

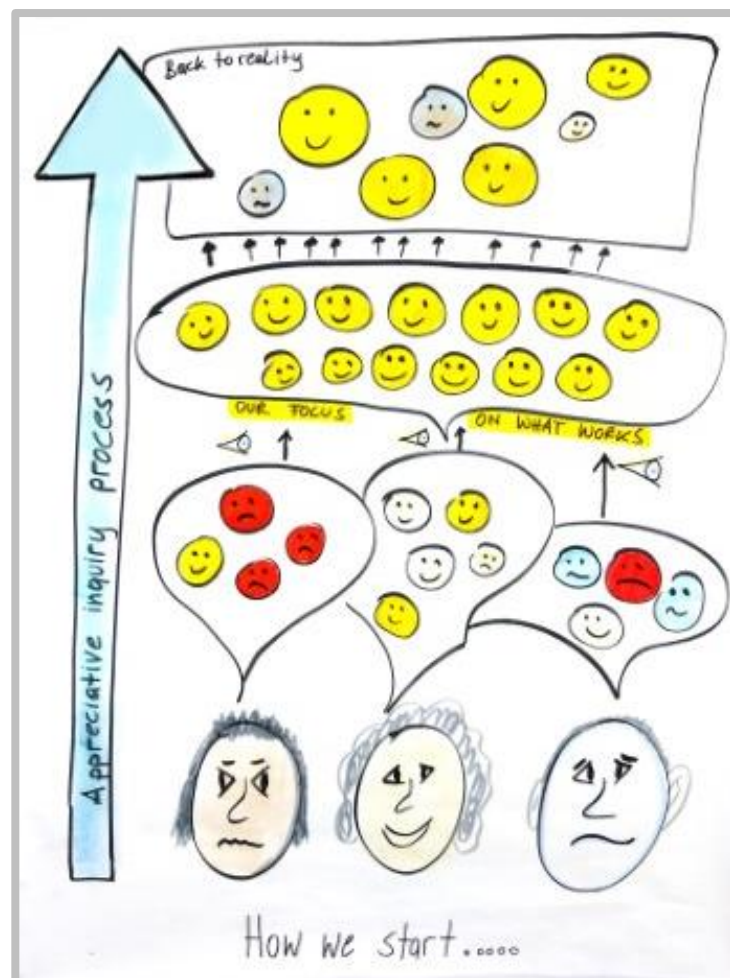
# CURRICULUM FOR SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES HARVESTING WORKSHOPS

December 2016



SOS CHILDREN'S  
VILLAGES

Hermann Gmeiner Academy



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## Preface

Before we turn our attention to the processes and approaches that guide SOS Children's Villages knowledge harvesting workshops let us draw attention to the diverse meanings of the word **HARVEST** as a concept, a metaphor and a practice.

Harvest and harvesting can be seen from different perspectives.

- **As a general practice:** it is a seasonal activity well embedded in human social, cultural and, very often, religious contexts.
- **As an event:** it is a time of reaping, gathering and bringing in the fruits of past labours.
- **As a social activity:** harvest is mediated by meaning and motivated by values. For instance, to harvest is to invest commitment and responsibility. It is also an act of communication.
- **As a process of continuity:** harvesting is like building a bridge between the past, the present and the future. Harvesting includes selecting the best fruits and preserving the seeds for future planting. Looked at in this way, harvesting is not just an end but also a beginning.

**What unites all the levels: Those harvesting a crop** do so when crops are ripe. In the same way, communication, management and care workers harvest at the peak of their experience. While the practical work of harvesting may mark the end of a crop season, festivals marking the harvest are **evidence of its enduring** social and cultural characteristics.

### What does it mean to harvest?

To harvest is to affirm and strengthen life, to share and manage knowledge, and to explore its meaning for social, economic and entrepreneurial activities. Harvesting is a consciously undertaken task connecting the past, present and future of the harvester. Let us illustrate this with two examples:

A bird can feast on the farmer's corn. The bird is certainly not harvesting. Even when human beings go into the forest to pick the fruits of nature, it is not called harvesting.

There is an important distinction between picking things which grow in nature by themselves and harvesting the fruits of the things we cultivate, plant and nurture ourselves.

