

What inspires us in our work



Stories told at the
Harvesting Workshop 2016



What inspires us in our work

Stories told by participants of the
Harvesting Workshop 2016



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
HERMANN GMEINER ACADEMY

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Prefa

Harvest time is when SOS Children's Villages co-workers from around the world come together to share stories about the best moments in their work. Harvesting workshops were developed to find out what functions really well in the day-to-day activities of SOS Children's Villages, what gives SOS co-workers strength and what we in the organisation can build on.

What is harvesting about?

In Harvesting we, the Hermann Gmeiner Academy (HGA) education team, invite a group of approximately 20 long-standing co-workers to exchange their rich and varied working experiences through storytelling. Colleagues from different countries working in a variety of functions tell stories from their personal experience and extensive knowledge that deal with issues like child protection, emergency response, quality assurance and much more: all of special importance for our vision: *Every child belongs to a family and grows with love, respect and security.*

In Harvesting we focus on increasing what works well in achieving our mission. SOS Children's Villages is a living system and, as such, develops in the direction of its focus.

Harvesting participants are therefore invited to concentrate on their strengths for the benefit of the children and young people in the SOS Children's Villages programmes who are definitely the essential core of this knowledge harvesting programme.

What are the fruits being harvested?

The fruits of this harvest are answers to questions such as: "What really inspires you when you are at your best?" These answers touch the personal as well as the organisational level of participants' endeavours. Looking at the moments, patterns of behaviour or circumstances when our co-workers are in a "flow", when they are achieving the best results in supporting children at risk or in need, enables SOS Children's Villages to grow in that direction. Co-workers learn and benefit from each other's wealth of experience in being effective. Harvesting proves that telling your own story and relating it to the stories of colleagues fosters a feeling of belonging, is an inspiration to take action, provides motivation and gives a feeling of being appreciated. Coming together in Harvesting offers participants the opportunity to share ideas and reflect on what the vision of SOS Children's Villages means for each co-worker's individual task.

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The enriching Harvest

What gives life to SOS Children's Villages?

In Harvesting workshops we focus on what works well in the participants' daily work activities. Building on the "Appreciative Inquiry" approach, we are convinced that it is more effective to ask, "What do you want more of?" or "What do you want to see grow stronger, better, bigger?" than to look for weaknesses, mistakes or problems. In contrast to common ways of thinking, using the AI approach we look at everything that gives "life" and energy and thus supports and motivates co-workers.¹

"AI does not focus on changing people. Instead, it invites people to engage in building the kinds of organizations they want to live in. That's hard to resist."

Gervase Bushe

Research on positive psychology shows that the act of asking questions already influences the co-workers of an organisation in some way (Bushe, G.R. 2011). People generally show more confidence and readiness to journey to the future, when they know what to carry forward and what to build because it worked well in the past. In other words:

Energy goes where the attention flows

What does this mean? In Harvesting workshops we foster growth in a direction in which we at SOS Children's Villages are already proficient. We choose this approach, not because we think that no more changes are needed, but because we believe that what we focus on becomes our reality.

Looking at the great diversity of the Harvesting workshop participants, it is clear that there is not one reality but many. However, SOS Children's Villages co-workers are deeply con-

¹ Find details about the Harvesting workshop process, background and methods used in the Harvesting Curriculum and Harvesting Handbook.

nected by having the same vision: “Every child grows with love, respect and security.” When asked, “What inspires you?” Harvesting workshop participants even expressed their own personal inspiration, describing it e.g. as: passion, protection, belief, fulfillment, urgency, leadership, flexibility, sacrifice, necessity, decision, positive change, adaptability to circumstances, targets, etc. This is what motivates the “Harvesters” 2016!

“Appreciative Inquiry is an approach to organizational and community development that has been used successfully worldwide to cultivate hope, build capacity, unleash collective appreciation and imagination, and bring about positive change.”

Bliss Browne

We aim to find answers to the following questions:

- What works well in the daily activities of SOS Children’s Villages?
- What gives strength to SOS co-workers?
- What can we build on within SOS Children’s Villages?

These “fruits” come from the stories told by the participants of the Harvesting workshop 2016. We have compiled some general aspects to illustrate the collective wisdom of the individual stories, before presenting them separately.



The Harvest

What gives life to SOS Children's Villages?

Below is a summary of what participants of the 2016 Harvesting workshop describe as motivating, inspiring and life-giving in their working lives, taken from the stories they told.

- We take action and make a difference
- We let ourselves be inspired by children
- We respect the rights of the individual child
- We foster sustainable change in societies
- Sustainability is key for us
- We support development
- We are good at building relationships
- We are a strong team of great co-workers
- We are inspired by little successes
- We rely on strong partnerships
- We can rely on experienced co-workers

What works well in the daily activities of SOS Children's Villages?



We take immediate action for children in need

- “When we looked around we found no one but suddenly we heard a baby crying. We then carefully looked for the sound. Finally we found a baby in a room. She was lying on a school table in a very poor condition. [...] We tried to find someone [...] but nobody was there. We decided to save the baby first [...] This situation taught me one thing: do everything NOW! Do it because the children cannot wait for us.” [Natalina Sangapta, p. 39](#)
- “However, I knew that this was life-threatening and I should act fast [...] co-workers were asking me, “What are we going to do now?” I realized that I have to make some vital decisions here for the safety of children, mothers and co-workers [...] I talked to my co-workers and asked about the highest possible place which we could reach in a few minutes [...]” [Kapila Gunawardhana, p. 43](#)
- “Along with my staff, we decided to appeal to the community. Just then other people called us to tell us that the protesters were coming now. I asked some co-workers to go out and tell the older people and community leaders about the danger. They came quickly and together we decided to put the kids in safe places (...)” [Aimé Eudes Yaka, p. 53](#)



We are good at building individual bonds and relationships with children and young people, a prerequisite for mutual understanding and working with parents and thus successful interventions

- “We convinced the mother to give us the child's documents so that he could be enrolled at school. She also gave her permission to let Alex sleep in our accommodation centre in the city of Mindelo.” [Maria José Freire, p. 49](#)
- “He [a young man, annotation HGA] could recall all the weekly pedagogical talks we used to have on various topics, the rules we made together for the smooth running of the youth facility, the outings, the holiday camps [...]” [Ruffin Balifio, p. 69](#)



SOS Children's Villages can rely on determined and self-confident co-workers and successful teamwork

- “Joint efforts with intensive physiotherapy, good diet and proper care gave us a satisfying small result [...] Keeping this result as a reference, we created a team comprising an occupational therapist [...] and set a goal that Alisha will go to school propelling her wheelchair herself.”
Rabin Nepali, p. 25
- “Looking back over the past ten years, the efforts of myself and my colleagues aiming at the development of the children's education was most successful as a team. Today some of the children are studying at universities and some of them get jobs.” **Vanna Huot, p. 29**
- “I thought that I can do my best even though I did not really know the real situation” **Natalina Sangapta, p. 39**
- “I met our National Director and shared the ways that I was going to approach this with him. My only request was that I needed his support to convince the teams in the villages that I needed to RE-write the letters using the guidelines provided by the International Office”
Prakashni Gounder, p. 95
- “I called all the village secretaries and told them that we will have a Skype meeting during the week [...] I then sent an e-mail to the programme directors informing them that I have scheduled a meeting with the sponsorship team [...]. I asked if they could help with authorizing a venue/ office space with laptop and Skype and invited them to join the meeting [...] I make myself available to the team, literally 24/7 via phone, mobile phone, whatsapp and Skype.”
Prakashni Gounder, p. 95



We can rely on co-workers being aware of the rights of the child, also beyond the work in the SOS Children's Villages programmes

- “Two years ago, I went to Latin America to a meeting and I had the opportunity to discuss how they deal with the topic of teenage pregnancies along with SOS mothers, co-workers and also young people from one of the member associations. In the past, young girls who fell pregnant were very often expelled from the programme [...] often, their lives became even more difficult than before. In the member association I visited, they decided to go a very supportive way. Young girls know that if they fall pregnant they are not alone [...].
Jan Folda, p. 79
- “In these cases, we have written texts that give the sponsor enough material to feel informed, so that they don't feel the need to ask follow-up questions, but not so much material as to violate the Convention on the Rights of the Child or overriding data protection laws.”
Alexandra Fuchs, p. 75
- SOS Children's Villages as an organisation working with children stands for a “zero tolerance” approach towards any form of abuse or neglect. Our Child Protection Policy defines corporal punishment as one of the forms of physical abuse. And although, according to local traditions in many countries, corporal punishment is still something normal and commonly accepted, it cannot be normal in the SOS programmes. People working for the organization have to accept that.” **Jan Folda, p. 79**



Sustainability is a key aspect of the SOS Children's Villages

organisational culture

- “The fact that we were able to achieve the critical basic need for programme sustainability or realignment generated motivation. This means that the community-based organisation/ key implementation partners are now leading and implementing programmes in their various communities directly [...] One of my flow moments was when the community started leading the programme by taking action that had always been driven by SOS.
[Eghosa Erhumwuse, p. 99](#)
- The sum generated by ATMs from 3 December 2015 to 15 June 2016 amounts to € 315,000. If the level of donations continues like this we expect the huge amount of € 700,000 by the end of the year! This means that the self-sufficiency of SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria is achievable by 2020!
[Sonia Zhivkova, p. 63](#)



Piloting new approaches leads to improved sustainability

- “We met the fishing community. The livelihood of these families is mainly dependent on fishing and related things [...] we ordered these fibre boats. They were [...] delivered to the fishing community. Initially, the fishermen were a little reluctant to adopt these fibre boats because they were more comfortable with the wooden ones. So we conducted a training and orientation programme with these fishermen [...]. After some time it was clear that the fishermen's yield had increased by switching over from wooden boats to fibre ones.”
[Rajneesh Jain, p. 35](#)
- “We had no idea whether people would be willing to donate to our organisation via ATMs [...] The “WOW day” soon came! [...] We collected around € 40,000 within a month. Just for comparison, the biggest corporate donation we had ever received over the last five years totalled € 25,000.
[Sonia Zhivkova, p. 63](#)



We are good at building strategic partnerships that lead to synergies in collaboration

- “All this happened as a result of the active participation of all the stakeholders, notably the community, the government, children and young people, co-workers, management and the regional office staff who supported in one way or another, while also acknowledging that the challenges faced were dealt with using courage as a value for doing things differently, instead of ‘this is how we have been doing it’.”
Erhumwunse Eghosa, p. 99
- “Also thanks to one of our partners we managed to contact Alex’ family to get more information about his situation.”
Maria José Freire, p. 49
- “We had to use our own cars for travel and home visits, had no premises and even no money to rent premises, so we had to make agreements with our partners to give us locations for offices and service provision for free.”
Igor Georgi, p. 57
- “Elders, community leaders and some other co-workers went to negotiate with the leaders of the protesters and explained that the SOS Children’s Village had nothing to do with the first lady. They also explained that we have already been there for 10 years, that we have been supporting them with schooling, water and medication and that we have taken care of the children.”
Aimé Eudes Yaka, p. 53



Knowledge sharing, especially for sharing innovative ideas, is an integral part of our work

- “By providing the project management, fostering the exchange of ideas about what worked well and with building up a good documentation of the ideas and challenges in a “best practice folder”, I was able to help the programmes participating in the project and SOS Children’s Villages Germany to be one step ahead in recruiting.”
Mareike Rodewyk, p. 105
- “To my surprise my first working day took place [...] at the continental Family Strengthening meeting where I met many other FS advisors [...]. It was a very enlivening and useful meeting where I got to see what the very core idea of an SOS family strengthening project should look like and aim for. I was eager to get as much information as possible and thus asked a lot of questions.”
Igor Georgi, p. 57
- “The end-of-year-letters 2013 feedback was based on a list of criteria and we scored 12 out of 26 for one of the village letters. Although I was expecting a low score, I was shocked and devastated at this; (...) I then decided to step back, re-read the evaluation and change my approach to the letters. I made large copies of the feedback AND spent a whole day understanding the notes/advice and comments. For added measure, copies were taped to my office walls so that I could constantly refer back to them.”
Prakashni Gounder, p. 95
- “[...] It was just great to build up the structures together and share the information of what worked well with the project members afterwards.”
Mareike Rodewyk, p. 105



Dialogue and training opens peoples minds and makes people feeling safe which leads to sustainable changes in society

- “They were keen to have only wooden boats as they were familiar with these boats. When we [...] realised that it is actually illegal to acquire (wood) trunks of this length to make wooden boats [...] We tried to identify alternatives [...] We conducted a training and orientation programme with the fishermen on the use, functionality and maintenance of these fibre boats so that they are better prepared to handle them. [...] By switching over from wooden boats to fibre boats their earnings also increased.”
[Rajneesh Jain, p. 35](#)



We prove solidarity within the SOS Children’s Villages federation by sharing resources as a survival strategy

- “It is quite remarkable that, when one family strengthening project lost its single source of funding in the middle of the year, the national management team took the decision to sustain the project by all the Children’s Villages each sharing a little bit of their budgets.”
[Igor Georgi, p. 57](#)

What gives strength to SOS co-workers



Co-workers become inspired by the positive change in the lives of innocent children and their families resulting from the care of SOS Children’s Villages

- “As the father figure in the village, I had a lot of children. It was my responsibility to focus on the development of the children’s education. Most of the children who were brought home to the SOS Children’s Village Battambang had never been to school before.”
[Vanna Huot, p. 29](#)
- „We heard from the local authorities that the baby was in good condition and that the father and his family were taking care of her.“ [Natalina Sangapta, p. 39](#)
- „On 20 April 2008 around 9 am in the morning Alisha came out of her house in school uniform, driving her wheelchair

ready to go to school. It was the first day of her new academic session and she was permitted to attend grade two. This wonderful event took place exactly four years from the day we made our commitment.“ [Rabin Nepali, p. 25](#)

- “For me it was easy with Maria [name changed], because she had good roots. [...] She had good ideas about relationships, love and living together in her mind and heart. She was able to rewrite her story, and became an excellent mother.”
[Gyöngyi Novak, p. 111](#)
- “It is paramount to note that what gives long-lasting satisfaction is not a position or title but rather the contribution you make to people and the children who smile back at you.”
[Sarah Nayiga, p. 85](#)

- „I was proud of my work for children who had lost their parents, and I thought that these children were very lucky to be able to live in a house with brothers and sisters in the beautiful village with the mothers taking care of them [...] I like the way they smile when they play together.“
Vanna Huot, p. 29
- “[...] most of the departures [of children who were cared for by SOS Children’s Villages] are still regular reunifications [with biological families].”
Alexandra Fuchs, p. 75
- „A ray of hope appeared, after several interactions and meetings with the subject teachers and the school management committee. They agreed to set different question papers for Alisha. The school conducted the final exam and they fulfilled their promise by providing her with different question papers [...] After reading the report card I looked into her eyes. In response she said, ‘see I did it’.“
Rabin Nepali, p. 25
- “[...] We were now able to have baseline information to work with and restructure the entire programme, including the scope of the programmes and the steering committees’ set-up, while community ownership started to rejuvenate.”
Erhumwunse Eghosa, p. 99



Co-workers are inspired by children and young people being cared for in SOS Children’s Villages programmes who express their love or appreciation for these co-workers

- “During this time spent together, he took the opportunity to encourage me not to give up, because what we were doing for him and the others and what we are also doing for other children in SOS Children’s Villages is a wonderful job according to him [...] ... What we need is some time to stop and have a drink and move forward.”
Ruffin Balifio, p. 69
- “His family also received support from our social workers through home visits and counselling, primarily for alcohol recovery, and training to gain self-employment.”
Maria José Freire, p. 49
- “At first I felt very surprised and touched when children called me Dad. I was aware that they had never had someone to call ‘Dad’ before. They need a father and a mother as all children do.”
Vanna Huot, p. 29



Being able to contribute to society’s development strengthens our co-workers’ self-confidence

- “I would also like to point out that, through this little boy, we were able to take some other children from the street to the centre and to school.”
Maria José Freire, p. 49



Co-workers get great motivation and positive feelings from the strong and positive relationships they experience in their workplace

- „People you love and respect, people you can trust and depend upon, people who help and support you – ALWAYS! That is how it [to survive repetitive tasks] is done! [...] Every morning, you are excited about going to work, because you can't wait to see these familiar faces.“

Alexandra Fuchs, p. 75

- „By the end of a month after being given that responsibility, I experienced an amazing flow, not only because I was able to coordinate the conclusion of the project's formulation phase, but because I experienced the third element of the equation: the good relationships. It was those good relationships which helped me to work with others from the different levels in the organisation towards a common goal [...]“

Ahmed Guevara Picado, p. 91

- “The only way you survive [challenging work tasks, annotation HGA] is by having the best co-workers by your side – each and every day.“

Alexandra Fuchs, p. 75

- “There are three elements I have found and experienced in this equation for great results: *trust*, *confidence* and *good relationships*.”

Ahmed Guevara Picado, p. 91



Leaders who trust in their co-workers' potential, who support learning and development and see where each individual best fits in, who give strength to their co-workers

- „Even though I did not get good results in my previous position, I was appreciated and not fired or treated as disposable. My supervisors believed that I had other potentials that could contribute to the organisation and trusted that I was able to put them into practice from a different perspective in another function.“

Ahmed Guevara Picado, p. 91

- “[...] the Regional Office Programs Team [...] invited me to engage with and participate in the analysis rounds. That allowed me to experience the first element of the equation: confidence. The fact that they took me into consideration not only for translating, but for giving my opinion from my professional perspective as a sociologist, built a sense of confidence in myself that motivated me to apply for a long-term job in the organisation”.

Ahmed Guevara Picado, p. 91



Knowing we stand for sustainability is one key element that motivates co-workers

- “This is my story with a simple message – do not give up, work hard and success will come. And success is always the best motivation for future results.”

Sonia Zhivkova, p. 63



Initial successes in the pilot phase of a new approach encourage

co-workers

- “Some programmes finally started to take their first steps. Some of the co-workers really acquired the drive to work together in their region. Through joint efforts they achieved a lot and built up a presence as a strong social employer in the region.”
Mareike Rodewyk, p. 105
- “Once that was done, I began working on each letter. It took me almost two days of re-writing and editing, before I completed one letter. [...] As I wrote the letters, I

kept going back to my notes, keeping them fresh and very alive in my mind. This was challenging and tiring, but I was determined to meet at least one of my objectives.” **Prakashni Gounder, p. 95**

- “We collected around € 40,000 within one month. Just for comparison, the biggest corporate donation we had ever received over the last five years amounted to € 25,000. [...] This means that the self-sufficiency of SOS Children’s Villages Bulgaria is achievable by 2020! [...] Now we automatically receive a transfer every week [...] Do not give up; work hard and success will come! Success is always the best motivation for future results!”
Sonia Zhivkova, p. 63

What can we build on within SOS Children’s Villages?



