

OK Foundation

Orange Foundation

PDFoundation

S&P Global Foundation

Stavros Niarchos Foundation

Stiftelsen GS

Stiftelsen Radiohjälpen

Stiftelsen Signe Marie

Stiftung Kinderhilfe

Stiftung RTL – Wir helfen Kindern e.V.

Stiftung zur Unterstützung der SOS

Kinderdörfer-Liechtenstein

SWISS Children's Foundation

Swissair Staff Foundation for Children

in Need

The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley

Charitable Trust

The SOL Foundation

The Steele Family Foundation

World Diabetes Foundation

LEADING LONG-TERM CORPORATE PARTNERS

Action

Aegean Airlines

Aktiv Eiendomsmedling

AkzoNobel

ALDI SÜD Dienstleistungs-SE & Co. oHG

Allen & Overy

Apotea

Bata Group

Beiersdorf

C&A

CEWE Stiftung & Co. KGaA

Clarins

Crédit Coopératif

Deutsche Fernsehlotterie

Deutsche Postcode Lotterie

DHL Group

Dr. August Oetker KG

Dr. August Oetker Nahrungsmittel KG

Dufry International Ltd.

Espira

E.ON

Gekås Ullared

GodEI / GoodCause

Heimstaden

Hemköpskedjan

Hilti Corporation

HOFER

Interquell GmbH (Happy Dog)

INTERSPAR

Jerónimo Martins

Johnson & Johnson Foundation

Kaufland

KFC Social Responsibility Trust Fund

Kröswang GmbH

M&G plc

MAN Truck & Bus SE

Mars Wrigley Confectionery

MINI

Nationale Postcode Loterij

Norsk Postkodelotteriet

OBOS

OTP Group / DSK Bank

Oy Karl Fazer Ab

Pepco

Radisson Hotel Group

Schmidt Groupe

Siegwerk Druckfarben AG & Co. KGaA

Société Générale

Spinneys

Standard Chartered Foundation

Svenska Postkodelotteriet

Swedbank Robur

Swiss International Air Lines

Swisscom (Schweiz) AG

TK Elevator GmbH

Transat A.T.

UniCredit Bank Austria AG

Vaillant GmbH

Vodafone Greece

Xellia Pharmaceuticals

OTHER PARTNERSHIPS

Accountable Now

Ashoka

Child Rights Connect

CHS Alliance

CONCORD

Convergence. Blending Social Finance

CYC-Net

Decent Jobs for Youth Initiative

Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA)

Eurochild

European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)

European Social Network

Generation Unlimited

International Civil Society Centre (ICSC)

International Fundraising Leadership

Forum (IFL Forum)

Joining Forces for Children in the SDGs

NetHope

Social Platform

The Civil Society Forum to End Violence

Against Children (CSO Forum)

The Global Partnership to End Violence

Against Children

The NGO Committee on UNICEF

Comillas Pontifical University

Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation

in Emergencies (VOICE)



Learn more about our national corporate partnerships.

Governance

With a presence in more than 130 countries and territories, SOS Children's Villages is a leading international non-governmental organization with a locally rooted approach. Structured as a federation, it is comprised of 110 independent, locally led and self-governed national member associations, united under the federation's statutes and committing to its standards.

In 25 countries and territories, operations are currently supported by SOS Children's Villages International, with 12 of them moving towards becoming self-governed entities in the near future. The main governing bodies of the federation are the General Assembly, the International Senate, the President and the Executive Board. Additionally, the Management Council, comprised of national directors from nine countries representing the perspective of different regions, serves as an advisory body to the Senate and Executive Board. It is supported with the participation of the International Youth Council.



General Assembly

The General Assembly, which meets every two years, is the federation's highest decision-making body and is comprised of all member associations.

The General Assembly met in person in July 2023 under the theme: "Coming together in diversity, enhancing good governance for quality child care." It handled ongoing business, such as approval of a global auditor, the previous two years' audit reports and the approval of International Senate activities.

A diverse panel of board chairs and national directors engaged in sharing their experiences, learnings and challenges in strengthening national governance, advancing the federation's goals, and improving quality and safeguarding in the delivery of programmes. Young people from all regions of the federation prepared and delivered a powerful session calling on the Assembly to consider their meaningful participation in decision-making processes.