Similarly, there is a difference between reflecting on one's own personal experiences and another person making use of the recalled experiences.

Experience is the basis of knowledge, and experience recalled and reflected upon is knowledge reaffirmed.

### Why harvesting the harvest?

Socially, economically and culturally we harvest to develop ourselves, to preserve and enjoy the fruits of our labour, to demonstrate our success and to acquire new energy. Harvesting is rarely done alone. Harvest time is a time for happiness, fulfilment, sharing, taking stock and sorting out. It is a time to examine, manage the present and anticipate the future; hence we evaluate options for orientation as we reflect on the past and the future. These reflections can release the potential for change.

### Organisations and harvesting

In businesses and social organisations and even in an educational context, the central element to what is sown, planted, processed and harvested is knowledge. Organisations harvest elements of experience and knowledge, moments of being at one's best and flow, unity of values and meanings, convergence of techniques and know-how.

Harvesting within SOS Children's Villages is an opportunity for gaining and sharing knowledge and experience and acquiring skills. It is also self-transcendence attainable through reflection and action planning. Progress takes place in experiences beyond the physical level. Simply put, it is a moment of growth. **We harvest to give meaning to our work. We harvest to release change potentials.**

### Harvesting and experience sharing

Learning from experience is indispensable when engaging in activities, aimed at consciousness raising, community action and social development.

John Locke, the English philosopher asked the question: "Whence has the mind all the materials of reason and knowledge?" His clear answer was: "In experience"! All our knowledge, according to him is founded on experience. (John Locke, 1904: Bk 11 ch. 1).

SOS Children's Village Harvesting is an **experience-based knowledge sharing workshop**. We create knowledge by transforming experience. The process of this transformation is learning. By reflecting on earlier experiences we transform them, thereby adding them to deeper understanding. (Lee Andresen et. al, 2001: 225-226). Giving special time and space to the processes of reflecting, transforming, deepening and extending understanding and experience form the distinguishing characteristic of Harvesting Knowledge in SOS Children's Villages.

### Harvesting Knowledge in SOS Children's Villages

Organisations and human beings grow in the direction in which they focus their attention! This is one of the core ideas of our leading methodology, Appreciative Inquiry. Harvesting knowledge in SOS Children's Villages focuses on finding out how and what works well in achieving our mission: we build families for children in need, we help them shape their own futures and we share in the development of their communities. According to Michael

Polanyi (1966: 6-8), being in possession of the capacities of "know-how and know-what" constitute the fact of knowledge. Know-how is demonstrated in our daily work, and know-what is revealed in our ability to combine normal work conventions and processes with new discoveries and innovations (Van der Ven, Johannes A. 136-138). The four phases of the Appreciative Inquiry approach – dream, discovery, design and destiny – appear well suited to this process.

The process of discovery is the beginning of self-knowing and knowledge acquisition. The process of this discovery is like being aware of what you know by remembering the moments of peak experience which accompanied them. Sharing knowledge is to share the experiences which inform this knowledge. A key part of this is cultivating and sharing the underlying values. **Harvesting turns into a value orientation exercise.** This is best done in a cycle of action-reflection-action. Providing an atmosphere conducive to this is the principle which forms the central departure point of "knowledge harvesting" in SOS Children's Villages.

### Importance of Harvesting Knowledge in SOS Children's Villages

Harvesting is a workplace example of experiential learning. It provides a viable context for knowledge generation and management through experience. Its experiential learning is holistic. It adopts an integrative perspective on learning that combines experience, creativity, cognition and action. "The continuity of experience means that every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after." (Lee Andresen op.cit. 230). Therefore, for knowledge to remain inspiring, durable, valuable and sustainable, **it has to be harvested.**



## SOS Children's Villages Harvesting

### Knowledge becomes tangible and, as a result, accessible

As an international non-profit organisation SOS Children's Villages is faced by similar management tasks as transnational groups and corporates. How can it best manage the vast knowledge of its employees in the most effective way? How can this knowledge be used to further its mission and vision? This question gives knowledge and skills a central role.