Co-workers jointly find ways to cope with the challenges which arise and act as a strong team

- “Along with our Promoting and Supporting Associations (PSAs) and our National Association coordinators, we have found ways to sooth worried and upset sponsors whose sponsored children took a wrong turn and had to go to jail or the like.”
Alexandra Fuchs, p. 75
- “When the evaluations of our association arrive, I give credit to the team. I do not work alone therefore the credit goes to the whole team. In my humble opinion, people who work in the background are key to the result. The secretaries are important to the work I deliver as the sponsorship coordinator. Oh yes. [...] I strongly believe that as a team we can jointly make a difference in the quality of the work we deliver.”
Prakashni Gounder, p. 95

- “It was about the captain of a sinking ship who let all the people on board leave the ship first and chose to be the last to leave [...] “We do not go unless you and your family come with us” they said ... This was the moment I realized the real meaning of the words ‘One for all – all for one.’” **Kapila Gunawardhana, p. 43**



We make a difference to the lives of many children

- One day Maria came to my room. I saw that she was terribly embarrassed and wanted to say something very important. She told me that she was expecting a baby. She was afraid of my reaction, because if she were to keep the baby she would not be able to graduate. She also showed me the very first picture of the baby. I was happy, hugged her immediately and congratulated her. She started to speak about what frightened her. She became pregnant exactly at the same age as her mother. She was not engaged to the boy who was the father. I showed her what was different about her situation. [...] Maria and her boyfriend got married before the baby was born. [...] They became a real family.”
Gyöngyi Novak, p. 111
- “It was the passionate commitment to make a difference that kept the fire burning on the inside. No wonder it is still alive in many young people today. A good number of students were recruited by the Hermann Gmeiner international college. Their lives have not remained the same and their story has changed. Uganda has the largest number of students at the college who access international university scholarships all over the world.”
Sarah Nayiga, p. 85
- “Elders, community leaders and some other co-workers went to negotiate with the leaders of the protesters [...] They also explained that this village has been supporting them with schooling, water, medication and taking care of the children for ten years.” **Aimé Eudes Yaka, p. 53**



Finding an individual approach in supporting development is always core in SOS Children’s Villages

- “Holding individual support sessions with each secretary has helped a lot and each one has a different level of understanding.”
Prakashni Gounder, p. 95
- “The SOS mother realized that Maria is very talented at handicrafts like drawing and she is also extremely creative. So she took the child to an art school. Maria did well and she was so happy with that change.” **Gyöngyi Novak, p. 111**
- “Alisha obtained some marks in all the subjects, although they were below the pass level. It was a clear message to us that she understood the subjects that were taught in the classroom. The problem was the examination method. If we could modify this orthodox examination system she would easily be placed within the average student group of her class. To introduce an alternative exam policy, we quietly prepared another advocacy movement.”
Rabin Nepali, p. 25
- “Young girls know that if they fall pregnant they are not alone [...]. I met three young girls who fell pregnant while they were still in the care of SOS Children’s Villages. One of them decided to leave the SOS Children’s Village and created a new family with her boyfriend. Another girl stayed in the SOS Children’s Village but, based on a decision by the child welfare authority, was to be ‘reintegrated’ with the family of origin of her partner. And the third girl left the SOS Children’s Village but still kept in contact with her biological siblings living there. All three girls were supported [...] and they had a key role in deciding about the next steps [...]”
Jan Folda, p. 79



Our co-workers always put the child at the centre, despite needing to take some risks to carry

through the required actions

- “We decided to save the baby first, because there was an issue about child trafficking when the disaster happened, meaning that some children who were separated from their families became vulnerable.” [Natalina Sangapta, p. 39](#)
- “I told the teacher that the children have to keep quiet and have to stay at school till we find a solution. I also told the watchman to ensure that they do not get out of the school without my authorization. So they had to stay there till 6 p.m. When I heard no shots any longer [...]”
[Damien Barindogo, p. 115](#)
- “Once I had the information from the authorities, I went to the province near the Cambodian and Thai border to select the children who would live in the village. This place was the former stronghold of the rebels. Explosive mines were scattered along the road and fields. The road was very rough and I saw marks where landmines had exploded along the road. Even though it was very dangerous to go to that area, I went so many times to bring around 20 children home .”
[Vanna Huot, p. 29](#)



Our co-workers cope with changes and remain committed in their work

- “To those who will follow in my footsteps, all I want to say is this: if you ever need someone for help and support – be sure to call me!” [Alexandra Fuchs, p. 75](#)
- “In 1998 we evaluated the fundraising results for the first time. The analysis showed a negative return on investment, i.e. we invested a considerable amount of money in carrying out fundraising campaigns, but the raised income could not even cover the expenditure. This was a special turning point in my professional life.” [Sonia Zhivkova, p. 63](#)
- “Russian colleagues could see the value of FS interventions over the years and began to understand that it was not a threat to the traditional SOS Children’s Village concept at all.”
[Igor Georgi, p. 57](#)



SOS Children's Villages is a recognized attractive partner in the child and youth welfare field

- “[...] we approached the DSK bank, one of our biggest corporate partners. We started the negotiations in June 2014, trying to convince the bank that the ATM project would affirm their good image and would be an excellent example for Corporate Social Responsibility. Every person who withdraws money from the DSK ATMs would get the message that the bank supports a good cause. The bank liked the idea and approved the project [...].” [Sonia Zhivkova, p. 63](#)
- “The communities, including government authorities, are more than happy to have an extended hand in supporting children who are at the greatest risk. The quality of SOS Children’s Village’s work in Gulu spoke louder than words and often opened the door to partnerships.” [Sarah Nayiga, p. 85](#)
- “SOS Children’s Villages also works closely with the Social and Welfare Department in the Philippines.” [Natalina Sangapta, p. 39](#)
- “With her agreement and with all the documentation, we managed to enrol Alex at a school close to the centre through another partner. He began to study and live at the centre.” [Maria José Freire, p. 49](#)



We can rely on experienced co-workers who can build on their expertise in finding appropriate responses in challenging situations

- “Based on this positive experience, the Care and Protection Team at the International Office drafted a statement that aims to support member associations in dealing with the challenging topic of teenage pregnancies. We also initiated a discussion with the sponsorship department to find the best way to reflect this changed practice in our system. As a result it was decided to change the departure reason in the departure letter form of the sponsorship office system from ‘pregnancy’ to ‘pregnancy (not in line with SOS policy)’. All this was intended to highlight that expelling pregnant young girls from SOS programmes is not correct and we should all learn from existing positive experiences.” [Jan Folda, p. 79](#)
- “Living and working in Indonesia, a region that is regularly hit by earthquakes, I am glad to say that SOS Children’s Villages Indonesia has experience in responding to such disasters.” [Natalina Sangapta, p. 39](#)
- “From our tsunami experience we knew that fibre boats with an engine are more efficient and effective for fishing purposes.” [Rajneesh Jain, p. 35](#)

Stories

about flow moments



In the first phase of each Harvesting workshop¹ we invite participants to think back to a time in their working lives when they felt entirely focused on and energised for a specific task or project in their given function and to tell their story about this. The following stories are about the time when a Harvesting participant was fully involved in and truly enjoyed the activity he or she had at hand. These are stories about the “flow moments” of 19 experienced SOS co-workers.

- Storytelling is an act of trust and it takes courage for someone to share their story.
- For most Harvesting storytellers, English is not their mother tongue.
- To keep the original character of the story, editing was conducted in a minimal form.
- In many stories names have been changed to maintain confidentiality.

¹ Read more about the Harvesting workshop process and background in the Harvesting Curriculum and Harvesting Handbook.





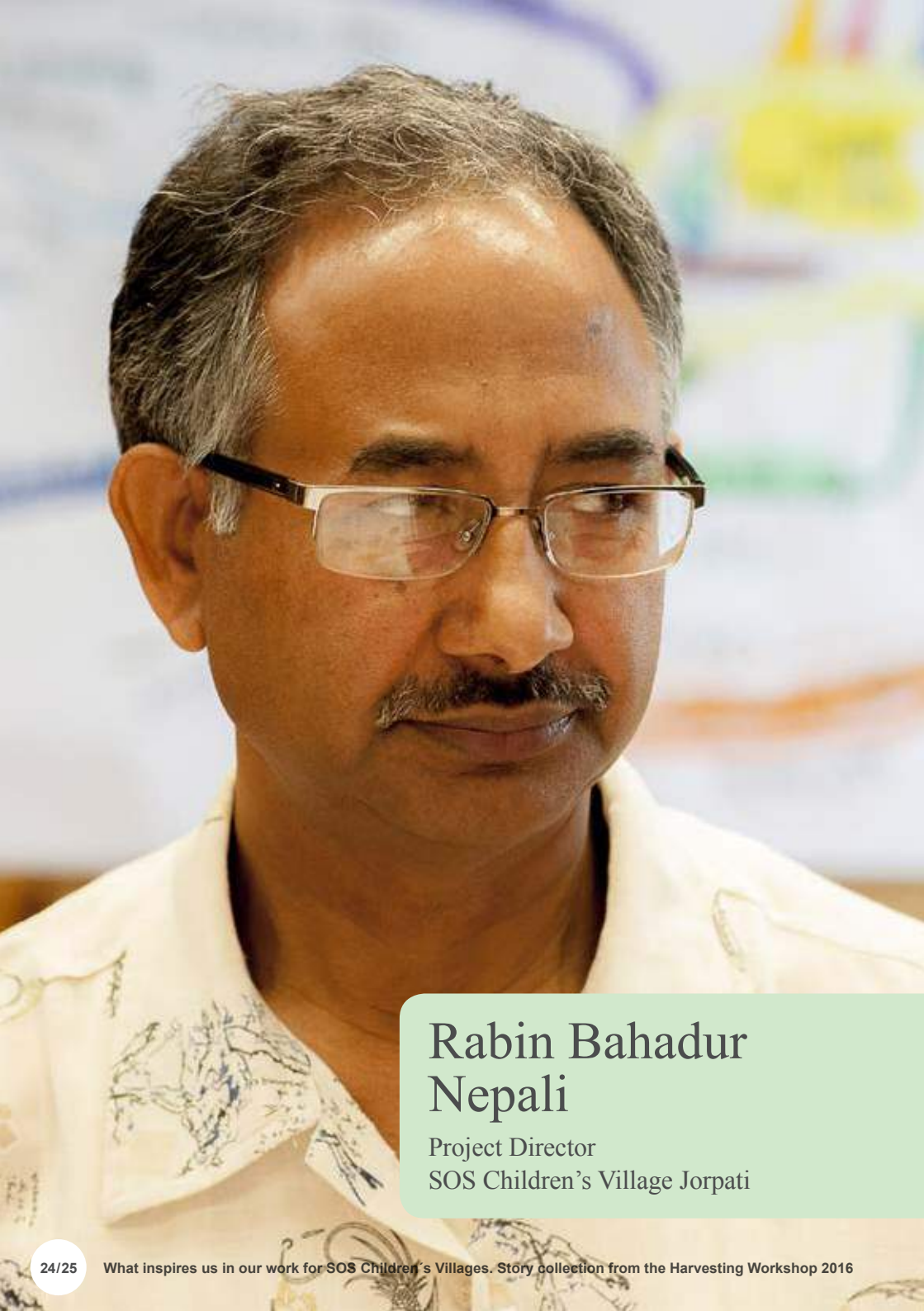
Child development

The development of a child is a process both natural and designed. Natural because every child by necessity changes and grows. Designed because the change and growth process presupposes direction and orientation.

Development is therefore all about taking action and child development is taking action for the child, especially for the well over “10% of the world’s children who are growing up alone, without appropriate parental care” (SOS Children’s Villages International, Strategy 2030).

Translated into SOS Children’s Villages’ vocabulary, it is building and sustaining relationship(s) at the various levels of a child’s living environment. It is also the conscious organising of care for the child as well as for the structures of society which affect the child and young person. Child development is therefore the product of the conscious intervention and designing of the living conditions of children and young people, most especially for those who have lost or are at risk of losing parental care.

Embedded in trusting, caring and viable relationships and supported by professional and courageous co-workers, SOS Children’s Villages helps children in the hope that they will grow into independent happy individuals and members of society.



Rabin Bahadur Nepali

Project Director
SOS Children's Village Jorpati



On the top of Mount Everest

A struggle of a child

A little girl suffering from severe Cerebral Palsy was struggling to insert a button inside the buttonhole of her shirt. Nearly after one hour of her continuous effort she was able to insert. It was the first button she had fixed independently in her life.

Besides this continuous one hour effort, she was struggling with this sort of difficulties since last six years. The very next moment of her victory, she smiled with joy by raising her hands in the air like a great climber on top of the Mount Everest and her facial expression showed that nothing can defeat her, even these severe disabilities.

A new member in the family

In the early spring of 2002, we received a call from the National Office in Kathmandu to rescue four children abandoned by their mother. The father had already died in a coal mine accident in India. When we reached at the said location, the scenario was very tragic. The smallest baby girl was lying motionlessly on the thin mattress like a log; other three children were at her side watching her helplessly. The room was filled with awful smell which could have been the result of the youngest child's uncontrolled bowel system. After few minutes of cleaning works, she was rushed to the hospital. Two

“**R**abin Bahadur Nepali joined SOS CV Nepal in 1996. He is the Project Director SOS Children's Village Jorpati. His highest treasure at work is meeting the point of heart and mind. This reflects in finding the appropriate middle in the most severe times. This was the image of success that SOS Children's Villages as an organisation taught him. Born in the western part of the country, growing up in Kathmandu and now >

weeks later, she got her new family in SOS Children's Village Jorpati thanks to our most senior SOS mother who accepted her wholeheartedly and welcomed her as a new member of the family.

With the reference of previous experiences; we immediately realized that she will be one of the lifelong responsibilities of SOS Children's Village Jorpati. But at the same time we felt that we are in different era and can do a lot. We took her situation with different perspective and accepted it as a challenge to lead the way.

Joint efforts with intensive physiotherapy, good diet and proper care gave us a satisfying small result; it was because she started to hold her head for a few second from supine position. Keeping this result as a reference, we created a team comprising an occupational therapist, physiotherapist, nurse, mother, educationist and dance teacher and set a goal that Alisha (name changed for privacy of the child) will go to school propelling her wheelchair herself."

On 20 April 2008 around 9 am in the morning Alisha came out of her house in school uniform, driving her wheelchair ready to go to school. It was the first day of her new academic session and she was permitted to attend grade two. This wonderful event took place exactly four years from the day we made our commitment.

It was nice to see her going out towards a wider open space from a confined tiny place. But at the same time it was also the starting point for her to face challenges of her school life. Not any part of school mechanism was disabled-friendly; even friends in her class had shown some reluctance to welcome her. To alter this situation we played different roles of a good mediator. We trained teachers; we supported the school to make their infrastructure disabled-friendly. We had many interactions with her classmates to convince them that only their cooperation would change Alisha's situation and increase the level of self-confidence. We can say that what Alisha has become today is

living inside the SOS Children's Village as a head of the SOS family, he savours the joy of connectedness as an active member of a big loving circle. His leisure time is simply being connected with people of different sectors. Some of them are linked with art, some with music and theatre and some with literature. It is in circles such as these

because of their acceptance and support.

In March 2012, Alisha appeared in front of us with her annual report card that was multi-coloured dominated by red circles. Of course, inside the red circles there were some marks. For us, it was an encouraging report card of a little girl who was not even able to move her hands freely and needed tremendous effort to hold any objects for few minutes. Alisha obtained some marks in all subjects, although they were below the pass level. It was a clear message to us that she understood the subjects that were taught in the classroom. The problem was the examination method. If we could modify this orthodox examination system she would easily be placed within the average student group of her class. To introduce an alternative exam policy, we quietly prepared another advocacy movement.

A ray of hope appeared, after several interactions and meetings with the subject teachers and the school management committee. They agreed to set different ques-

tion papers for Alisha. The school conducted the final exam and they fulfilled their promise by providing her with different question papers. A week later, in the evening I was interacting with children after going through their result. At last I went to Alisha's home, every family member seemed happy and on the top of this, Alisha's happiness was clearly visible. I checked her mark sheet, as to my expectation, she had secured average marks in every subject. It was the first experience of her school life that she was holding mark sheet with some praise worthy remarks from her subject teachers. After reading the report card I looked into her eyes. In response she said, 'see I did it'

We both know this is just a beginning of the journey and she has to travel a very long way filled with lot of ups and down, obstacles and challenges.

*"The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep".*

Robert Frost

that he bears witness to the power of creative works. The city of Kathmandu is a valley in which, according to popular opinion, more gods and temples are to be seen than there are people and homes. Despite the destruction by the last earthquake which rendered the gods and humans homeless, they still laugh, smile and have hope.

”



Vanna Huot

Project Director
SOS Children's Village Phnom Penh



My responsibility to bring about change

The children's educational development

I started working with SOS Children's Village Cambodia in November 2000. I am one of the first members of SOS CV Cambodia which started its operations with the first village in Phnom Penh. As a senior co-worker I was responsible for various functions such as: sponsorship work, administration and education.

Happy to work for children

I was proud of my work for children who had lost their parents, and I thought that these children were very lucky to be able to live in a house with brothers and sisters in the beautiful village with the mothers taking care of them. I played football, volleyball and tennis with the

children. I liked the way they smiled when they played together.

In 2006, I was assigned to work as the village director in the third Cambodian SOS Children's Village Battambang, in the second capital city of Cambodia. Battambang is about 300 km away from Phnom Penh. Why did I decide to work and live in this province? I lived there for about four years when I was 8 years old. It was during the genocide regime¹.

Many people were killed or died from punishment or starvation in that regime. I wanted to teach and educate the rebels' children who lost

¹ <http://www.cambodiatribunal.org/history/cambodian-history/khmer-rouge-history/>

“Vanna Huot joined SOS CV Cambodia in 2001. He is project director SOS Children's Village Phnom Penh. The experiences he had in the children's camp in the genocide regime (Khmer Rouge regime) where he lived for four years left their marks on him. When he was moved to work in Battambang as the village director in the third



their parents. Most of their parents were uneducated. That's why they followed this ideology and killed their people.

Once I had the information from the authorities I went to the province near the Cambodian and Thai border to select the children who would live in the village. This place was the former stronghold of the rebels¹.

Explosive mines were scattered along the road and fields. The road was very rough and I saw marks where landmines had exploded along the way. Even though it was very dangerous to go to that area I went there so many times to bring around 20 children home.

At first I felt very surprised and touched when children called me Dad. I was aware that they had never had someone to call "Dad" before. They need a father and a mother as all children do. As the father figure in the village, I had a lot of children.

¹ The rebels were the so-called Khmer Rouge forces. They fought against the government to create their territory. They ruled the country from 1975 to 1979 known as a genocide regime. After 1979 a civil war continued till 1999.

It was my responsibility to focus on the development of the children's education. Most of the children who were brought home to the SOS Children's Village Battambang had never gone to school before and they were older than their school levels. I discussed with my co-workers and mothers about setting up family rules for the children, for example: what time they study, they play or go to bed, whether we need to organize extra classes, remedial classes for children to learn. Educators went around the family houses to help the children with their homework. I had to monitor and make sure that mothers encouraged their children to do their homework every evening. We also organized activities such as sports and arts for children who had a talent for learning.