The General Assembly also approved a new set of strategic indicators for tracking progress against our Strategy 2030, and it voted to convene an extraordinary meeting in 2024 to continue work on the statutes of SOS Children's Villages International and its rules of procedure.

Based on feedback from the General Assembly, a governance reform process is currently under way, which seeks to further democratize decision-making. The reform aims to give members a stronger role in leading the federation, for example deciding on policies and strategy, and aims to increase participation and youth in the decision-making processes.



International Senate

The International Senate is the overriding policy and supervisory body of SOS Children's Villages International and is elected by the General Assembly every four years. The Senate is made up of the President and Vice-President, and representatives from 20 member associations; eight seats are reserved for members with the largest financial contributions and one for the founding member. The members of the Executive Board are non-voting, ex-officio members of the Senate.

The Senate holds two in-person regular sessions every year, and as many extraordinary virtual sessions as may be required. Throughout 2023, the Senate held 10 meetings. They addressed and took decisions on ongoing and critical issues, including:

- overseeing and advancing the federation's comprehensive revision of its governance structure and bylaws; establishing a Governance Reform Group to bring proposals to members – with a first milestone on the adoption of revised statutes at an Extraordinary General Assembly in 2024
- adopting the budget and ensuring the financing of the General Secretariat
- acting upon recommendations from the Independent Special Commission on child, adult and asset safeguarding, which include adoption of the revised Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy, the removal of the Honorary President's title due to past safeguarding failures during his tenure, and recommending eliminating honorary memberships from the organization's statutes
- approving the Humanitarian Mandate and Cybersecurity Regulation
- approving leadership changes within the Executive Board and ensuring smooth transitions
- adopting a resolution and approving a plan for General Secretariat transformation

International Senate Members 2023

Dereje Wordofa Gidda President	Kārlis Danēvičs Latvia	Maria Grazia Lanzani Italy	Philip Willem van Verschuer Netherlands
Beáta Juvancz Vice-President	Vacant Seat* Norway	Luis Roberto Martins Urquizo Bolivia	Kay Vorwerk Germany (e.V. association)
Aishah Ahmad Nigeria	Vacant Seat** Germany (HGFD association)	Lars Henrik Munch Denmark	*Elisabeth Grieg until July 2023
Doris Albisser Switzerland	Rakesh Jinsi India	Gabi Nahum Israel	**Lanna Idriss until July 2023
Daniel Barroy France	Michael Wandy Karlsson Sweden	Gordon Nzalo South Africa	***Susan Kiama until November 2023
Pedro Paulo Campos Brazil	Vacant Seat*** Africa Region	Maria Raharinarivonirina Madagascar	
	Andreas Kovar Austria	Mel Senen Sarmiento Philippines	

Executive Board 2023

Chief Executive Officer*
Ingrid Maria Johansen

Chief Programme Officer
Arian Buurman
(interim until April 2023)
Angela Maria Rosales R. (as of April 2023)

Chief Operating Officer
Steffen Braasch (until November 2023)
Anna Ernestam (interim starting November 2023)

*Angela Maria Rosales R. interim CEO as of April 2024

SOS Children's Villages worked for children and young people in 136 countries and territories in 2023.

Countries and territories in which we responded to a humanitarian crisis in 2023 are shown in **bold**.

Join us!



www.sos-childrensvillages.org

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Benin
Botswana
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cabo Verde
Cameroon
Central African Republic
Chad
Côte d'Ivoire
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Djibouti
Egypt
Equatorial Guinea
Eswatini
Ethiopia
Ghana
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Kenya
Lesotho
Liberia
Madagascar
Malawi
Mali
Mauritius
Morocco
Mozambique

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Nigeria
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Senegal
Sierra Leone
Somalia
Somaliland
South Africa
South Sudan
Sudan
Tanzania
The Gambia
Togo
Tunisia
Uganda
Zambia
Zanzibar
Zimbabwe

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Chile
Colombia
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Ecuador
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Guatemala
Haiti
Honduras
Jamaica
Mexico
Nicaragua
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Uruguay
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Azerbaijan
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Cambodia
China
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Georgia
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Iraq
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