"Throughout its history every organisation collects a large amount of knowledge [...] most of which is not articulated – and is therefore not available to others. It is to be found in the heads of its members, in procedures and structures, in habitual behaviour and ways of thinking."  
(Ursula Schneider 2006:11)

It is of vital importance that many co-workers know what others (somewhere else) know (ibid.). Harvesting workshops enable us to connect the **experiences, insights** and knowledge of co-workers to the organisation. Harvesting contributes to usable **knowledge** within SOS Children's Villages and creates a platform to value it. This goes beyond the available **information** sources.

Besides the knowledge-sharing aspect, SOS Children's Villages wishes to be a long-term attractive employer for committed employees. Harvesting can be seen as one way of making this aspiration a reality. By realising the power of their joint mission, co-workers reach a new stage of **belongingness** to the organisation.

Around 40,000 SOS Children's Villages co-workers perform wonderful work, often under

"Harvesting is not just an instrument for knowledge transfer – it goes far beyond that. It was set up as a development project for the staff and the organisation, in which [...] exchange between co-workers is the main focus (Gerhild Rafetseder 2006:123).

very challenging conditions. Harvesting brings successful inspiring work experiences to the attention of SOS Children's Villages. In the workshop, staff members' experiences are turned into knowledge through a deeper perception. This **knowledge has an effect on the organisation**.

### Harvesting workshops and their benefits

- **Making knowledge accessible:** Long-standing employees have an enormous wealth of implicit knowledge. Harvesting makes this clear to the members of staff and accessible to the organisation. Harvesting releases the potential in the wealth of experience of staff members. Ideas are exchanged, new things emerge!
- **Promoting a thinking focused on strengths:** Inputs on approaches based on strengths support members of staff in becoming aware of their own potential, but also the strengths of the organisation. Harvesting initiates change in SOS Children's Villages as members of staff become clearer about the meaning of their work, their success and their aims. This promotes a thinking focused on strengths for a prosperous future.
- **Motivation through appreciation:** Harvesting workshops provide a "motivation kick" through the conscious recognition of every individual, through attentive dialogue in the group and through appreciative feedback. The special workshop format and the unique composition of the workshop groups enable participants to experience true appreciation. Harvesting helps members of staff to carry on achieving great things.

- **Strengthening team spirit:** Harvesting participants recognise that all members of SOS Children's Villages staff are dedicated to the same overriding aim – a loving home for every child. This strengthens the team spirit.

### Harvesting Workshop Facilitation Replicability and Outcomes

For a coherent understanding of the Harvesting Workshop facilitation, we offer two concise documents called "Harvesting Curriculum" and "Harvesting Handbook".

The document "What inspires us in our work for SOS Children's Villages", which is published after each Harvesting workshop, is also of vital importance.

The combination of these three documents offers a deep insight into the process, methods and output of Harvesting workshops.

#### Harvesting curriculum

- Describes aims, structure, conditions
- Explains scientific approaches, attitudes
- Displays methods used
- **Is available as a pdf file**

#### Harvesting handbook

- Is a "user manual" for multipliers
- Offers assistance to people who wish to provide a complete Harvesting workshop or individual parts of it in their area
- **Is available as a pdf file**

"What inspires us" appears regularly as a result of every Harvesting workshop. It is a treasure chest filled with valuable stories.

#### What inspires us

- Contains stories about outstanding events in the professional life of workshop participants
- Displays **analysis** of these stories
- Gives an overview of participants' **dreams and visions** for their professional future in SOS Children's Villages.
- **A limited number are available as print versions**
- **Please download the pdf file**

### The Aims of the Curriculum and Handbook

This curriculum and the handbook are designed for all those who wish to understand the methodology and its application in the Harvesting workshops and recognise and appreciate its value, as well as for those who are interested in multiplying the concept.

We have written it

- To communicate the underlying concept of the "SOS Children's Villages Harvesting workshop"
- So that Harvesting workshops can be applied in other regions, teams and organisations

This document is particularly relevant for

- Managers who stand for a future-oriented organisation with motivated, inspired members of staff
- SOS Children's Villages employees who want to grow with their colleagues
- Experts, particularly in the realms of organisational development and knowledge management
- Those who would like to apply, adopt or implement the Harvesting approach (see SOS Children's Villages Harvesting workshops)



### The aims of the story booklet “What inspires us in our work for SOS Children’s Villages”

Besides describing the attitudes and methods which guide us in Harvesting workshops, a central focus of our team is to present **stories** from the daily work of different professional groups in SOS Children's Villages. Reading the stories that co-workers tell can convey a sense of how attractive it is to be part of SOS Children’s Villages. The stories demonstrate the variety of challenges overcome and at the same time bring into focus the enormous commitment of the staff, which makes SOS Children's Villages one of the world's leading organisations in alternative child care.