This was also to reduce the children's stress and homesickness. Mothers and co-workers worked as a team to push the children to learn hard from day to day. Child Protection was also a crucial aspect that was taught and implemented within the village.

SOS CV, he saw the opportunity to transform and renew impressions in young hearts and spirits. Children for their own part also give the grown ups invaluable impressions. "Kids are a part of our lives. Kids make the noise full of love and make family life colourful". Living today in Phnom Penh, he finds leisure in cycling. Phnom Penh is a

Looking back over the past ten years, the efforts of myself and my colleagues aiming at the development of the children's education was most successful as a team. Today some of the children are studying at universities and some of them get jobs. The children are happy to take part in all the activities we have organized to shape their future.

historic place. Population growth is soaring and traffic jams are now a huge challenge; cars and motorcycles are always stuck on the roads. Cambodia is also home to the ancient temples of Angkor Wat, which is now a world heritage site and attracts tourists from all over the world.





Emergency response

The phenomenon of crisis is as multidimensional in nature as it is cross-generational in effect. It corrosively infiltrates national borders. Crises destructively destabilize the social environment and life chances of children, young people, families and communities.

Crises usually arise suddenly and their consequences call for an urgent and emergent response. Responding to emergent situations demands a comprehensive and calm mindset, a disposition gained by conscious training, experience and expertise. “SOS Children’s Villages is not a prime emergency response organisation” (SOS Children’s Villages Emergency Policy, May, 2012) nevertheless, through specialization and experience, it has set out to “see ourselves as a child care organisation with an emergency mindset”. For instance, “being on the ground, having our local networks and ties and being a specialist in alternative care gives us the reason for becoming active in emergency situations” (ibid.).

With the principles of “preparedness and speed” guiding emergency response actions, SOS Children’s Villages launches its emergency response policy which categorically states: “When children are exposed to emergencies, be it as a result of war or natural catastrophe, we take action to bring them as quickly as possible from the emergency situation into a caring family environment where their development as individuals is supported” (ibid.).



Rajneesh Jain

Children's Villages International
Representative



A boat for sustainable life

Livelihood intervention in an emergency programme in the Philippines

This story is about emergency relief work in Tacloban, the Philippines, conducted by SOS Children's Villages. As you know a super typhoon (Yolanda) hit the Philippines in 2013. Tacloban was one of the worst affected areas.

SOS Children's Villages initiated emergency relief work there and carried out emergency operations in three phases: relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction. In the rehabilitation phase, we provided a livelihood to around 500 families. I am going to relate an incident about this livelihood intervention.

Boats as a basis for livelihood

To provide appropriate livelihood support, we had to hold discussions with the affected families in order to get to know their opinion and situation. During this process we met the fishing community. The livelihood of these families was mainly dependent on fishing and related activities. Their wooden boats had been destroyed in the typhoon and they wanted to have new ones to restart their lives. They were keen to have only wooden boats again as they were familiar with these kinds of boats. When we checked the feasibility of procuring or making wooden boats, we realised that it is illegal to get wooden trunks of the necessary length to make wooden boats. We therefore tried to identify alternatives

“ Rajneesh Jain joined SOS Children's Villages in 1999. He is currently Children's Villages International Representative at the Regional Office Asia in Faridabad. The insight that the place of work is a great place for indulgence and enrichment is a priceless treasure he discovers in his work. Every morning he looks forward to arriving at the office >

to wooden boats in discussion with our emergency relief team.

From our tsunami experience, we knew that fibre boats with engines were more efficient and effective for fishing. So we tried to look for a manufacturer of fibre boats in the nearby market in Tacloban but couldn't find anyone. Finally we went to Manila and met a few manufactures of fibre boats. One of them was prepared to make and supply these boats to Tacloban in a week's time. To our pleasant surprise these fibre boats with a power engine were much cheaper and had the capacity to go further out to sea and catch more fish. So we ordered these fibre boats. They were supplied to Tacloban and finally delivered to the fishing community.

Improved living conditions after fatal loss caused by natural disaster

Initially the fishermen were a little reluctant to adopt these fibre boats because they were more comfortable with the wooden ones. So we conducted a training and orientation

programme with these fishermen on the use, functionality and maintenance of these fibre boats so that they were better prepared to handle them.

After some time it was realised that the fishermen's harvest had increased by switching from wooden to fibre boats. We were really satisfied to see the impact of this livelihood intervention in an emergency programme in Tacloban.

It was satisfying for me personally and professionally to organise and co-ordinate all these activities such as interacting with the local community, discussions with colleagues, dealing with suppliers and with the government agency. The outcome was very clear: SOS could introduce the new technology of fibre boats in the Tacloban area which will benefit the fishing community in the long term and in a big way.

with great excitement and enthusiasm. The whole office is treasure for him. It provides him with a tangible platform to deliver and to feel emotionally satisfied, especially when things are implemented on the ground and an impact is achieved. Complementing this is

the family which, for him, is a place to recharge his energy. Each family member, Rajneesh observes, is a source of a different kind of energy. Leisure is for him pleasure in chatting with friends, sharing moments with his family and practicing yoga.





Natalina Sangapta Peranginangin

Deputy of National Human Resources &
Organisation Development Director



Do it now!

How to respond to a child's needs in an emergency response

Living and working in Indonesia, a region that is regularly hit by earthquakes, I am glad to say that SOS Children's Villages Indonesia has experience in responding to such disasters.

For example, after the devastating 2004 earthquake¹ with its epicentre off the west coast of the Indonesian Island of Sumatra, SOS Children's Villages Indonesia responded to the situation by building three villages based on very good coordination with local people and government.

¹ The shock killed 230,000 people in 14 countries, and inundated coastal communities with waves up to 30 metres (100 ft) high. It was one of the deadliest natural disasters in recorded history. Indonesia was the hardest-hit country, followed by Sri Lanka, India and Thailand (see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2004_Indian_Ocean_earthquake_and_tsunami).

The tremor had an extremely high magnitude, triggering a series of devastating tsunamis along the coasts of most landmasses bordering the Indian Ocean. SOS Children's Villages is still working there, even though some other organisations have left.

Another example is the eruption of a volcano at Yogyakarta Special Province on the island of Java where hundreds of families lost their homes. Most of them are farmers. SOS Children's Villages Indonesia responded by distributing goods to meet the the basic needs of the children and families. I was there to coordinate support and I worked with local volunteers.

“Natalina Sangapta Peranginangin joined SOS CV Indonesia in 2007. She is the Deputy of National Human Resource and Organisational Development Director. Be excellent and leave a legacy, is her most cherished treasure. Life mottos like this come from the influence of role models in her life. The late Bpk. Agus Prawoto, founder of SOS Children's Villages Indonesia, is one such role model and inspiration for her. In her own family >

On November 8, 2013 another natural disaster took place. Super typhoon Haiyan¹, known as Yolanda in the Philippines, hit the island country. Yolanda was one of the strongest tropical cyclones ever recorded. This most deadly typhoon on record devastated portions of Southeast Asia, particularly the Philippines, where it killed at least 6,300 people. Faced with this emergency situation, the International Director of Asia, Ms Shubha, called on the National Director of SOS Children's Villages Indonesia, Gregor Niti-hardjo, who has experience with emergencies, to help in responding to this situation. Gregor went to SOS Tacloban with Patria Banteng, the HROD Director of SOS Children's Villages Indonesia. Banteng also has experience of building villages after a tsunami. Tacloban was one of our villages that was affected by the typhoon. First they moved all the children to SOS Calbayog, the nearest village to Tacloban, because of the chaotic situation. In those days many robberies took place because people were in need of food to survive. A week after their departure,

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Typhoon_Haiyan

Banteng called me and asked me to help as well.

So I went to Tacloban with some information provided by Banteng. For example, he told me that one of my responsibilities was to build more child-care spaces (CCS) based on the children's needs in coordination with local government. I brought some solar lamps because there was no electricity. I thought that I could do my best even though I did not really know the actual situation.

When I arrived in Tacloban, I started to work and mapped out the situation with the help of local volunteers and Family Strengthening Programme (FSP) co-workers who already knew the real situation. We also worked in partnership with other organisations in clustering, so that we could work hand in hand to reduce overlap.

One morning I walked to a place where we planned to start a new CCS in an empty school along with family strengthening co-workers. There were no school activities at that point and some schools were being used as evacuation centres. We held discussions about our ac-

she also finds many role models. The life of her mother imprinted in her the value that to give is to receive. We lose nothing when we give and, more than that, we receive happiness and joy in making others happy. To have leisure is to be people-oriented. Through this

tivities with the local authorities there and they recommended that we use this school. When we looked around we found no one but suddenly we heard a baby crying. We then carefully looked for the sound. Finally we found a baby in a room. She was lying on a school table in a very poor condition. There were many flies around her because her head was scalded. Her clothes were wet because her food which had been placed near her had spilled over her. We tried to find someone who was looking after this baby, but nobody was there.

We decided to save the baby first, because there was an issue with child trafficking when the disaster happened, meaning that some children who were separated from their families became vulnerable. So we first talked to the local authorities about the baby and her condition and then took her to the SOS Children's Village Tacloban. SOS Children's Villages also works closely with the Department of Social Welfare & Development in the Philippines. Every child admitted to SOS should be admitted on the decision of this department.

When we arrived at the village, we washed the baby and treated her skin with some medication. In the afternoon her father came to SOS and asked us to give him back his daughter. I asked the local authorities to get involved in this situation. The baby's father explained that he had to go to work and to earn money. He got a job with a foundation that provided money for cleaning the environment. So we agreed to give the baby back to her father and we asked him to take proper care of her. We gave him some baby food and essential items. After that we had no opportunity to see the girl again because the father then decided to move to another place. We heard from the local authorities that the baby was in good condition and that the father and his family were taking care of her.

This situation taught me one thing: do everything NOW. It made me realize not to delay important actions. Do it NOW because the children cannot wait for us. In every situation we should consider this as a value and do our utmost in the best interests of the child.

she learns new things, embraces new perspectives and understands people better. Life is therefore lifelong learning, both in the social life of the society, through formal education and, most of all, from the young, the old and every person she meets.

”



Kapila Ruwan Gunawardhana

Director National Youth Care



One for all – all for one

Confronting an unexpected crisis situation

It was 26th December 2004, the day that the tsunami devastated most of the coastal areas of my little island country of Sri Lanka. I was the Village Director of the Children's Village in Galle, the only village then located in a coastal area.

Shock at a full moon holiday

It was a full moon day which was normally a holiday for Sri Lankans. I was in my quarters at around 9.30 am when one of my co-workers informed me that the people outside were shaking with fear and were running here and there insisting that we run for our lives as the sea was moving inland. I immediately went running to the main gate of the village and saw exactly what I had

heard. People had gone mad and were running on the road not knowing where they were heading. They were shouting, "Why are you still waiting? Run for your life or you will die here, the sea is moving inland!!!".

I realized that something serious had happened. An article I had read many years before explained that, due to global warming, someday in future the sea level would rise and cover many parts of our coastal band. I thought this was the day and the sea water would come and swallow the whole area at any moment. I had not even heard or read the name tsunami before. However, I knew that this was a life threat and I should act fast. Our normal practice was to consult our superiors to get

“

Kapila Ruwan Gunawardhana Wedumpuli Achchige Don joined SOS CV Sri Lanka in 1999. He is the Director National Youth Care.

Even from his school days, he discovered peace-building and reconciliation as prominent treasures in himself. This manifests in his work, where he is well appreciated as a



advice on unusual situations. So I tried to do so and learned that the telephone lines were not working and mobiles were not connecting due to congestion. Co-workers were asking me, “what are we going to do now?” I realized that I have to make some vital decisions here for the safety of the children, mothers and co-workers. There were approximately 150 heads in total.

“We should move to a highland” I thought. But how high do we need to move? No one knew what level the sea would reach. I thought the best place to go would be the SOS Children’s Village in Nuwara Eliya which is 7,000 feet above sea level. However, there was not nearly enough time and the available vehicles were not adequate. Then I talked to my co-workers and inquired about the highest possible place we could reach within a few minutes since I was new to Galle and had less knowledge of the geography of the area. My intention was to keep all of us alive as long as possible till the government’s rescue operations had started.

Whom to send first?

Once the place was decided another challenge arose over who should go first and who would be last? A story I once read when I was small came to my mind. It was about the captain of a sinking ship who let all the people on board leave the ship first and chose to be the last to leave. I too decided to do it this way. I started the evacuation by sending children first. I sent an aunt and a male co-worker along with them. After that I told mothers to go next. “We will not go unless you and your family come with us” they said. I explained that I had to stay here to look after the village till the last minute. They said, “Then we all stay. You thought about the lives of the children and us before you and your family, so we are not leaving you behind”. A co-worker also suggested, “Yes, we’ll all wait here with you.

We could all make it with the available vehicles when the time comes”. I was surprised by this response from the mothers and co-workers. This was the moment when I realized the

reliable person for SOS mothers, superiors, subordinates and children. Family for him is a call for love, sharing, sacrifice and rewards. He is blessed to be witness to this as the best part of his experience with his son is that he remembers how much he and his wife do for him. Love, fun and jokes fill his leisure time. Imagine his wife is busy raking the gravel in the front yard, making a design, and their dog makes it messy with her manic

real meaning of the words “One for all – all for one”. We were there till evening waiting for any kind of threat from the sea.

I was able to win long-lasting and permanent trust amongst the mothers and co-workers through the few decisions I took that day.

Support for the “extended family”

In the meantime a young integrated adult who had previously been cared for by SOS Children’s Villages came walking into the village. He said that his house had been completely washed away and his wife, mother-in-law and grandfather were all washed away by the water. He wanted my support to go to the hospital and look to see whether they were alive or not. I asked two co-workers to take a vehicle and go with the boy and support him. Luckily he was able to find his wife and the family alive later in the day.

Happily the SOS Children’s Village Galle was not directly affected by tsunami. Nevertheless, I was proud of myself for behaving really calmly in such a critical and frightening situation, taking the best possible decisions for the safety of the children and many others. Above all

behaviour and his wife gets angry. Then imagine what happens: he and his son join on the dog’s side! Sri Lanka is a small Island situated in the Indian Ocean, south of India. It is a land of rainforest, diverse wildlife and endless beaches. It is famed for its ancient Buddhist ruins and 5th century citadel Sigiriya. Growing up and living amongst all this, makes us mature!





Strengthening families

“All the children of this world are our children”

(Hermann Gmeiner)

This is a statement which is as visionary as it is missionary. It is visionary in that it places no limitation on the scope of action, inclusion and involvement. It is missionary in that it calls for action.

Human action is limited because human capacity is exhaustible. To get the broadest and most demonstrable impact from this situation, children who have lost parental care or are at risk of losing it, are brought within the focus of SOS Children’s Villages for preventive action. One such interventional measure is the Family Strengthening Programme.

It is a cluster of “programmes aiming to prevent children from losing the care of their family. We empower families to strengthen their capacity to protect and care for their children, and strengthen safety nets for vulnerable children and their families within the community. Where children have lost the care of their biological family, we provide family-based care within our SOS Children’s Villages” (See What we mean by ‘family strengthening programmes’, SOS Children’s Villages International).

While respecting the personality of the individual child and family and at the same time determined to reject those conditions which prevent the wellbeing of the child in her/his natural environment, SOS Children’s Villages resolutely intervenes with an attitude of co-operation rather than just helping. With this passionate enthusiasm to bring about change in the living conditions of vulnerable children and their families, SOS Children’s Villages initiates transformation in the individual child, young person, families and communities.



Maria José Delgado Freire

National Human Resources and
Organisational Development Advisor



From street to school

Street children and FSP

In 2006 I was a social worker. At that time SOS Cabo Verde had just started the family strengthening programme on Sao Vicente Island, more specifically in the city of Mindelo.

I went to work in Mindelo with some of our programme partners. During our meeting they said that the main problem in the city of Mindelo was the situation of street children. They said they were unable to resolve the situation.

After the meeting and during the night I walked round the city of Mindelo to observe the reality of street children on the spot. During my walk I met a little boy, aged between 6 and 7 years, very cold and lying on the pavement of a famous hotel in the city. I approached him and asked if he did not want to go home to take a shower and sleep with his family. His name is Alex¹. He just said, "no". Alex told me that his house was the street. I was a little sad about this situation and asked him if he would like to go for dinner with me at a nearby restaurant. He said "yes" and he was hungry but the people working in the restaurant did not like him coming into the restaurant. I told them that Alex was my guest and he

¹ Name changed for privacy reasons.

“

Maria José Delgado Freire joined SOS CV Cape Verde in 2003. Maria is the National Human Resources and Organisational Development advisor. She finds gratitude and the spirit of delivery amongst the greatest treasures in her work. Discover- >

became very happy, even “making fun” of the restaurant staff.

The next day, Alex came to me at the centre. I had invited him to come. He took a bath and had breakfast in the centre along with two more boys who were already there. This centre was provided by one of our partners the City Hall of Mindelo.

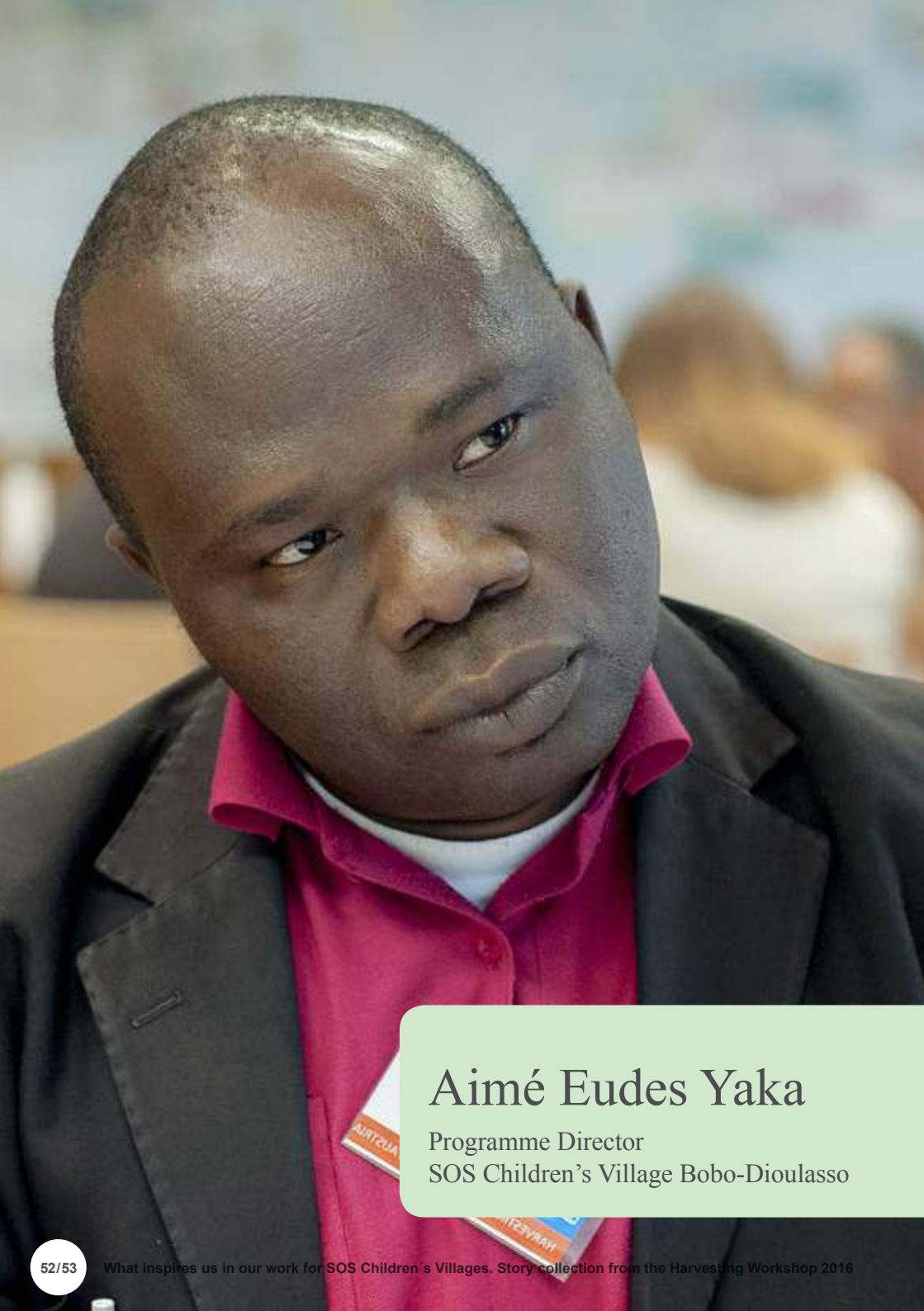
Also thanks to one of our partners we came into contact with Alex’s family to get more information about his situation. The mother said that she could apparently not bear to see the child on the street any longer but she could not handle the situation. Alex did not want to return home so we convinced the mother to give us with the child’s documents so that he could be enrolled at school. She also gave her permission to let Alex sleep in our accommodation centre in the city of Mindelo. With her agreement and with all the documentation we managed to enrol Alex at a school close to the centre through another partner. He began to study and live at the centre.

I would like to highlight that through this little boy we were able to take some other children from the street to the centre and to school. Alex supported e.g. our social workers to help more street children. His family also received support from our social workers through home visits and counselling, primarily for alcohol recovery and training to gain self-employment.

ing people’s capabilities, expectations and will to work and getting them into the most appropriate positions form the magic wand to happiness at work! Growing up in SOS CV, she discovered the invaluable value of the family as a trusting and stable relationship; and this she enjoys with both her own family and her SOS mother. Visiting the

SOS Village where she grew up with her own children is a source of joy for her. Sports and cooking give her another source of happiness. Cape Verde, with its 10 beautiful islands, is for her the evidence of the abundant wonderful gifts of nature. In all this she finds contentment.

”



Aimé Eudes Yaka

Programme Director
SOS Children's Village Bobo-Dioulasso



Grateful community

Community supports SOS programme to keep everything safe

In 2014 our country's president decided to extend his term. He wanted to change the country's constitution to stay in power, but people in Burkina Faso did not agree and organised demonstrations. It was a revolution. Organisations of civil society and political parties organised demonstrations everyday.

October 31 I was in the village when I received a phone call from a friend who is a police man. He informed me that protesters were coming to the SOS Children's Village. They came to burn, destroy and ransack it. Indeed, the protesters were burning and sacking everything that had related to the President.

Danger due to confusion about another children's village

Before that, the first lady had created her own children's village, called "Children's Village SUKA". Therefore, people were confused and believed that our village was one of the first lady. That very day I received another call from a third person giving the same information.

“
Aimé Eudes Yaka joined SOS CVs Burkina Faso in 2006. He is Programme Director in Bobo-Dioulasso. The treasure he discovers in his work is the bountiful promise of life. In spending time with children and young people, he has gained rich and invaluable experience which transformed his way of seeing life, people and circumstances. Optimism, enthusiasm and making life significant in all around him, especially >

Before I never thought something like this would be possible.

My co-workers and mothers had also been informed. They came to my office to find out how we could solve this problem. Some were very scared and worried. The security forces were not able to protect us from this protest wave.

Along with my staff, we decided to appeal to the community. Just then other people called us to tell us that the protesters were coming now. I asked some co-workers to go out and tell the older people, community leaders and honourable people about the danger. They came quickly and together we decided to put the kids in safe places by sending them to the families of the family strengthening programme and other families around the village. When children were in a safe place with mothers half of the problem was solved. What now remained was the challenge to save the installations from any destruction.

Joint efforts together with the local community

Elders, community leaders and certain other co-workers went to negotiate with the leaders of the protesters and explained that the SOS Children's Village had nothing to do with the first lady. They also explained them that we have been there for 10 years already, that we have been supporting them with schooling, water, and medication and that we have taken care of the children.

Very worried I went to the village entrance because I did not know if negotiations would succeed. Indeed, the crowd was exited and angry. Moreover some people of the communities had been dislodged and displaced during the construction of the SOS Children's Village and have always been against it for this reason. I saw the crowd of protesters coming with axes, knives, wood and fire. They were shouting and screaming. My heart was pounding in my chest and my throat was dry. I thought: Now that we have done what we could, my God everything

co-workers, children and young people, are the pillars of his satisfaction. The real base in life where sharing becomes the pivot of happiness is the family. It is the fortress to withdraw to and rebuild and regain strength. He enjoys listening to comedians, but then they trivialise life events. Living in the city of Bobo-Dioulasso, west of Burkina Faso, is

is in your hands. But suddenly I saw the protesters change road by turning to continue their way. Some protesters shouted at us, “You had the chance, thank God that it is over for you.”

At the moment, co-workers erupted in joy, shouting, clapping and dancing. It was such a great joy that in the evening the children returned to their families.

a mixture of solace and anxiety. The climate is mild, traffic is sparse, the air is clean, the fruits of life abound in the web of a social life characterised by a great liking for hospitality. And still, religiously motivated terror attacks with a major military presence disrupt the quietness of life.

”



Igor Georgi

Programme Director St. Petersburg



New ways to work, more lives to save

Family Strengthening Programme Development in Russia

Currently SOS Children's Villages Russia runs nine family strengthening projects in five country regions. This is an overall capacity saving about 1.000 children from losing their natural family environment. But it took quite a while to come that far.

I joined SOS Children's Villages Russia in 2006 as first national family strengthening program advisor. At that time there was only one family strengthening project and my task was to nurture this one and start new ones in various country regions.

My first steps into family strengthening at SOS Children's Villages Russia

To my surprise my first working day not took place in Russia but in Czech Republic at continental family strengthening meeting where I met many other colleagues involved in family strengthening (FS). The workshop was led by Ms. Nicola Oberzaucher. It was a very enlivening and useful meeting. There I got the very core idea of what SOS family strengthening projects should look like and aim for. I was eager to get as much information as possible and thus asked a lot of questions. At the end of the session Mr. Michael

“

Igor Georgi joined SOS CV Russia in 2006. He is the St. Petersburg Programme Director. When he joined SOS CV Russia, he began as FSP advisor. Igor enjoys the privilege to be the one who shoulders the responsibility for starting FS projects around



Pörtl, who was regional director then even qualified my questions to be “killer questions”.

Upon my return to Russia I attended the very first national management team meeting (NMT) in my SOS-life. This was quite an opposite experience from the meeting in Czech Republic! None of the NMT members except for the National Director was aware at all of what FS projects are about and why SOS Children’s Villages needed them. Many Children’s Village directors even regarded FS projects as threat to the core business of SOS Children’s Villages Russia and thus refused to cooperate or support me in developing new ways to work for our association. So, in the beginning it was quite challenging to have that little support on national level.

Successes despite considerable challenges

In addition the very concept of FS projects incorporated the idea to have small or almost no investments with really low running costs. Thus for some years my laptop was the

most expensive tool in FS work in Russia. We had to use our own cars for travel and home visits, had no premises and even had no money to rent premises, thus we had to make agreements with our partners to provide us locations for offices and service provision for free. Nonetheless we succeeded to open seven new projects in four country regions in this manner within three years time. Enlivened by this progress SOS Children’s Villages Russia was asked to make a strategic plan to start as many FS projects in as many country regions as possible. This was really a dream-moment: We drew a picture where almost the whole country was full of FS projects starting three to five new projects every year!

Then the so called “sustainable path” document came. SOS Children’s Villages Russia was among a number of countries to become self-financed. That was the sudden end of the dream about the expansion of family strengthening, but by far not the end for already existing FS projects. Russian colleagues could see the value of FS interven-

the country. In a family of four plus a pet, Igor understands responsibility as an act of will: I am trying to be a caring husband and father! Spending the greater part of his leisure time with the family and sharing with the local Hindu community are for him

tions over the years and began to understand that it was not a threat to the traditional SOS Children's Village concept at all.

Solidarity within SOS Children's Villages Russia enables greater support for more families

It is quite remarkable that when one family strengthening project lost its single source of funding in the middle of the year the national management team took the decision to sustain the project by the entire Children's Villages each sharing a little bit of their budgets. Another FS project we even had to close down due to lack of finance, but we re-started it again this year as the NMT decided to allocate the money received from IKEA foundation to support especially family strengthening projects in Russia. Furthermore SOS Children's Villages Russia bought premises for three FS projects in Saint Petersburg last year and thus made our dream come true: We now have our own premises whereas before we had to shift offices every year and a half!

Future dreams

I have left my position of national family strengthening program advisor two years ago, but still I am very proud of SOS Russia exploring new ways to save even more lives and families of children in need. In my position as SOS Children's Village program director I have the strong believe that SOS must be flexible to address current needs of vulnerable children in local communities. I also believe that one day we will no longer label children as "SOS children" and "Non-SOS children" The life of every child is equally important and we should be equally proud of both: preserving the loss of parental care for children and creating a loving home for every child.

moments of the conscious acquisition of caring capabilities. Home is exactly the place where he is often not present. Still, he finds solace where the family is and spiritual sharing sessions take place.





Successful fundraising

The world constantly increases in material wealth while more and more children, young people and families become more vulnerable than ever. Hundreds of thousands of children worldwide drift to the brink of risks of all kinds.

These children are at special risk of losing their families and safety nets. In a sustained reaction to this, in 2016 SOS Children's Villages adopted the bold 2030 strategy. This carries the declared increased readiness and determination to see as many children as possible succeed in life, as the organisation aims towards becoming the world's largest child care movement (Strategy 2030).

A concerted effort and dedication are obviously necessary for this declared aim to be realized. The pivot of such engagement is fund development and fundraising, the purpose of which "is to motivate people to support our efforts of enabling every child to grow up in a family with love, respect and security". Through such efforts, sponsorship contributes to giving an otherwise anonymous fate a name and a face, an emotional bond which can really "inspire sponsors to become long-

term, loyal friends of SOS Children's Villages" (The quality assurance network on international donor services 2011).

Successful fundraising is one that creates motivation for joint responsibility and a feeling of recognition and value. It includes sending child rights friendly information on sponsored children to donors and friends. Undertaking fundraising activities with keeping in mind the principles that: a broad base of supporters ensures stability, enables innovation and facilitates learning thereby leading to better results. This is a sure step to achieving the fundraising aims of SOS Children's Villages, especially the sustainable path¹ initiative (SOS Children's Villages International Global Intranet).

¹ In 2012 SOS Children's Villages International launched the so-called "Sustainable Path" initiative which aims to ensure self-sustainability among SOS Member Associations in middle income countries by 2020. Simultaneously this process aims at maximising the impact of SOS programmes by strengthening the local communities' and local community-based organisations' capacity to take an active role in the development of their own community. 35 Member Associations with the greatest fundraising potential were selected, with the aim of achieving self-sufficiency in order to free up international subsidies that could be relocated to the member associations with the greatest need among our target group (Child Care for Development, 2015, SOS Children's Villages Norway).



Sonia Zhivkova
Head of Corporate Partnerships



Never give up

The journey from minus results to € 315,000 from just one fundraising project

It was very easy for me to choose the Harvesting story I would like to share with you. I will present the most successful project in my professional life.

I started working for SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria in 1990. 24 years out of 26 I worked as a fundraiser. If I had to describe my profession in one word, it would be "Challenge". We, the fundraisers, have a motto: "You have to kiss a lot of frogs before you find your prince," which means, when approaching new donors and partners, you very often hear "no", "not now", "not you". This can be deeply discouraging. Luckily you succeed in attracting new supporters from time to time and that is always a good occasion to celebrate. But it is difficult! Most of the time you feel disappointed and you are simply ready to give up.

Going back to my first years as a fundraiser, I always remember my first visit to Innsbruck in 1992. Nobody was doing fundraising in Bulgaria at that time and the colleagues from the Austrian SOS Children's Villages Association were the first ones who taught me how to start. The first fundraising campaign I carried out was the "Silent guest" campaign. It brought us the first Bulgarian donors. In the following years I designed a lot of campaigns which increased the number of donors in our database up to 17,000 – a real success for my small country!

In 1998 we evaluated the fundraising results for the first time. The analysis showed a negative return on investment, i.e. we invested a considerable amount of money in carrying out fundraising campaigns, but the income raised could not even cover the expenditure. This was a special turning

“**S**onia Zhivkova joined SOS CV Bulgaria 26 years ago and she proudly sees herself as “the living memory of the organisation”. She is head of Corporate Partnerships, moving from traditional ways of fundraising to approaching donors today via new channels, offering them new products, forms the great challenge in reconciling tradition >

point in my professional life. Fundraising stopped to be pure creativity and nice communication that brings satisfaction. We had to switch to business ratios. We started planning, monitoring, evaluating, based on key performance indicators. Every year we set quite ambitious targets that we never succeeded in fulfilling throughout those years.

Bulgaria is no easy ground for fundraisers

Let me give you some information about our fundraising market. Bulgaria has a population of approximately 7 million inhabitants. The minimum salary in 2016 was € 210 and the average salary about € 500. It is a real challenge to undertake fundraising in the poorest country of the European Union. Despite all the efforts over the past years, we did not manage to reach the targets. Try to imagine how demotivating this was for my colleagues and me. Many times I was just about to give up and leave but I am still with SOS Children's Villages because of a very personal reason that could be the topic of another story.

Let me now share the story of the biggest success of my career. Working as a fundraiser I had the constant wish to develop a fundraising project that would bring considerable financial results.

At the fundraising market it is very important to be the first, even when you are the best. If you don't make it to be first, you should at least be the second. Three years ago our strongest competitor, UNICEF, launched a very successful project through the ATMs of a bank named Pireaus. We decided to replicate UNICEF's idea.

A real win-win project

Once having made the decision, we approached the DSK bank, one of our biggest corporate partners. We started the negotiations in June 2014, trying to convince the bank that the ATM project would affirm their good image and would be an excellent example for Corporate Social Responsibility. Every person who withdraws money from the DSK ATMs would get the message that the bank supports a good cause. The bank liked the idea and approved the project in October 2014. DSK started to develop the donation software and invested € 35,000. It took almost a year to create the project and start with the first tests. The project was launched on 3 December 2015.

What is the ATM project about?

It is very simple: if you need cash you go to the ATM to withdraw money. You

and innovation. This is the ability she discovers as a great treasure in her work. She discovers that the family is at the top of all value systems. To be loved, happy and healthy and to share the joy of other family members are things which give the feeling

insert your card and you choose the amount you want to withdraw. Now the next screen appears. A little girl holding a flower asks you if you would like to donate one Lev (€ 0.50) to SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria. You can choose between "I am donating" and "No, I do not want to donate". By just pushing a button, you become a donor of SOS Children's Villages. At the end of the process you receive your money and a receipt stating that you donated one Lev for SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria. One Lev is such a small amount that everyone can afford it.

We had no idea if people would be willing to donate for our organisation via ATMs, although we knew that UNICEF reported good results. The "WOW day" soon came! The person in charge of the project at DSK called us two days before Christmas. He told us to expect the transfer of the first amount in the afternoon. We started making forecasts of how much it might be. One guessed € 1,000, another one € 1,500, a third € 2,000. I decided to dream big and made a forecast of € 3,000. And the winner was: no one! The first payment exceeded € 8,000!!! Even though only one third of all the DSK bank's ATMs had the donation software installed before Christmas! The second transfer came in the first week of January 2016: € 11,000,

the third ten days later– € 13,000, etc. We collected around € 40,000 within one month. Just for comparison, the biggest corporate donation we had ever received over the previous five years amounted to € 25,000.

Now we automatically receive a transfer amounting to 29,900 Leva (approximately € 16,000) every week. "Why is it exactly 29,900 leva?" I asked the person from the bank. "There is a regulation", he explained, "that says, that if there is a transaction over 30,000 Leva, we and all banks are obliged to check whether it is considered money laundering and have to declare the correctness to the Bulgarian National Bank."

The sum generated by ATMs from 3 December 2015 to 15 June 2016 amounts to € 315,000. If the level of donations continues like this we expect the huge sum of € 700,000 by the end of the year! This means that self-sufficiency for SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria in 2020 is achievable!

This is my story with a simple message: do not give up; work hard and success will come! Success is always the best motivation for future results!

of completeness to her life. Dancing and breathing in fresh air from nature in the wood give her real boost in life. She is typically urban – she loves Sofia, the capital city of Bulgaria, with all its luxuries and problems.

”



Evidenced impact

“A great leverage SOS Children’s Villages has over all other humanitarian organisations is that they have worldwide individual and collective living testimonials to their development work. SOS Children’s Villages have produced an immense number of successful human beings in various communities worldwide. All these people bear witness to the success and sincerity of their claim.”

*Testimony by a co-worker of
World Vision International, 2015*

A promising measure of the impact of the work and services SOS Children’s Villages renders to children, young people and communities is “about how lives of people are improved, how communities grow, how the fabric of society is strengthened, how a donor’s contribution translates into improving children’s lives” (Measuring Impact, 2016, SOS Children’s Villages International).