### Replication of SOS Children's Villages Harvesting workshops

We are happy to make our experiences available to others. We would be delighted if the handbook inspired someone else to run or carry out a Harvesting workshop. Nevertheless, to offer a workshop with the title "SOS Children's Villages Harvesting workshop", we request that it be done in line with the general concept as described in the curriculum.

Generally, we ask to be informed if someone wants to use this concept as a basis for running a Harvesting workshop.

We are happy to offer assistance in developing Harvesting workshops with local partners and to co-host these if required/desired. Please give adequate notice of the date, so we can plan for it. Please note that while no charge is made for co-hosting, we request that the inviting organisation cover our travel expenses.

We also look forward to hearing about your experiences in using the methods and tools in this document.



Please send any questions, comments and feedback to [Irene.Gleirscher@sos-kd.org](mailto:Irene.Gleirscher@sos-kd.org)



## The Harvesting Workshop Framework

Designed, developed and carried out by the education team of the Hermann Gmeiner Academy, the Harvesting workshop programme consists of the following parts:

### Learning and practising the Harvesting methodology

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) forms the bedrock of Harvesting. "It is a process of search and discovery designed to value, prize, and honour. It assumes that organizations are networks of relatedness and that these networks are 'alive'. The objective of AI is to touch the 'positive core' of organizational life. This core is accessed by asking positive questions." (Cooperrider, Sekerka 2003:228). In Harvesting we guide participants to focus on their "circle of influence", a concept in which the participants increase their efficacy by focussing on the areas where they can create impact (Stephen R. Covey 2013). We combine the AI approach with methods that foster open dialogue like Storytelling, World Café and World Kitchen.

### Knowledge sharing

In Harvesting, knowledge sharing refers to the exploring and sharing of tacit knowledge. This can be seen as the body of intuitive knowledge rooted in context and facilitating action. To explore and share tacit knowledge presupposes a conducive culture of attitude and atmosphere. During the workshops we provide space for social interaction and teaching sessions (e.g. World Café).

### Capacity building

We foster a process of equipping Harvesting participants with the understanding, skills and access to knowledge that enable them to perform effectively. During this intensive group process, participants learn and discover their strengths. This helps them to find identity, meaning, and purpose in (working) life through acquiring the bigger picture of SOS Children's Villages International. By engaging in this intense process the diverse

group of participants serves as an example what it means to work in an organisation that is active in 134 countries worldwide. This increases their feeling of affiliation. We also keep in touch with former participants and offer them virtual exchange on a regular basis.

### Incentive

Harvesting is one way to increase overall employee performance, reduce turnover, boost morale and loyalty, improve employee wellbeing and increase retention. Harvesting offers participants the opportunity to get to know the origins of the SOS Children's Villages idea on a topic-guided city tour through Innsbruck, explaining the roots and history of SOS Children's Villages. We also offer a visit to the first SOS Children's Village in Imst. Harvesting workshops allow participants to share their experiences with others and thereby reinforce the spirit of reciprocity and solidarity

### Networking

Relationships are the catalyst for success. Networking is about making connections and building enduring and mutually beneficial relationships. It is about meeting the "right" people at the "right" time. By continually connecting new people through linking the annual Harvesting groups with each another, we leverage the network and cultivate emerging relationships. We also offer a "Post-Harvesting workshop" at the International Office of SOS Children's Villages International in Vienna to network with a wider circle of colleagues.