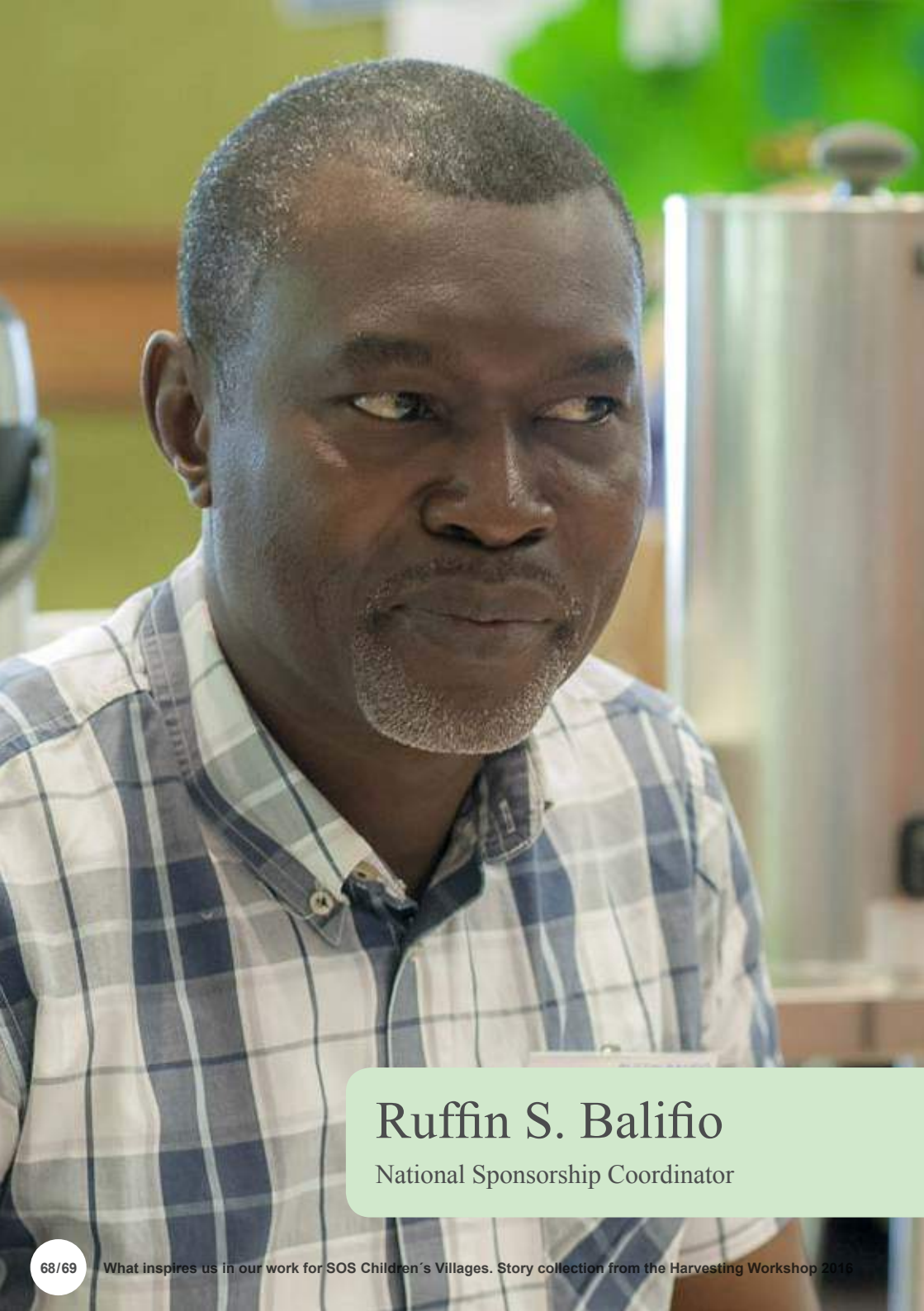
This has both material and motivational benefits. To attract and retain significant donors and sponsors, mobilize and acquire as many friends and partners as possible, increase and improve on the quality of our work

through innovation, “it is essential that we are able to clearly show the outcomes and impact of our work” (Global Intranet, SOS Children’s Villages International).

SOS Children’s Villages has already embarked on various measures for doing this. One is the Harvesting workshop, a strength based approach with a focus on finding out: what works well in the daily activities of SOS Children’s Villages; what gives strength to SOS co-workers; what we can build on within SOS Children’s Villages.

Another is the social impact assessment approach as part of a global result-based management system – RBM (SOS Children’s Villages International Website and Global Intranet).

Combining technical skills and storytelling techniques, what is produced by our work with children and young people and in communities is harvested and re-invested better. Like any other organisation, SOS Children’s Villages is a living system, and living systems grow in the direction in which they focus their attention.



Ruffin S. Balifio

National Sponsorship Coordinator



Let's have a drink

Telephone call way back in the past

Working for SOS Children's Village Centrafrique for 20 years can be exhausting, especially when the working atmosphere is not what it used to be. Your spirit can be low, but it can also be bumped up and wonders can happen when you look back through someone else's eyes.

Dring! Dring! Dring!

This is an incoming call from Joël¹, a former SOS boy who has been out of the SOS Children's Villages programme for a couple of years. "I would like to meet you, Tonton Ruffin (Tonton is an affectionate way of saying Uncle), if you don't mind!" he said. Do you know what was going on in my head at that moment? I was expecting him to come up with a problem to solve as our grown-ups are used to doing. So an appoint-

ment was made in a nearby restaurant. While waiting, Joël took the responsibility of ordering two bottles of beer. When the bartender brought the bottles, Joël told me: "Let's have a drink Tonton! You used to tell us (amongst many bits of advice) not to drink beer until we had a job, until we were adults: today I would like to have my first beer with you!" Isn't that surprising?

Back in the past

While drinking, Joël took me back to the time when he was a young boy being cared for in an SOS Children's Village. He could recall all the weekly pedagogical talks we used to have on various topics like the rules we set together for the smooth running of the youth facility, the outings, the holiday camps, etc. What amazed me was when he recalled an an-

¹ Name changed for privacy of the young man

“**R**uffin S. Balifio joined SOS CV of the Central African Republic 20 years ago. He is the National Sponsorship Coordinator. In the love and company of children, he discovers the value of happiness through daily work. “Dear Sponsor”, the children call him

ecdote of an organised afternoon support course. “Do you recall when I questioned you about whether you are really educators? I did wonder how you could timetable a mathematics course at 2 p.m. when we were supposed to take a nap¹”.

“Do you remember that you would exempt me only if I got better grades in maths? I knew, you would have punished me harshly,” he laughed.

Go further! You are doing great!

What I required from Joël was just that he work hard at mathematics and then I would leave him alone. Since then, Joël has been very good at this subject. He never failed a class, he got brilliant entrance grades to the university and graduated in finance and banking. As an adult, he realizes how difficult it is to educate children because he is a father of two daughters now. During this time spent together, he took the opportunity to motivate me not to give up, because what we did for

him and the others and what we are now doing for other children in SOS Children’s Villages is a wonderful job, according to him. He hopes that we will go further in our work for the ones in need and give more joy to children who need our help, especially when thousands are left on the streets because of the four years’ ongoing crisis in the country.

Remember! The Central African Republic has been going through a major crisis since 2012, making travelling to work in the country at our two SOS sites or within the town dangerous. Because of this crisis, the working conditions, motivation, the hope for a better future might be missing, discouragement may set in, but Joël encouraged me to still believe that working for the children, for the children in SOS Children’s Villages, is worthwhile. What we need is some time, to stop to have a drink and move forward.

¹ This is a rule after eating in the Central African Republic

and that gives him the feeling of being important – as part of a puzzle which shapes the future of CAR children. Equally the family gives him the same sense of being cherished, belonging and sharing. It is a school for tolerance, acceptance and moreover, to learn words like, “life is easy”. Playing the four quarters of basketball and afterwards extending

it into five quarters with stories and jokes, relaxing and giving meaning to life, reward him well! Growing up and working in Berberati in the southwest of his country where gold, diamonds, forestry and agricultural activities abound brings both joy and total despair. Children are tempted to go for money too early in life and to forgo education.

”



Assured quality

Quality, it can be said, is the satisfaction arising out of the mutual three-way interaction of past, present and future. This is possible when the past is seen as treasure, the present as pleasure and the future as measure.

The abiding main goal of SOS Children's Villages substantiates this very clearly: "(...) to help every single child and adolescent entrusted to our care to grow into an adult who, by virtue of his personal skills and capacities, is able to participate in the processes of society in an independent way" (SOS-Kinderdorf Forum No. 19 pp. 21-24). And still it is the primary goal of SOS Children's Villages "to ensure that many more children have a loving home and an equal chance to succeed in life" (Strategy 2030).

Quality assurance forms consciously designed measures intended to act at all levels and instruments of operation within SOS Children's Villages and beyond. In SOS Children's Villages, the instruments for such measures are: our ability to be human, tools, knowledge, policies etc. The following are also essential for assured quality in service and guaranteed delivery: adequate organisational structures, cooperation as an essential human characteristic, individual attitude, qualification and skills as elements of capacity competencies.

On a very practical level, the results-based management (RBM) approach as adopted by SOS Children's Villages illustrates this satisfactorily. Equipped with experience, knowledge and skills, SOS co-workers at various levels of functions, within specific circumstances, "make informed decisions and steer [their] work for the best interests of our target group". To assure the quality of work and services rendered, they focus "on outcomes of our programme work in planning, monitoring and evaluating, and reporting (Results-Based Management on SOS Children's Villages website and global Intranet).



Haight Ashbury



Music Center
Francisco

Alexandra Fuchs
Donor Services Coordinator
in Individual Giving



Blood, sweat and tears

An ode to the best team one could ever ask for

They say that every artistic accomplishment consist of 10% talent and 90% perspiration.

My story is about the art of keeping the stone rolling – it is about all these slightly boring administrative tasks that need to be done but don't come with any tangible reward.

The SOS Vikings

Up until recently my team, the SOS Vikings – that is what we call ourselves – have supported SOS Denmark, SOS Norway and SOS Sweden in all sponsorship matters. Together the Scandinavian Associations account for almost two thirds of all SOS sponsors worldwide.

During the past 15 years, the entire span of my SOS era, the SOS Vikings have written child profiles,

departure letters, transfers and name changes and taken care of all kinds of queries ranging from "The sponsor did not get the mid-year report" to "The child looks different in the new picture, does it really exist?"

We have prepared tens of thousands of profiles just for campaigns. Every few years, SOS Norway puts on a TV gala where 8,000 to 12,000 new sponsors sign up for a child sponsorship within a period of two weeks. This year, for the fourth time, Sweden has produced the TV documentary "A journey for life", acquiring 4,000 to 6,000 new child and village sponsors over a period of four weeks the programmes aired. The preparation for these campaigns starts months in advance, so you have to write profiles that will still be up-to-date and fresh many weeks afterwards. We try to make the progress visible

“

Alexandra Fuchs joined **SOS CV International** in 2001. She is a **Donor Services Coordinator in Individual Giving**. Constant changes around sum up the essence of her work but what stays is the inspiration of her co-workers. Being active in donor communication for well over 15 years, she now awaits new challenges which need to be



in some way by hanging up huge posters and ticking off the numbers of the profiles written using colours and drawings, because a tick-box on an Excel spreadsheet has no real feng shui value...

Then there are DR TV campaigns (direct TV), D2D (door to door) and F2F (face to face) appeals throughout the year that need preparation and, of course, every departure notice requires a profile for the replacement sponsorship. The ones I love the most are the unannounced campaigns: "Oh, by the way, we decided to have a test run for the Sponsorship Lab and since Sweden is one of our test markets, over the course of the next two months you will have to write 200 child profiles starting now!"

Day in and day out, year in and year out – this is what we do. We keep the wheel spinning.

Along with our Promoting and Supporting Associations (PSAs) and our National Association coordinators, we have found ways to sooth worried and upset sponsors whose sponsored children took a wrong turn and had to go to jail or the like. In some

cases the sponsors knew about these incidents via Facebook as they have been in regular contact with their sponsored child. It is difficult to find the right words when the sponsor knows more about the incident than I do and, even if I do know something, I must not say anything compromising.

We process 100 departures: meanwhile, 200 new ones are waiting

Late departures, underage marriages, drug addiction, abuse and – the most tragic of all – the death of a sponsored child, when there is actually no suitable wording at all, must nonetheless be communicated to the sponsors and/or to the PSAs.

In these cases, we have written texts that give the sponsor enough material to feel informed, so that they don't feel the need to ask follow-up questions, but not so much material as to violate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child or overriding data protection laws.

The SOS Vikings have evolved into professional communication dip-

counterbalanced with other treasures like music and sports. Her friendships ground her and gently force her to grow, and are therefore profoundly important. From conducting a choir and coaching young rock bands to running, hooping and other kind of movements, she

diplomats and determined knights of children's rights to privacy, whose whole existence is limited to a hamster wheel.

Now, you may ask yourself how you survive these repetitive tasks? Because, to be honest with you, most of the departures are still regular reunifications, and how many ways are there to describe a reunification on the basis of data protection and the Child Convention – not too many, I can assure you.

A wonderful team by my side

The only way you survive is by having the best co-workers by your side – each and every day. People you love and respect, people you can trust and depend on, people who help and support you – ALWAYS! That's how it's done. This is the only way I know how. The only way that you can keep the motivation going. Every morning, you are excited to go to work, because you can't wait to see these familiar faces.

This past year brought painful changes. The cutbacks forced us to say goodbye to many dear colleagues.

Due to the changed circumstances, others chose to leave on their own account. The SOS Vikings are no more.

It is time for a new generation of diplomats and knights

Due to the decentralization process, in July 2016, the time has also come to pass the torch.

My highly respected sponsorship co-workers in the National Associations will then take on the task of writing the transfer and name changes, the child profiles and departure texts. It is time for a new generation of diplomats and knights to step forth.

To those who shared the last years with me and had my back, I want to say: thank you. We will always remain deeply connected. You people rocked my world.

To those who will follow in my footsteps, all I want to say is this: if you ever need someone for help and support – be sure to call me!

always remains a time optimist. Coming to Vienna from Sweden as a teenager, she witnessed the city transforming over the years and is today blessed with one of the highest living standards in the world. Vienna waits for her while Sweden guards her heart.





Jan Folda

Child protection advisor



Changing mindsets is not easy but worth doing

Keeping children safe – no harmful practices

SOS Children's Villages provides care and support to many children in different types of programmes. It is easy to believe that the care and support is enough to claim that we protect the children. However, we always need to challenge ourselves and ask whether the children are really safe in the SOS programmes.

Do we do enough to protect them against every form of harm? What about ourselves, about the organisation? People tend to replicate the behaviour they learned from their parents when they were children. We are rooted in the local culture and traditions. The way that parents raised us is replicated in the way we treat our own children. In the case of SOS Children's Villages, it also

directly influences the way we treat the children supported by the SOS programmes. As part of this effort, we need to prevent potential harmful practises that may affect the children and young people in our programmes. How can we guarantee a safe environment for every child and young person in our programmes?

In some situations, the principles of SOS Children's Villages are not coherent with the local traditions and practises. Corporal punishment, female genital mutilation, early marriages, not accepting children born out of wedlock, are all practises that we can still find in many countries around the world.

“

Jan Folda joined SOS Children's Villages in 2007. He is Child Protection Advisor at the International Office Innsbruck. By learning from each other and listening attentively to the children and young people in our programmes, he believes very



How can we become strong enough to challenge these local practices? How can we create a different/ rights-based/safe reality in our own programmes?

A different way to handle teenage pregnancies

Two years ago, I went to Latin America to a meeting and I had an opportunity to discuss how they deal with the topic of teenage pregnancies along with SOS mothers, co-workers and also young people from one member association. In the past, young girls who fell pregnant were very often expelled from the programme. It was understood that it was not acceptable to keep the girls in the programme. They had to return to their families of origin or go to an institution. Very often, their lives became even more difficult than before. In the member association I visited, they decided to go a very supportive way. Young girls know that if they fall pregnant they are not alone. The SOS mother and other SOS co-workers will be there to support them. They have a right to stay in the programme, start an

independent life with their new family or – together with the SOS mother and other SOS co-workers – to find another possible solution.

I met three young girls who fell pregnant while they were still in the care of SOS Children's Villages. One of them decided to leave the SOS Children's Village and started a new family with her boyfriend. Another girl stayed in the SOS Children's Village but, based on a decision by the child welfare authority, she was to be "reintegrated" with the family of origin of her partner. And the third girl left the SOS Children's Village but still kept in contact with her biological siblings living there. All three girls were supported by the member association and its co-workers in the decision-making process and they had a key role in deciding about the next steps. They all confirmed that it was not an easy time for them but they appreciate the support from the SOS Children's Village and all its co-workers. However, as one of the girls said, "the family advisor advised me to 'speak to the people in the programme; you will not be removed from the programme'. My SOS

strongly that the treasures of working to keep children safe becomes a reality. Respect, trust, and a sense of responsibility are vital for life and these he practices and transmits in his family.

Hiking, cycling and travelling are sources of exhilaration, but it is nice to look forward to

mother also told me, ‘you are neither the first nor the last girl to become pregnant in the village; speak to the SOS co-workers’.”

Based on this positive experience, the Care and Protection Team at the International Office drafted a statement that aims to support member associations in dealing with the challenging topic of teenage pregnancies. We also initiated a discussion with the sponsorship department to find out the best way to reflect this changed practise in our system. As a result it was decided to change the departure reason in the departure letter form of the sponsorship office system from “pregnancy” to “pregnancy (not in line with SOS policy)”. All this was intended to highlight that expelling pregnant young girls from SOS programmes is not correct and we should all learn from existing positive experiences.

Appreciating this important example, I ask myself: how can SOS Children’s Villages support those children that are at particular risk and in need of help?

Experiences that impact on a wider field

On another occasion, I received information about a number of child safeguarding concerns and allegations reported in one of our member associations. They included care quality issues but also serious allegations of child abuse and neglect. The reporter was very angry about the organisation and threatened SOS Children’s Villages with approaching the media if we did not act quickly to address all these issues.

Many of the reported allegations were related to the traditional way of raising children in that country where, for example, corporal punishment is still widely practised. My role was to facilitate the contact between the reporter and the relevant regional office, as the reporter initially voiced a huge lack of trust in the member association and the regional office. I also supported the regional office in defining the necessary actions and followed up on the development of the whole situation. I was therefore right in the middle of all the discussions and emotions as-

being home again. Born in a small town in the central part of the Czech Republic and growing up in Prague as the capital of the Czech Republic, he now quickly realises how fast he wants to be back in the buzz and rush of the big city whenever he is away from it for a short time.



sociated with this situation. At times when the situation was not easy, I always found energy from the positive examples such as the situation described above relating to teenage pregnancies. It helped me to keep faith that, no matter how difficult, challenging and emotional the situation is, things can be worked out in a positive way and that the best interests of the children involved in the reported situation are always at the centre of all our actions.

During the follow-up actions, some of the allegations were upheld, some were unfounded. But many SOS co-workers including SOS mothers did not feel comfortable about the situation. They grew up in families where parents practised corporal punishment and brought up children very strictly. So why should they now see this as something wrong? It was obvious that there was a need for a thorough but also sensitive discussion about these issues. The main message of the discussion was clear. SOS Children's Villages as an organisation working with children stands for a "zero tolerance" approach to any form of abuse or

neglect. Our Child Protection Policy defines corporal punishment as one of the forms of physical abuse. And although, according to local traditions in many countries, corporal punishment is still something normal and commonly accepted, it cannot be normal in SOS programmes. People working for the organisation have to accept that.

During the discussion with the co-workers and SOS mothers involved in the follow-up actions, it turned out that more capacity-building in positive parenting was needed for the caregivers and other co-workers in the SOS Children's Village. However, since corporal punishment is also widely accepted by the local community, a crucial question remains for our team: how can we promote and explain our position of zero tolerance towards any form of child abuse (including corporal punishment) when we become challenged by local communities?

The difficulties and challenges during the whole process were a big learning experience for SOS Children's Villages. For example, it was

not clear how the situation should be handled when there is a disagreement between a member association and the regional office or even the regional office and the International Office. The main outcomes were that it was decided to define specific procedures for dealing with the reported child safeguarding concerns and allegations, and to clarify the General Secretariat's roles and responsibilities in the whole process.

In March 2015, the Management Council approved a new policy support document on the roles and responsibilities of the General Secretariat in the process of child safeguarding reporting and responding. It does not provide all the answers but it gives a very clear framework based on the collected lessons learnt. Collecting these experiences has sometimes been painful but it was worth doing. At the same time, we need to be able to defend our position when it comes to the point of being challenged by local communities.



Sarah Nayiga Kalungi

Programme Director
SOS Children's Village Kakiri



It is possible!

The passion that grows stronger Structure and functions

The village educator's job was very confusing at the start, but there was a will to perform it excellently, doing the best with all there is to support each child and co-worker. This involved a lot of commitment to get it right and to do the right thing. Self-sacrifice is part of the puzzle, helping children to do their home-work and supporting mothers to follow up on the individual development plan for each child.

This task was not clearly understood but many hours of work and a lot of energy were spent on having it work; because it is an important aspect of child development that needs to function, since SOS Children's Villages cherishes it as a brand domain. Many children were supported to do better in school through

special remedial sessions, including actual instruction as a teacher, a profession I never signed up for. The determination and dedication meant that at times I had to perform more than one role. This aspect is something I have continued to do to date. The role which was a little bit of everything, made many people's lives easier: mothers were supported with documenting of their work; the sponsorship department received data for the sponsor letters that were needed on time; the Village Director received full support in compiling reports; the youth care co-worker received strong support for children's placements, follow-up and regular motivational sessions for the young people. Central to this were the child protection activities that were crucial to the organisation. It was the

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Sarah Nayiga Kalungi joined SOS CV Uganda in 2002. She is Programme Director. What she treasures most at work is team achievement. That is why working in a team to achieve the best results is a highly desirable treasure for her. The level of team



passionate commitment to make a difference that kept the fire burning on the inside. No wonder it is still alive in many young peoples lives today who are reaching great heights. A good number of students were recruited by the Hermann Gmeiner international college. Their lives have not remained the same and their story has changed. Uganda has the largest number of students at the Herman Gemeiner international college who now access international university scholarships all over the world.

Supportive supervision fires enthusiasm

The support that has come from several supervisors so far, makes me feel that it is working and the enthusiasm to have an impact on more children gets bigger and stronger. This brings a great need for critical assessment on achievement to the next assignment. With all due respect, I was allowed to take on the sponsorship coordinator role that I had applied for at the national office. The new job opened doors for me to work with over 490

children and young people in SOS Children's Villages Uganda programmes. Knowing each child by name and face was very interesting but also quite challenging. There were strict deadlines and a need to be articulate and punctual in order for the work to meet the required international standards. Let alone the individual needs of the sponsors abroad across all the donor continents. Creativity was part of the package, as there was a need to keep up the interest of the sources of information, children, mothers and youth care workers. The numbers of sponsors in this period grew from 1500 to over 3500. Furthermore, the move from national sponsorship administration to fundraising gave rise to a comprehensive knowledge of the work in order to support more children. This was tough and needed a lot of patience, a strategic mind and honesty. Getting individual and corporate donors, and managing events was challenging but fulfilling. At the end of the day, funds were raised and this confirmed the fact that at times you need to follow your heart (self- commitment) to do work outside your training and get results.

achievement and motivation go hand in hand and the latter is always on her mind as she begins the journey to accomplishing any given task. A trusting and caring environment form the treasures of the family as a cardinal value, elements of which are: being well

Back to the initial passion

It was time to reconnect to the initial passion, but this time on a larger scale as more results needed to be visible in the work. The major focus was to influence the lives of many children as a national child and youth development coordinator. This time all the issues to do with children in SOS Children's Villages Uganda were on my desk e.g. one child strategy, child and youth development involving advocacy, guideline development and strategies for implementation including child admission, education, child protection, youth care, psychosocial guidelines, right from scratch to paper in the context of local and international SOS standards. I still feel that many children's lives are at stake if co-workers do not know what to do. I see a need for a standardisation of tools, ways of working and then looking at results.

All we can say is that when you fall it is not OK to stay on the ground. You always have to start again and believe in your work. It is still possible to focus on the individual child and young person. As a result

we can now see clear fruits: many young people have decided to serve their country as lawyers, accountants, educators and business men and women, and those who received their money gift have started to live independently. Many times one has to go an extra mile. For me it was required to play the role of an aunt, helping young people to settle into their new families, "now married".

provided for, trust, a helping hand to the less privileged and striving for common happiness. Living these values is for Sarah always a consciously made choice. Leisure for her is a mindful search for work-life balance: she cooks for the family, works in the



Change that can never be contained

Soon, with the changes in the organisation, the passion for the SOS Children's Village's work grew stronger. Many co-workers who had worked in the organisation for many years needed to look at innovative ways of doing the work, for the better. The target was now clear: reaching the child who has no parent and those who are at risk of losing parental care. We are now meant to work more with the communities and build on what already exists. The communities including government authorities are more than happy to have an extra hand in support of children who are at the highest risk. The quality of SOS Children's Villages work in Gulu spoke loudly and often opened doors to partnerships. No wonder partners sign up to hold hands with us! Right up to now, we have many committed co-workers who are willing to go the extra mile. This is done in teams that focus on real issues they come across in their daily work. The required change and the transition can only be a route to greater success. Keeping

core values is also very important. It is only the past that can propel us fast into the future. It is paramount to note that what gives long-lasting satisfaction is not a position or title but rather the contribution you make to people and the children who smile back at you.

Remain visionary and keeping achievements

Remaining visionary but not losing the achievements made to date is crucial. Today we live in a more constrained world with few resources to do what we would have wished to do. It is better that we sit in the boat with other like-minded people. This is how teams in Uganda have been able to go beyond the set targets. There is no one way of reaching the goal. We all have a contribution to the SOS Children's Villages' mission whatever our position or task: if we do things right and with passion, then we are building SOS together. Trying out new things and supporting others, trusting teams to do work, builds lasting trust amongst colleagues. If we engage with each other, it is the most reliable way to

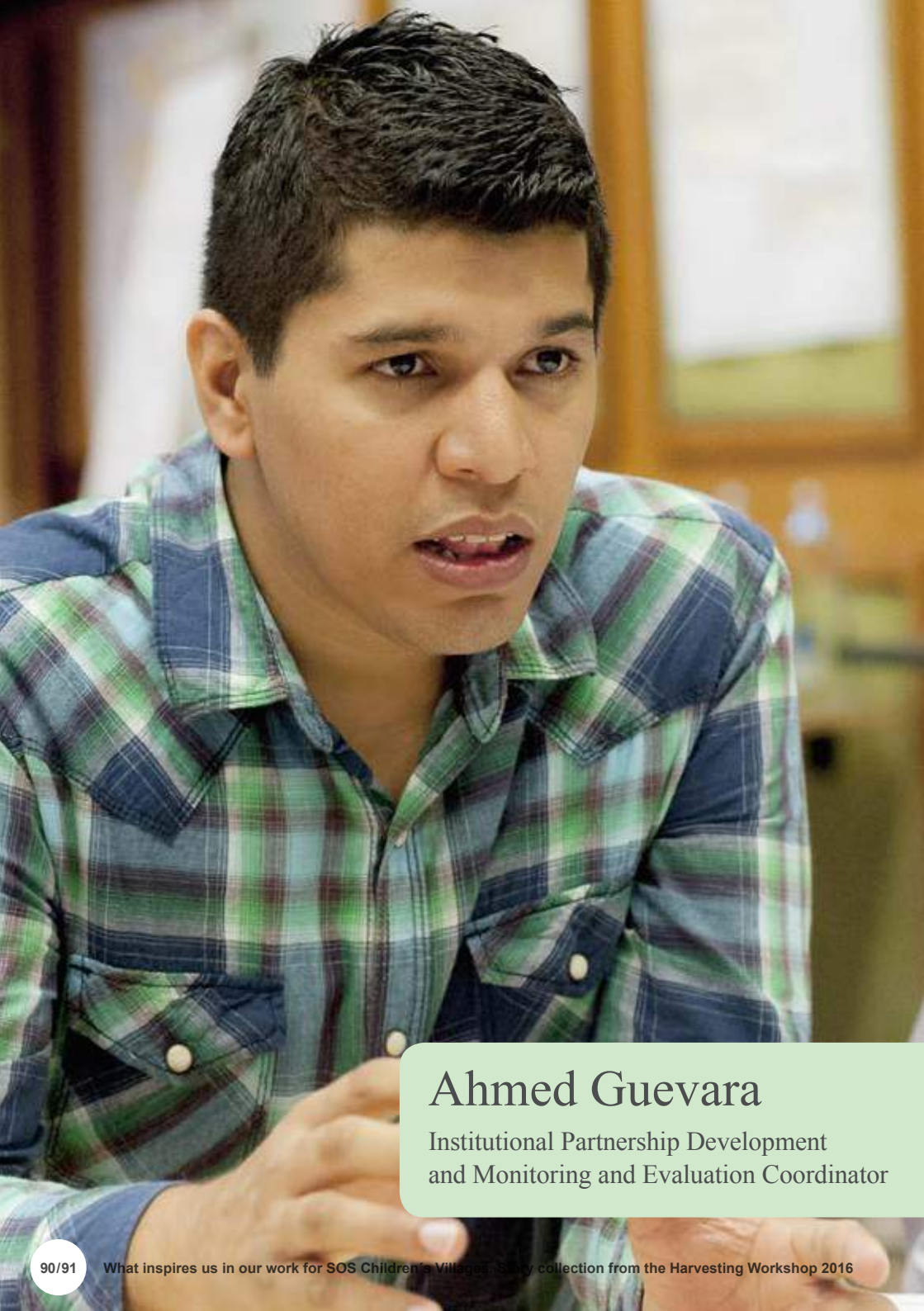
garden, tales time for a good laugh with friends etc. For Sarah, home is synonymous with hosting. It is an art, a game to be played: creating special moments for family members and friends, designing home surroundings into pleasing scenes for eye and mind etc.

build strong relationships that can enable us to support more children.

It is now time to rekindle what was at the heart of the start of the work in Uganda: the standards, collective achievements over the years and energy provided to other new county programmes, utilizing the skills and professionalism to prompt further success. Being creative and brave enough to recombine knowledge and skills to undertake new roles with new goals is paramount.

To all my co-workers I say: it is possible to not lose the individual picture of a child in what seems like an undefined path, where pressures from all circles speak loudly for a change. Many children still need our help. We can do it faster, taking care of each other, not feeling overwhelmed in changing the lives of many beneficiaries and communities. Going beyond the minimum requirements is what makes the SOS Children's Villages grow. SOS is the sum of all people going beyond the limits to provide the best care, and dedication is the major force in building trust both internally and externally.





Ahmed Guevara

Institutional Partnership Development
and Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator



The equation for great results

How living the SOS values can lead us to find treasures around

There are three elements I have found and experienced in this equation for great results: **trust**, **confidence** and **good relationships**.

The presence or absence of these three elements at different stages in our lives can lead us to completely different outcomes.

Childhood – a crucial phase in life for building confidence

For instance, when we are children and are in our learning process, if we do not get good results in a subject, parents can simply scold and reprimand us. They can question our intelligence and complain about why the results are not good enough if studying is our only duty. That

reaction will of course contribute to creating a negative belief in ourselves and eventually will undermine our self-esteem.

On the other hand, if our parents' reaction is to take our hand and be supportive, trustworthy and with a clear intention of building confidence in us through caring and good relations, then the most likely outcome will be an improvement in the grades and/or better results.

The same power those three elements have to shape our personalities in our biological growing process, they have to shape our performance in our working life. I

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Ahmed Guevara joined SOS CV Nicaragua in 2012. He is Institutional Partnership Development and Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator. Through the dynamics of his work, either as a community facilitator or programme coordinator, he discovers



had the blessing of experiencing that equation in SOS Children's Villages.

The experience of being seen / involved

It all began when I was working as a freelance interpreter and received a call from SOS Children's Villages Nicaragua to assist them with an international visit they were expecting. I accepted the job and spent 15 days getting to really know the core of the organisation, as that process was about implementing the five SOS policies in the programmes. During that process I felt really happy, not only because I was doing my job properly, but because the Regional Office programme team, who were leading the process, invited me to engage with and participate in the analysis rounds. That allowed me to experience the first element of the equation: confidence. The fact that they took me into consideration not only for translating, but for giving my opinion from my professional perspective as a sociologist, built a sense of confidence in myself that motivated me to apply for a long-term job in the organisation.

Sometimes one needs another turn

About a year later the opportunity to get that job appeared, and I was hired as a community facilitator. In the two years I worked in that position I tried as hard as I could to get good results, but I was not able to achieve them, which led me to submit my resignation. Quitting was the logical thing for me to do as I did not want to fill a space without contributing positively to the organisation's goals, but at that point my resignation was not accepted. Instead I got the chance to work in a different position as an individual donor service assistant.

Supporting each other makes the difference

It was at that moment that I experienced the second element of the equation: trust. Even though I did not get good results in my previous position, I was appreciated and not fired or treated as disposable. My supervisors believed that I had other potentials that could contribute to the organisation and trusted that I was

adaptation and commitment alongside openness to novelty as quintessential treasures in his work. The experiences of his childhood imprinted in him the importance of the family as a stable foundation for a balanced life. Leisure for him is also a way of learning: watching movies and then analysing their diverse meanings, is a school of its

able to put them into practice from a different perspective in another function. In that context I experienced trust at an even higher level when I was given the task of taking on one of the biggest challenges so far: contributing to improving the relations between a strategic partner as a promoting and supporting association (PSA) and, at the same time, concluding the formulation of a project proposal/application with several months' delay within a very short time.

By the end of a month after receiving that responsibility, I experienced an amazing flow, not only because I was able to coordinate the conclusion of the project's formulation phase that would benefit more than 200 children and their families, but because I experienced the third element of the equation: good relationships. It was those good relationships that helped us to work together towards a common goal from the different levels in the organisation. In addition, the same good relationships that were re-established with the PSA and nowadays allow us to have a more horizontal interaction

with them, are the ones that are so important in making SOS an amazing place to work.

Summarizing, if each and every co-worker in SOS Children's Villages trusts each other and makes an effort to build confidence and good relationships with those round about, the synergy to achieving great results and their treasures will inherently come sooner rather than later.

own, in his view. As his country, Nicaragua, is passing through a successful, yet worrying situation, he identifies signs of a brighter future as the present government has been more focused on the social area and has made substantial investments in education, which is a key factor for development.

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Prakashni Gounder

National Donors Services Coordinator



Together we can

Improving quality and meeting deadlines

I shall start my story by sharing with you that I love my job, despite ALL the challenges I encounter. Although I do not work directly with the children in the eight villages, I work with the information and stories and photographs of the 530+ sponsored children. The National Association is evaluated annually based on the work via the sponsorship department. The village and child sponsorship letters, the departure notices and response time to queries, etc. make up the score – although we also receive the score of the letters separately as well.

Feedback on the Child Sponsorship Letters and Village Sponsorship Letters

Each year we send letters to the child and village sponsors, based on the information received from co-workers in the village. Previously we received general feedback on the letters e.g. the letters were xx or xxx. And the overall score is xx.

The end of year letters 2013 feedback was based on a list of criteria and we scored 12 out of 26 for one of the village letters. Although I was expecting a low score, I was shocked and devastated at this; and to add more to my stress levels, as I had just completed the editing of the midyear 2014 letters, I then decided to step back, re-read the evaluation and change my approach to the letters.

“Prakashni Gounder joined SOS CV South Africa in 2008. She is the National Donors Services Coordinator. She loves working with children and communities and by virtue of this fact, her work bridges the two worlds she loves to work in. She is passionate about her work and consciously likes to state: ‘come to me with challenges and I



I made large copies of the feedback AND spent a whole day understanding the notes, advice and comments. For added measure, copies were taped to my office walls so that I could constantly refer back to them. I met our National Director and shared ways that I was going to approach this with him. My only request was that I needed his support to convince the teams in the villages that I needed to re-write the letters using the guidelines provided by the International Office (IO).

Once that was done, I began working on each letter. It took me almost two days of re-writing and editing, before I completed one letter. I then printed a copy and looked at it carefully. I did this process many times before I was happy, before completing the rest of the letters. My main objective was to score a minimum of 20 out of 28 for the next evaluation. As I wrote the letters, I kept going back to my notes, keeping them fresh and very alive in my mind. This was challenging and tiring, but I was determined to meet at least one of my objectives.

Challenging yet rewarding

Who says hard work does not have its rewards? When I received the feedback evaluation from IO I could have cried, as we scored 21 out of 28.

A change process with big impact

Our National Association is going along the sustainable path process¹. This process aims to support 35 Member Associations of SOS Children's Villages International in five regions to become increasingly financially self-sufficient and sustainable in the long term.

I have to say that this process leads to many challenges at various levels

So who is listening to my challenges of meeting International Office deadlines on improving the quality of work provided by co-workers from the village?

To me, leading by example is important and therefore change starts with me. I called all the village secretar-

¹ See p. 61

will help to find solutions". "Let me be ME" is the ethics of her understanding of relationship and family. Living with good memories of the beaches of her birthplace, Durban, a seaside port, she still enjoys nature in Johannesburg, loves cooking, reading

ies and told them that we will have a Skype meeting during the week and I will e-mail the agenda to them. They will add/edit/ comment what they also need. I then sent an e-mail to the programme directors informing them that I have scheduled a meeting with the sponsorship team [village secretaries]. I asked if they could help with authorizing a venue/ office space with laptop and Skype and invited them to join the meeting.

Holding individual support sessions with each secretary has helped a lot as each one has a different level of understanding. As for the secretaries closer to the National Office, I invited them to one of the sessions to help them improve their English writing skills and look for stories in everyday activities in the village. I make myself available to the team literally 24/7 via phone, mobile phone, Whatsapp and Skype. I hold workshops and get the village sponsorship co-workers to make presentations in the area of work where I see that they shine, excel or do well. I give them notebooks so that they can record events and happenings that the children participate in.

I thank them for working late, for responding to my e-mails, for trying to meet deadlines and for helping me to be good at my job. When the evaluations of our association arrive, I give credit to the team. I do not work alone, therefore the credit goes to the full team. In my humble opinion, people who work in the background are key to the result.