## Mandate and Objectives for Harvesting Workshops

In April 2011 the board of the Hermann Gmeiner Academy mandated the education team to resume<sup>2</sup> the running of Harvesting workshops. The board defined two different target groups: 1. co-workers in the middle of their careers and 2. co-workers who are due to end their careers in the foreseeable future but still have a minimum of five years to serve. The Hermann Gmeiner Academy in Innsbruck or another regional seminar centre were specified as the workshop venues. The Hermann Gmeiner Academy's board detailed the aims for Harvesting workshops as follows:

- Demonstrate special appreciation to participants for the work they have done
- Acknowledge the good experiences that participants have made in their working lives
- Share participants' knowledge within the organisation

- Provide ideas to refresh participants' views and
- Inspire participants for their future in SOS Children's Villages

### Reformulation of assignment

After successfully carrying out workshops in 2012 and 2014, the above-mentioned goals were discussed once more with the colleagues in Human Resources Organisational Development of SOS Children's Villages International. This process raised and discussed critical aspects in terms of length, goals and outputs, leading to some jointly developed adaptations as listed below.

Aims are set on three levels: individual, group of participants and organisational level. Harvesting workshops are designed to



individual level

- Appreciate and value co-workers as individuals and as bearers of experience & knowledge
- Offer tools for creative action towards a desired future for SOS CVI



workshop group level

- Ensure intensive sharing of knowledge and experiences prepared as stories
- Enable **face to face exchange** in a diverse group of co-workers (management & practitioners)



organisational level

- Generate the feeling of closeness among participants and affiliation with SOS CV worldwide
- Ensure knowledge-sharing with more co-workers beyond the Harvesting workshop group

The overall goal of Harvesting is to discover what works well in daily activities, what gives strength to SOS co-workers and what SOS Children's Villages can build on.

<sup>2</sup> Harvesting workshops started in 2002 with 20 co-workers at the Hermann Gmeiner Academy (HGA). Between 2002 and 2004 three Harvesting workshops were held. A restructuring of the International Office and the HGA in 2008 led to a temporary pause in Harvesting workshops. Since 2012, when the project resumed, Harvesting workshops have become an integral part of the HGA's education programmes.

## Methodological framework

After clarifying the general framework around HARVESTING we proceed with a detailed explanation of some of the guiding theoretical approaches and how we apply them. A key approach is Positive Organisational Scholarship (POS) comprising leading theories and methods in research on organisational behaviour.

### General perspective

Methods and approaches applied in Harvesting are designed to enable social action for SOS co-workers in a continuum of performance, experience, reflection, action and impact-making.

As individuals are the bearers of knowledge, the methods used aim at bringing the specific knowledge to the surface and viewing this as the starting point for putting it to use in the group and the organisation.

Harvesting methods and approaches therefore build on

- the power of the individual's experience
- the generating power of the group
- the diversity of cultural relationships
- the achievements of leading philosophical traditions
- the organisation's power of vision, acquired experience and attentive professionalism
- existing networks of communities of practitioners

### Positive Organisational Scholarship

How do organisations create a positive working life and performance? This is the central question that Positive Organisational Scholarship (POS) – as an umbrella concept in organisational behaviour – sets out to answer.

POS focuses on attitudes and performance areas such as: **self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience.**

It asks questions such as: What goes right in the organisation? What gives life and motivation? What is experienced as good and what is inspiring? (Kim S. Cameron et al, 2003: 3-13) These questions form the pivot on which also the Appreciative Inquiry approach rests.

### Differences between POS and conventional Traditional Organisation Studies

- POS looks into what constitutes the best of the human condition rather than seeing the human condition as a deficient, pathological case to be restored to normality.
- POS inquires consciously into positive outcomes, processes and attributes of organisations and their members rather than asking about the roots of problems.
- The typical vocabulary used in POS are words such as excellence, thriving, flourishing, abundance, resilience and virtuousness rather than setbacks, delays, failures, scarcity and problems.
- The objects of study in POS are human motivators and system enablers and outcomes and their effects (ibid, online).

Underlying all these assumptions is the heliotropic pattern of perception which says that in human and organisational life people are drawn towards sources of energy!