The secretaries are important to the work I deliver as the sponsorship coordinator. Oh yes.

Are you curious about the latest evaluation score for the period 2014 to 2015? For the end of year letter to the sponsors, we received a score of 26 out of 28. The total evaluation for the National Association was 94%.

I strongly believe that together as a team we can make a difference in the quality of work we deliver.

and ten pin bowling. Johannesburg is a city of many cultures and people – in fact a true reflection of the rainbow nation. It is known for its beautiful shopping centres, friendly people and heavy traffic.





Eghosa Agbonlahor
Erhumwunse

National Director



My story, our story

Accountability for Result

After joining SOS Children's Villages Nigeria in 2008 as the National Family Strengthening Programme Coordinator, my team and I were tasked with realigning the existing Family Strengthening Programmes and designing new ones in the country. This included redefining the scope, redesigning/adjusting the entire programme for sustainability, mainly focusing on child development through family and community empowerment, by building up family and community capacity to enable them to engage in, support and lead the implementation of the programme themselves.

Realignment for better outcomes

The management team, family strengthening co-workers, children, young people, community stakeholders and other relevant actors as well

as the village co-workers actively contributed to the entire process of realigning the programme. Together we reflected on and gained understanding of the present situation, while also proposing and discussing likely solutions for programme implementation and sustainability. The process of alignment took place in two existing locations, while the setting up of and designing new programmes commenced in Abuja and Jos respectively.

The goal of this process was to refocus the family strengthening programme (FSP) in existing locations and develop new programmes using the right approach, so as to be able to show results and report the outcome/impact of our programme to donors and other relevant stakeholders as we implement the programme in the various communities.

“Eghosa Agbonlahor Erhumwuse joined SOS CV Nigeria in 2008. He is the National Director. His work is happiness to him, because his motivation to work comes from within. Belonging to a family is the foundation of love, respect and security and from these he draws constant inspiration. He imparts a few words of wisdom: a family



The scope of the programme in each of the states where programmes were being implemented was wide and ambitious, with an overwhelming desire to reach more children and families. However, the programme did not define its scope of coverage in clear terms and no baseline information was available for measuring progress and results or for sound decision-making in all the existing programme locations. The programme was initiated with good intentions, but the dependency syndrome in every area of intervention/service of the package, made it very challenging to convince experts or other stakeholders of the impact and sustainability of our FS programme.

Based on approval received from management to assess the existing programmes, the consultants were able to identify and engage relevant stakeholders. Children, young people and community leaders as well as other community-based organisations were presented in the whole process and the report of results.

Positive change based on assessments made

After the report had been submitted, we were then able to have baseline information to work with and to restructure the entire programme. This included the scope of the programmes and setting up steering committees, while community ownership started to rejuvenate, as the communities were able to organise themselves, with each establishing a community-based organisation, as a key implementation partner. In addition, the leadership in these communities was now being responsible as they began to become aware of and provide means of identifying and supporting families whose children were at risk of losing parental care within the communities. The active participation of the community in the activity of the programme management committee was another clear indicator that the community was now taking ownership of finding solutions to the needs of children in their communities. The fact that we were able to achieve the critical foundational need for programme sustainability and realignment

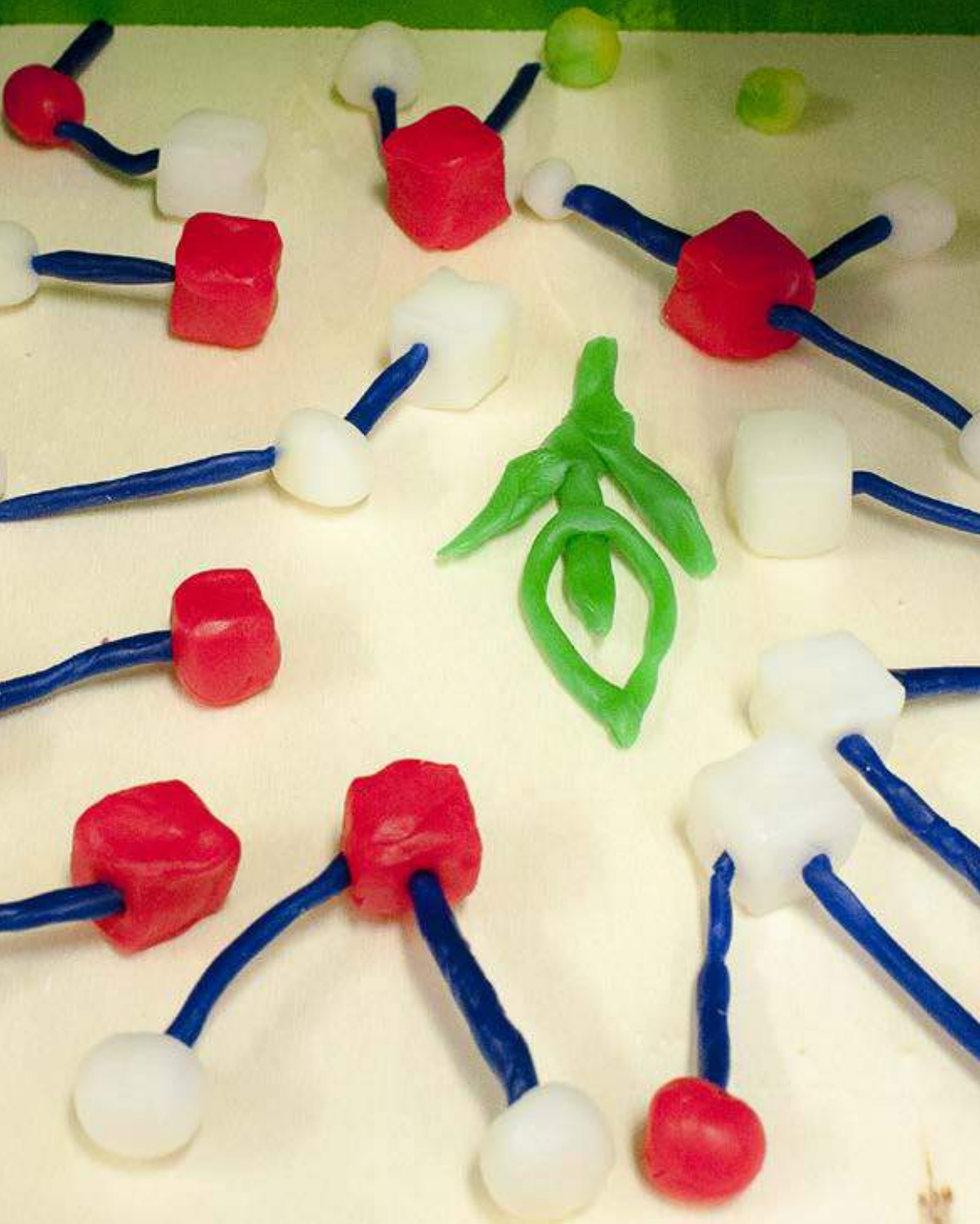
without its own unique story may not be complete. He loves nature. While it is the foundation for the work of our hands, in its own right it is filled with the marvels of delight and wonder. He lives in Lagos, the economic hub of Nigeria, where activities

created motivation. This means that the community-based organisation/ key implementation partners are now leading and implementing programmes in their various communities directly, while emphasis is based on family and community empowerment for sustainable child development, as a clear roadmap to ending or reducing to the barest minimum the inherent dependency syndrome. The fact that communities are now able to find the hidden resources in their community and are tapping into these resources while responding to the situation of their children is a significant leap. One of my flow moments was when the community started leading the programme by taking action that has always been driven by SOS. Interestingly, all the programmes are growing and developing along the path of sustainable change and living up to the dynamic nature of our world, especially as it relates to child development and family and community empowerment.

All this happened as a result of the active participation and engagement of all stakeholders, notably the

community, the government, children and young people, co-workers, management and the regional office staff, while also acknowledging that the challenges faced were dealt with using courage as a value for doing things differently, compared to “this is how we have always done it”.

run almost 24 hours a day. The diversity of the country Nigeria, he sees reflected well in the multi-ethnic constitution of his very own family. These are equally great sources of motivation from within. ”



Quality assurance

in Human Resources Development

The key to carrying out the mission of SOS Children's Villages successfully is investment in core child care & co-workers' development to provide them with the necessary skills to ensure their on-going growth and empowerment. Another very important element is a good understanding and sensitivity to the issues they face by investing in the organisation's leaders at all levels, to equip them to effectively lead the core co-workers. The quality of human resources development is a function of building human relationships with a focus on attaining better organisational results. This is derived from building skills, consolidating passion and commitment, and showing recognition. One essential element of this is cooperation, through which the overall picture of the quality of work in the functional areas can be produced and assessed (Our Human Resource Development Approach, 2006).

Assuring the quality of human resource development in the organisation therefore becomes a *condicio sine qua non* to effectively realising "the long-term goal of helping more children and young people and their families and communities to build their own successful futures" (Our Human Resource Development Approach, 2006).

To generate, tap, promote and integrate the personal qualities and resources of individual co-workers into the global processes of the organisation's work is a central measure of quality.



Mareike Rodewyk

National Human Resource Manager



One step ahead

Getting prepared for the shortage of skilled personnel

This story tells us about the pleasure of finally being able to help our programmes with their new task: increased recruiting efforts to be prepared for the future.

Although it had been difficult to find SOS mothers in Germany for many years, for a long time we had no problem finding the right educational employees for our programmes who were well trained and equally skilled. At this time, the usual ways of finding them like advertisements in newspapers or on the Internet worked well.

Over the last few years the prerequisites for recruitment have changed. On the one hand there is a new law that defines the right of every child under the age of 3 years to have

a place in a day care programme. The shortage of skilled personnel is therefore getting worse, especially in certain regions of Germany. Since it is much easier to work in day care than in residential care with shift work, some of our programmes were really struggling to find new educational staff.

In this situation I was put in charge of a pilot project scheduled to last for 1 year. We would support some programmes in trying out new ways of finding qualified staff. Project management was a new task for me at that time. Two to three programmes per region were asked to go to teaching colleges and universities to establish a partnership in training young people with educational work skills. They were to provide events

“**M**areike Rodewyk joined SOS CV Germany in 2001. She is National Human Resource Manager. In 15 years of work for SOS Children’s Villages she has discovered the professional passion to inspire people to contribute to the great idea of SOS CV as her great treasure. Accepting and respecting difference based on the



at those colleges and universities and also in their facilities. The goal was to increase the awareness level of being well known as a good place to work. We wanted to be known for our good structures for getting into the job and for the many options of developing oneself as an employee. So all the programmes at one regional level were to present themselves as one strong employer. It was important for us that interested students perceived SOS Children's Villages as an attractive employer where they could apply for a job.

The intention was that programmes would efficiently recruit and train more young people even during their studies at teacher training college or university in order to qualify them for the jobs we have to offer in residential child care and youth care. All this was done with the final aim of attracting them as co-workers afterwards. We wanted to employ co-workers who already knew what it means to work in our facilities, especially in residential child care, even without having been in the job for a long time. A second aim of the project was to implement structures

in each programme to ensure that there would be someone in charge of this task in the future as well.

There was a challenge for the project members: they did not have very much time to work on the project in addition to their tasks in education or leading a team of educators. The project got stuck a little bit and I wasn't sure if it would be successful at all.

Knowing about this challenge we tried our best to attend and support them as best as possible throughout the whole process. We organised meetings, helped with project management and assisted from head office, such as by providing standard forms, setting up new homepages, helping with flyers and so on. We even make suggestions for lessons to be offered to the teaching colleges and universities about some topics related to work in the villages. However, we were not able to interfere in the actions to address the regional colleges and universities.

Finally, some programmes started to take their first steps. Some of

foundations of love and trust, a loving atmosphere for living together is created. These form the treasures of family. Sailing in the sun is her treasure in leisure. Moreover, when she sails along with her kitchen and friends, then she feels at home. All the way from

them really got motivated to work together in their region. With joint efforts they achieved a lot and built up a presence as a single strong social employer in the region. It was a real pleasure to see how well it worked out for them and how much enjoyment they had doing it. It was just great to build up the structures together and share the information of what worked well with the project members afterwards.

This seemed to be infectious, so the others also started to find many good ways of working with the colleges and universities on one hand and to train the young people on the job during their study programmes on the other. These parallel efforts were important. It really felt great to inspire some of our programmes to take ownership of their own project and to handle it very successfully. We helped them to try out and establish new ways, thus ensuring that there will be enough skilled personnel and especially enough qualified educators or trained social workers in times of a big shortage of skilled personnel.

By providing the project management, fostering the exchange of ideas about what worked well and building up good documentation of the ideas and challenges in a “best-practice folder”, I was able to help the programmes participating in the project and SOS Children’s Villages Germany to be one step ahead with recruitment. It was very energising and encouraging to run even more projects to be prepared for the future.

her childhood home in the southern part of Germany (“Bodensee” – Lake Constance) to Munich where she lives and works, the experience of successful management of difference and diversity makes her happy.





Youth care programmes

towards independence and self-reliance

It is an important milestone in the work of SOS Children's Villages when young people take responsibility for their living situation, for their employment and for providing for themselves.

From the day a child enters the SOS Children's Village they are guided to become independent, self-sufficient and participating members of society.

Youth programmes support this process and are an essential part of the SOS family child-care model. They offer young people a variety of opportunities through which they can further develop their personality and prepare themselves for an independent life. The programmes may include

- education and training
- accommodation
- headstart programmes and
- follow-up guidance.

The youth leader plays a key role in guiding individual young people as well as reflecting on what can be offered to support their development. Being aware of the social and economic situation of the community in which the young person grows and develops is essential for the success of every youth programme.

Experience has shown that an SOS mother does not only guide her children towards maturity, she also continues to be available to them as a caring parent.

Youth development is always team work. SOS Children's Villages co-workers support and take on various roles within the youth development programmes in a variety of ways and capacities.



Gyöngyi Novák

Youth Facility Leader Szeged



From childhood to motherhood

How to be a good Sherpa next to the children

I met Maria when she was 17 but of course her story begins earlier. She was born in 1995 in a loving family. But after she was born her father decided to leave the family, because the parents had arguments. Maria never heard anything from him again, nor had a photo of her father left. So he disappeared from her life.

Not an ordinary childhood

Maria's mother was a nurse, working hard in a hospital. They lived together with her grandmother. When Maria was 7 years old, her mother died from cancer, so the grandmother became the one to look after Maria. I think that is why Maria is so tolerant now and why she can cope with difficulties. She had to learn these

things and she learned them well. When Maria's grandmother got older she went blind. It was a difficult time for Maria, because now she became the one who had to look after her grandmother and do the housework and gardening instead of playing with other children in the playground, or just hanging around with friends.

Maria became the "head of the family" and had to deal with all the problems. Maria was often hungry, so she went to the garden and ate what she found: carrots, onions, peas and tomatoes. Her grandmother got an illness and had to go to hospital. Fortunately, Maria and her grandmother lived in a small town, so everybody knew what was going on. One of Maria's teachers took her

“

Gyöngyi Novák joined SOS CV Hungary in 2005. She is a Youth Facility Leader. For her, it is a big treasure to lead life with young people. It offers her moments of insight into how they experience the world. The treasure of family is the feeling of a



to her home to live with her family until the school finished. Maria had been a good student before, but because of this situation, became worse and worse. In the hospital the grandmother died. So Maria had to go into alternative care.

Finding a nest in an SOS family

Fortunately she entered a good SOS family. She had a good nest and built relationships. She still had difficulties in school. Due to poor marks she went to a school to learn cookery. But things got even worse. The SOS mother realized that Maria is very talented at handicrafts like drawing and she is also extremely creative. So she took the child to an art school. Maria did well and she was so happy with that change.

At the age of 17 her orientation began and at the age of 18 she moved to our Youth Facility. In Hungary we have a school leaving exam. If you get good grades you can go to university. On the exam day Maria went to school to sit the exam.

Having fun in the capital city

After a few hours I received a call from the police, telling me that Maria was in prison. It appeared that she had met some friends and had gone to a shop where she stole make-up, perfumes and some nail polish. The price of the items was so high that the shopkeeper called the police. At that time Maria was already over 18 years so she was held responsible for what she had done. We went to the police station: Maria was really upset. She and her friends had thought it would be fun to do this kind of thing. Spending four hours in prison was more than enough punishment for her and she had to have one extra year at school in order to finish the exam.

During that year Maria also learned a trade to make the best use of the time. After that she successfully applied to university to study art. She had three wonderful years in our capital, Budapest, exploring the world, dealing with all the problems: how to deal with money properly, how to look after herself. She really became an independent young lady.

common purpose. Enjoying life together with her niece and nephew, with young and old, she cultivates this feeling. Reading, indoor and outdoor games and gardening offer

When everything changes

One day Maria came to my room. I saw that she was terribly embarrassed and wanted to say something very important. She told me that she was expecting a baby. She was afraid of my reaction, because if she were to keep the baby, she would not be able to graduate. She also showed me the very first picture of the baby.

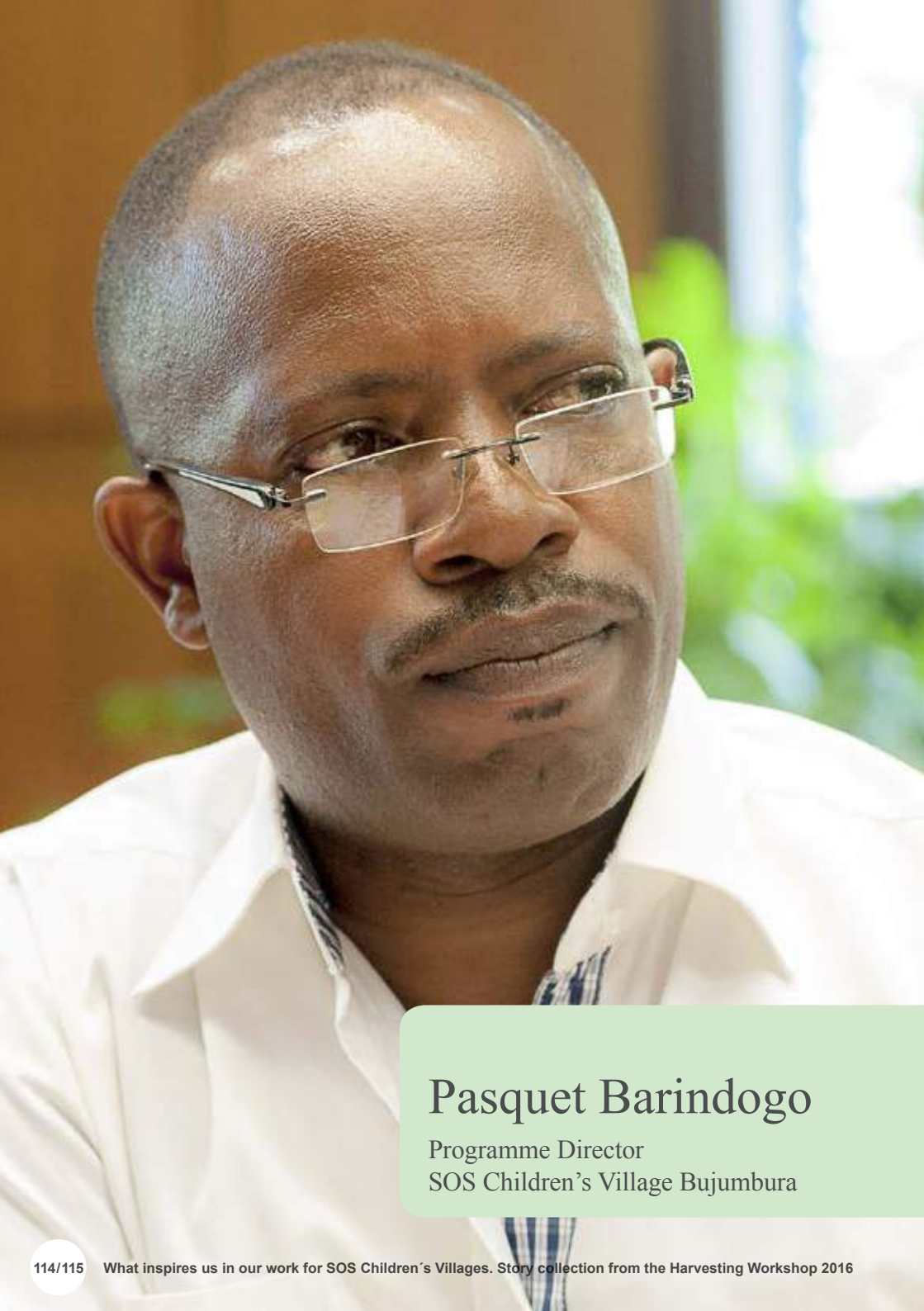
I was happy, hugged her immediately and congratulated her. She started to speak about what frightened her. She became pregnant exactly at the same age as her mother. She was not engaged to the boy who was the father. I showed her what was different about her situation. That calmed her down. Maria and her boyfriend got married before the baby was born. They have a nice flat in our capital and the father is so happy to have Maria and the baby with him. They became a real family.

For me it was easy with Maria, because she had good roots. All I had to do was to remind her about what had worked before. She had good

models about relationships, love and living together in her mind and heart. She was able to rewrite her story, and became an excellent mother. I have just checked my Facebook messages and I found a nice poem that she had written about her son's teeth coming through and about what problems they have to face. This also shows me that Maria can handle difficulties in a very unique and creative way.

her refreshing moments. Home is practicing the various kinds of occupations which have the character of work, games and trivialities.





Pasquet Barindogo

Programme Director
SOS Children's Village Bujumbura



More fear than evil

In December last year, there were protests against the current president. There were a series of military camp attacks in December. Unfortunately, it was early in the morning one day and some of the children being cared for in our SOS Children's Village had already gone to school. We then found that three of them were missing.

I called the staff members and mothers in order to tell them this bad news. Everyone was afraid, but we didn't lose hope. We all kept searching but because we were afraid, we couldn't leave the SOS Children's Village. There were gun shots from everywhere! From 8 am we were still waiting for them... in vain!

Where are the three boys?

At 12.00 I got an anonymous call while I was still in my office. The voice asked me if all my children were there. Being afraid, I did not answer directly and asked him who he was. I recognised the voice: it was one of the teachers of the SOS primary school. He told me that he had just seen five boys at the school but he did not know where they came from. I gave him the names of my three boys and fortunately they were amongst them.

“Damien Pasquet Barindogo joined SOS CV Burundi in 2006 as Programme Director at the SOS Children's Village Bujumbura. The treasure he discovers in his work is passion – for growth in respect and security. He watches children grow in the village, asks questions about life as they develop through learning and create their own families. >

Still, the problem was to find a way to get the boys back to the village. Although it was not far from the school we struggled because of the danger on the road. I told the teacher that the children had to keep quiet and stay at school till we could find a solution. I also told the watchman to ensure that they did not leave the school without my authorisation. So they had to stay there till 6 p.m. When I heard no shots any longer, I called the teacher and asked if he could accompany the boys back to their home at the SOS Children's Village. He agreed and told me that he had to make sure that the danger had passed.

A dangerous way home

At 6.43 p.m. he called me to tell me that he was leaving the school. I immediately called all the mothers to come to the usual place where we meet to pray every evening, in order to wait and welcome the boys back in the Village. I continued to keep in touch with the teacher till he got to the Village.

When we saw our three boys, many of us cried with joy. It was such a huge relief in the entire SOS Children's Village Bujumbura. We welcomed the boys to the different houses and stayed up together till 10 p.m. There was more fear than evil, because thanks to God our three children were found unharmed.

“It always seems impossible until it happens” – this is the magic of what he experiences as the family. Leisure opens the road to happiness for him as he goes jogging, cycling and sometimes swimming. Home is the place where he passes on stories of childhood. ”

Second phase of workshop approach – dreaming

What might be within my sphere of influence in SOS Children's Villages?

As the second phase of the Appreciative Inquiry cycle, the dream phase sets the scene for the individual to embark upon a boundless wave of inspiration and creativity and to exercise his or her potential in “creative envisioning” for the organisation. In the Harvesting workshops this dream phase is individually oriented and the rationale for this approach is:

- To inspire the individual to action for the common good
- To experience that inspired action leverages high motivation, and that the resulting achievements are foundations for job satisfaction, optimum results and personal fulfilment.
- That an individual co-worker is able to dream for the organisation with the great chance of seeing the dream come true, is evidence that the dream phase is a reliable stepping stone to consolidating a sense of ownership, leadership, responsibility, accountability and belongingness.
- For more details see Harvesting Curriculum and Handbook.

Having extracted in the discovery phase what is encapsulated in the phrase “life-giving forces” – meaning what gives life to and what works well in the organisation – the individual workshop participants now challenge their creative ability, willingness and openness by envisioning from and within their “circle of influence” for the organisation. This is a technical term describing the closest sphere of the participant's jurisdiction at work (for further explanation, see Curriculum for SOS Children's Villages Harvesting workshops (Part A)).



The point of departure in the AI approach dream phase is to find out “what might be”. During Harvesting, the participants are introduced to this part of the programme by either a dream journey or a philosophical circle (for a more detailed explanation of the two applications and the rationale behind them, see the Handbook for Harvesting workshops parts A and B). In the 2016 workshop we adopted the philosophical circle. After telling a captivating story, the inspiring philosophical question:

What does it mean to get the best out of something? was posed. A round of philosophising ensued on this subject. The outcomes from this are as diverse as the areas of work, scope of the of influence, power of imagination and cultural context of the “dreamers”. Connecting all these with the life-giving forces discovered earlier, the participants individually dreamed up ideas and concepts to be put into action as dream-projects.

Perhaps the pictures and descriptions below will entice you, dear reader, to dream for SOS Children’s Villages as well?



Ahmed Guevara, Nicaragua

Supporting each other will take us to great results and higher levels

People often build walls around themselves that isolate them from each other. In SOS or any other organisation, those walls can make people work like islands, working daily for individual goals and recognition, rather than looking for common success.

It is only when we come out of our bubble, when we tear down those walls of lone work to support and care for the ones around that we are able to climb the ladder that will take our organisation to a new level.

Let us take the hand of the one next to us who might be facing some difficulties (yellow), and we will all as a system eventually become an outstanding practice (blue).



Tearing down the walls of lone work

(In the Monitoring and Evaluation colour code, yellow refers to a process encountering difficulties and blue to a best practice that can be replicated).

Aimé Eudes Yaka, Burkina Faso

Whose child? Our child!

SOS must now practice the strategy of acting. It must share its experience, knowledge and skills with the community so that it protects the community, especially children as their sociocultural context.

The community wakes up and, with the support of SOS, rediscovers and relearns traditional best practices in the field of social solidarity, something practiced in the past and now gone. The community becomes strengthened by SOS. SOS and the community develop a strong network and child protection system.



Community wakes and stands up for the rights of children

Alexandra Fuchs, International Office Vienna

Goodbye Child Sponsorship – Hello new possibilities of support!

The set-up of the classical SOS Children's Village has changed over the years and the logical development that goes hand in hand with these changes is of course to renew our forms of support. Align the sponsorships we offer with the UN Convention on the Rights of the child and key data protection of child privacy and focus on other means of income. Shape a modern organisation that is gender streamlined and diversity rules!



Damien Barindogo, Burundi

Every child is protected in a safe environment with love and respect

All the children of our target group should live in a protected environment with the help of the community. This community must be ready to cope with the children by giving an immediate response before the intervention of SOS. In 2020, all the children from our target group should be well integrated in the community. We have to aim for the promotion of CVPP in order to reach the Villages of tomorrow with the guarantee that the children will gain more. All the stakeholders such as colleagues in the Village, the associations and the government will be immersed with the development of the SOS Children's Villages of tomorrow. This will be achieved thanks to information and training.



Every child is well integrated in society

Eghosa Erhumwunse, Nigeria

Quality Child and Youth Care in Nigeria

Strong people, systems and effective and efficient processes that support quality child and youth care will promote their independency as they grow into adults, while also providing them with the soft and hard skills needed to succeed in life.

The opportunities for this are reflected in the implementation of the SOS Children's Village Programme Policy (CVPP). This uses world café methodology to conduct reviews within different functions (including systems and processes) and triangulate and analyse the outcomes of these reviews with clearly implementable action plans to drive and guide quality care for children and young people to become independent, and to

finally succeed in life. Government and other stakeholders are urgently required to be fully and passionately involved for the overall good of children and young people, in order to sustain and preserve the future for generations to come.



Strong people, systems and effective and efficient processes that support the quality care of children as well as making them succeed in life after care

Gyöngyi Novak, Hungary

Doing it with Heart & Soul

My goal is to attract my colleagues' attention in connection with the quality level of our work. These young adults have nobody but us, so we really have to put our heart and soul into our "work".

To achieve that we have to be in the processes in a more conscious way. So we first need to develop self-awareness. We then need to learn and experience more determination not to follow the easy way of external motivation but to find the route of internal motivation. We also have to be better at problem solving. This is important because we are the role models for these youngsters. If they don't learn particular skills in the youth facility which is a safe environment, they have to learn when they no longer have this kind of safety, when we are not around. That can make them much more vulnerable.

So my dream is to let our young people go with basic skills which will help them to live a good life. But to raise independent adults, I need independent co-workers. Only an adult can bring up someone to be an adult.



Working in a Youth Facility is not just a Job, but a Way of Living and Thinking

Igor Georgi, Russia

Strong development of the SOS Children's Village Programme in St.Petersburg based on community needs

Our program is there to be an essential part of the local community, so our work is inspired by the needs that we hear of from local stakeholders. It gives us the required and right wind for the sail. To be able to respond in an effective way to all the challenges, we need to have the necessary resources for our activities. That is the green arrow part. When we have both of these in our hands, we are sure to provide a strong development of the SOS Children's Villages Programme in St.Petersburg, based on community needs.



Jan Folda,

International Office Innsbruck based in the Czech Republic

There is a response to any reported child safeguarding concern

Child safeguarding concerns and incidents are not easy to deal with. Very often, an immediate response is required and any delay or inappropriate response may cause further harm to the children and/or young people affected by the reported situation.

Let's put clearly defined measures and actions in place in all SOS programmes and make sure that all co-workers are aware of these. Ensure that there are well-trained people at all levels of the organisation who can provide the highest quality support for the process of dealing with child safeguarding incidents.



SOS Children's Villages needs to define a set of specific actions and measures to be taken in the case of reported child safeguarding incidents

Kapila Gunawardhana, Sri Lanka

Every employer takes on SOS young people

Youth development should be started from childhood.

Good care builds self-esteem in children and supports them to be resilient to social encounters and be more confident and skilled in employment.

An education system which includes a mechanism to identify each child's multiple aspects of intelligence and multiple nature in order to structure their education and vocational training.

A good lobbying with employers is needed to employ the young people who are groomed in such manner in initial stage and it will flow free later.



The employability of young people is assured through well-structured education, vocational training and employer lobbying

Mareike Rodewyk, Germany

Discovering the power of storytelling for HROD

Storytelling is such a powerful method to share impressions of the work with SOS that it will help the process for recruiting qualified educational personnel.

If we can implement the method in seminars and other meetings and can build up a 'treasure of stories' (told live whenever possible, or in films or written down), we can use them in many recruiting situations such as on the employer website or in recruiting events in teacher training colleges and universities. Feeling 'the flow' in other people's work experience with SOS can make the difference, so that people apply for a job with SOS.

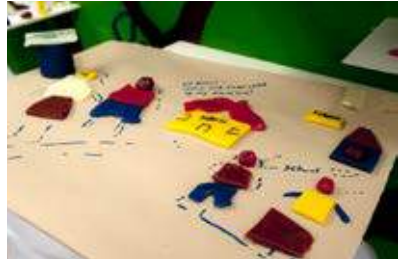


Storytelling to attract people working for us!

Maria José Delgado Freire, Cabo Verde

More joint ventures for greater results!

My dream is to have the Family Strengthening Social Workers motivated and trained to support families to be self-sufficient to support their own children. FSP social workers receive on-the-job motivation training. Their immediate needs in community work and the necessary motivation inputs should be identified.



Natalina Sangapta, Indonesia

Every child belongs to a family

Every child should grow up in a family environment where they feel accepted, respected, and safe. It needs a stable relationship with the adult where the child feels loved and cared for. They should also be able to come to the family every time they need to. This stable relationship grows in a supportive and encouraging atmosphere.

SOS Children's Villages work with many types of alternative care where the child can grow up, based on the individual needs and situation of each child.

We work with the concept of family strengthening, kinship care, foster care and other kinds of alternative care. We ensure that the children grow up with love, respect and security. We provide assistance and expertise to support the

implementation. SOS Children's Villages work in a way which advocates the best interests of every child in the world.



Family strengthening, kinship care, foster care, alternative care, children grow up with love, respect and security

Prakashni Gounder, South Africa

building a stronger team

Working together as one team to provide sponsors with quality information on their sponsored children.

My dream is to build a team of co-workers who understand that the part played by each of them in sponsorship is important and appreciated. Together we can!



Change starts with me

Rabin Nepali, Nepal

Special care unit and work therapy centre

At our place, young people and adolescents with learning disabilities spend their time by living idly. This situation arises because there is no place where they can go to work and earn something for their living according to their capacities.

My dream project is to establish a care unit plus work therapy center where they can work and earn something to live on for their later life in a dignified manner, as contributing members of society.



A dignified later life for young people and older people with learning disabilities.

Rajneesh Jain, Regional Office Asia

A boat for sustainable life: livelihood intervention in an emergency programme in the Philippines

In this livelihood intervention fibre boats were given to the local fishing community, something which proved to be quite cost effective. These fibre boats are lighter, durable and get higher yields than their old wooden boats.



Ruffin Balifio, Central African Republic

Sponsorship in an emergency situation

This aims to motivate colleagues to provide sponsors with objective and appealing information on the development of the children they sponsor. This is all the more important, considering the worrying state of uncertainty the Central African Republic (CAR) is going through at the moment.

The common goal in sponsorship is to be able to make our supporters feel valued and informed about our work and how their help contributes to building families for children at risk. To be able to tap into the dark cloud of misery, uncertainty and trauma, and still find moments of relief and happiness in the children's lives to talk and write about is not that easy. When life is upside down and tomorrow is never certain, the way we live nowadays in the Central African Republic, experiencing positive and optimistic, creative and motivating feelings in one's work may happen only in rare moments.

In situations like this, when writing for the sponsors, such feelings may not be found often in such letters.

That is why it remains a dream to be dreamed about and realised, namely, how to discover that glimmer of light flickering in the heart of a dark cloud.



Sarah Nayiga, Uganda

A happy childhood and supportive environment for every child who comes into contact with SOS

There is more that we can do collectively to enhance the way we work with children to ensure that every young person who leaves the programme is fully supported i.e the alumni provides feedback but also supports those who seem not be on track. SOS can also be a hub for memories for many children who are beneficiaries and those from the community.

We should join hands with several stakeholders to advocate change in child care and safety practices in the community, ensuring that at the end of the day, there is a child-friendly environment for children's growth and development, happy

and motivated co-workers who support child development and several sponsors for the childcare work.



Wellbeing of each SOS child and co-worker promoted

Sonia Zhivkova, Bulgaria

Strong and reliable association for childrens' well-being

Doing fundraising means making money. Not for profit, but for changing children's lives for the better.

My dream is about achieving great fundraising results in the years to come, so that the Bulgarian SOS association becomes self-sufficient and is able to provide plenty of social services to children in need. Because every child deserves to be happy and to be surrounded by love and security.



Financial stability that guarantees provision of various services for children at risk

Vanna Huot, Cambodia

Safe way to school for children

Safe trips for poor children in the city to go and come back from school. In the capital city, small children from poor families face the danger of traffic while walking or crossing the road on the way to school and back, because there is no public transportation.

My dream project is to have vans or carts with engines to take those children to school and also to strengthen their families' situation.



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Harvesting short films

List of trailers to stories told in Harvesting 2015

- Trailers to **stories told in Harvesting 2016:**
http://youtu.be/r_prZFYdchl
(by Tantegert OEG)
- Trailers to **stories told in Harvesting 2015:**
<http://youtu.be/XLIHivUC4yQ>
(by Tantegert OEG)
- **Short film about Harvesting**
(April 2014): <http://youtu.be/x5E-lZXHV3U>
(by Tantegert OEG)
- **The story about Harvesting**
(November 2012):
<http://youtu.be/nCRUX42FJTA>
(© Joachim Puls)

Harvesting workshop team



**Irene
Gleirscher**

Head of project
Adult Training
Tel. +43 512 3316-5671

“I am thankful to be involved in Harvesting! It is so enriching to see such a diverse group of people discovering their strengths jointly, to feel the trust amongst them grow, to watch the network being alive, and to grow myself by hosting this experienced colleagues together with a committed and great team.



**Christian
Honold**

Team member
Managing Director
Tel. +43 512 3316-5682

“Harvesting to me means to enter a world of exciting labour experiences enriching me in my perception of the SOS world.



**Walter Waltz
Anyanwu**

Team member
Spirit-ubuntu
Tel. +43 512 3316-5704

“Harvesting enlivens and enriches me so much. Then, it brings home to me what it really takes to serve the child at risk:
SOS Children’s Villages
It’s everywhere that
You bring in the very best you can
I bring in the very best I can
We bring in the very best we can
To save the child at risk.



**Margret
Steixner**

External consultant
Process facilitation &
analysis

Intercultural Perspectives
www.intercultural-perspectives.com

“Every culture has its own way to celebrate the harvesting season, but all connect it with joy, gratitude and appreciation. All these words are also true for HARVESTING and I feel privileged to be a member of the team, that prepares the room for all the special stories to be told.



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