### Embedding Positive Organisational Scholarship in Harvesting

The positive aspects of POS shed light on Harvesting processes in the following ways:

- Participants examine the depths of their contexts of experience
- They come together as an act of recognition, appreciation, regeneration and battery recharging

- They aim to share experience and transfer knowledge
- They reap fruits which foster closeness and belongingness

All these are in line with the AI assumptions which aim towards positivity, attentiveness and motivation. By focussing on positive experiences, Harvesting workshops turn out to be an investment in developing the human workforce of SOS-Children's Villages. Participants, affectionately called "Harvesters", come to celebrate their performance in the past and their belongingness in the present and to reap further motivation for the future. Seeing the evidence and impact of what they have done in the past inspires them to do even more.

### Harvesting, Positive Organisational Studies, Growth and Motivation

*"Positivity unlocks and elevates resources in individuals, groups, and organisations to such a height that capabilities broaden, capacity is built and strengthened"* (Cameron et al, 2016). In line with this, it is therefore natural that Harvesting adopts such objectives as broadening the life-giving elements, generative processes, motivating experiences, and moments of flow in an organisational working context.

Working in a social, humanitarian context, motivation is often not drawn from the conventional reward expectations like money, promotion, position, recognition etc.

**Motivation comes much more from the elevated desire to co-create values and virtues.** This is in line with what Positive Organisational Scholarship theory calls transcendent behaviour. This comprises actions "overriding environmental contingencies or apparent personal limits. It is actions creating extraordinary change in the person or in the environment" (Thomas Bateman, Christine Porath 2003: 123).

### From Individual Motivation to Organisational Change

What is it that motivates people to do the things they do? Beyond their basic needs, human beings put a great deal of energy into aiming high, they desire self-transcendence. Such "Transcendent behaviour at work is evidenced when people effect extraordinary change by exceeding demands, eliminating or overcoming constraints, and creating or seizing opportunities" (Maslow 1987:125). Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi describes this all as flow (1990: chapter 4).

According to POS, such phases have enormous benefit for the individual and the organisation:

- personal growth,
- expanded personal capabilities and
- enhanced subjective well-being directly reflecting and impacting on organisational effectiveness.

This is a process through which individual motivation can be transformed into organisational advantage. The precondition for transcendent action, Abraham Maslow, (Maslow 1987:69) testifies, is the attachment to and conviction about an ideal. This conviction finds expression in the Harvesting dream phase (see page 20 and the Harvesting Handbook!).

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<sup>1</sup> Handbook for Harvesting Workshops Curriculum, Appendix Morning Exercises Breaking rules – widening horizon p.29

## Appreciative Inquiry

Building on the guiding theory of Positive Organisational Scholarship, Appreciative Inquiry is a way of thinking, seeing and acting for powerful, purposeful change. It approaches change by assuming that whatever you want more of already exists. It says that living systems (like people or organisations) grow in the direction on which they focus.

“Appreciative Inquiry is based on the simple assumption that every organization has something that works well, and those strengths can be the starting point for creating positive change.”

(David Cooperrider et al 2008: 3)

Appreciative Inquiry has two basic elements. These are the element of philosophy as an attitude and the element of language as a technique and style. Focussing initially on the philosophy behind the AI approach, first published in 2003 (ibid.), one can say that it was like a catalyst for the spreading of **dialogical organisational development methods**. Amongst other things, AI emphasises that **change** within an organisation **is a constant dynamic process** and therefore cannot be rigidly planned, as suggested for example by the Lewinian paradigm.

Firmly grounded in social constructionist theory (Kenneth J. Gergen 1978; 2009 in: Gervase Bushe 2011: 87) AI emphasises the **importance of social interaction** in the construction of knowledge. According to this learning theory we are all **shaped by our experiences and interactions**. Each new experience or interaction is taken into our mental patterns and shapes our perspectives and behaviour.

Furthermore, AI strongly emphasises the **importance of language**. “Words create worlds” is a core AI idea. If you want to change something, you start by the way you talk about it. AI in this sense also promotes post-modern perspectives on narrative and

discourse (Frank Barrett, Gail F. Thomas & Susan P. Hocevar, 1995 in: ibid).

## Assumptions underlying the AI approach

Is the glass half full or half empty? Viewed as half empty, an organisation would probably be oriented towards problem solving and deficit thinking. It would ask “How do we fill the glass?” This is all about the learned tendency to



fix the problems we have. Most people and organisations apply this approach almost automatically. This is not good or bad: AI is just another way of looking at an organisation.

Viewing the glass as half full, we are positively oriented towards “what works” and towards enjoying the small successes of each day. In Harvesting workshops we therefore discover what SOS Children’s Villages does well and how it does this and design ways of doing more of what works.

Based on another of the eight underlying assumptions of AI, we believe that there are numerous individual success stories in any organisation. Filled with enthusiasm, creativity and pride, these stories – once discovered – can be shared throughout the organisation. By doing so, the entire system retains the best of the past and expands it into future opportunities. This differs from other visioning work because the AI envisioned future is based in the reality of the actual past.

David Cooperrider and colleagues (2008: 4) mention eight assumptions underlying AI:

1. In every society, organisation or group something works.
2. What we focus on becomes our reality.
3. Reality is created in the moment and there are multiple realities.

4. The act of asking questions of an organisation or group influences the group in some way.
5. People have more confidence and comfort to journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known).
6. If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what are best about the past.
7. It is important to value differences.
8. The language we use creates our reality

### Underlying propositions

Furthermore the following **four propositions** (ibid. 4) are essential to conduct a successful AI process:

1. Inquiry into the social potential or “the art of the possible” in organisational life should begin **with appreciation** => discover, describe and explain “exceptional moments” that give life to the system and activate members’ competencies and energies
2. Inquiry into what is possible should yield **information that is applicable** => should lead to the generation of knowledge that can be used
3. Inquiry into what is possible should be **provocative** => the learning stirs members to action
4. Inquiry into the human potential of organisational life should be **collaborative** => assumes an undeniable relationship between the process of inquiry and its content

Below we describe the steps of the AI process as carried out in Harvesting workshops. We also explain the adaptations we consciously make compared to the classical AI processes described in the literature.

### The 4 D Cycle

The 4 D Cycle is a way to engage in a process of discovering the positive elements of the past and carrying them into the future. The four phases are called **Discovery**, **Dream**, **Design** and **Destiny**.

AI begins by asking questions. To ask questions means to begin to discover, realise and see things, like the treasure of knowledge that is embedded in SOS co-workers’ individual experiences.

#### Discovery

##### *Appreciate what is. What gives life?*

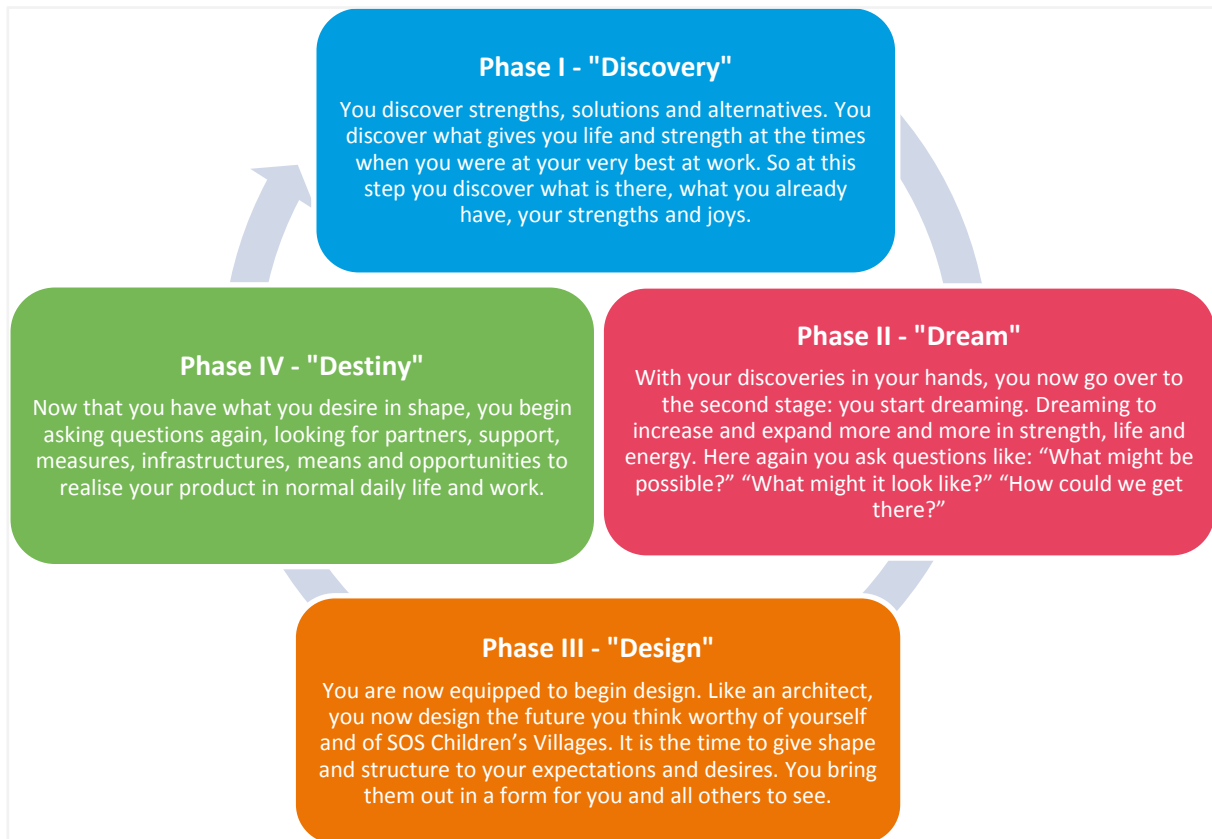
A key innovation of AI is that participants are encouraged to talk about their own “best of” experience. Participants of all levels, i.e. organisational stakeholders, act both as storytellers and listeners. The aim is to fully engage them in the act of inquiry itself (Carter & Johnson, 1999. In: Bushe 2011).

In Harvesting workshops many organisational stakeholders are involved in the workshop process, from social worker to national director. Each workshop group has been fortunate to include one person who grew up in an SOS Children’s Villages programme, something which turned out to be very enriching. We aim to involve even more important stakeholders such as SOS parents (see perspectives, p. 51).

“Inviting people to participate in dialogues and share stories about their past and present achievements, [...] high-point moments, [...] can identify a ‘positive core’. From this building on the positive core of the story, AI links the energy of the positive core directly to a change agenda. This link creates energy and excitement and a desire to do more toward a shared dream.” (Cooperrider et al 2008: 3)

Therefore for every starting point of the AI process, the inquiry in the discovery phase, it is crucial to define the initial question.





In our first step in the AI process of the Harvesting workshop we invite participants to remember their first time in SOS Children's Villages. In pairs they share answers to question like,

- "What first attracted you to work for SOS Children's Villages?"
- "When in the process of your work with SOS CV have you experienced the realisation of these attractions you mentioned?"
- "What joy have you derived and do you still derive from your work?"

We continue this phase with the search for a "flow moment" in co-workers' work lives. We describe "flow", based on the works of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990: 49):

**"Flow** is the feeling of pleasure resulting from enjoyment over the attainment of set goals, the fulfilment of desired expectations, the feeling of being in harmony with the experiences of the moment and of achieving previously unexpected success."

These and others are some of the characteristics of the flow experience (ibid):

1. Clarity of goals and immediate feedback
2. A high level of concentration on a limited field
3. Balance between skills and challenge
4. The feeling of control
5. Effortlessness
6. An altered perception of time
7. Melding of action and consciousness

In an individual reflection exercise we ask participants to let certain moments of their work life replay before their inner eye.

They begin to recall a time, a moment or an experience in their work life when they:

- felt most lively and concentrated
- felt in control of the task before them
- enjoyed having attained optimum goals
- rejoiced over fulfilled expectations

- made the unexpected and unimagined happen
- felt at one with the tasks facing them and with themselves
- wished things could continue going on and on in this way

We use **Storytelling** as a vehicle to share these personal experiences. Find out more in the chapter “The power of Storytelling” (page 22).

### Dream

#### *Imagine what might be?*

#### **Develop a dream and visualise it**

“The primary purpose of the dream phase is to expand or extend people’s sense of what is possible.” (David Cooperrider, Diana Whitney, Jaqueline M. Stavros 2008: 44)

The Dream phase is grounded in the organisation’s history. It seeks to expand the SOS Children’s Village’s potential, keeping in mind the voices and hopes of its stakeholders. Having extracted what is encapsulated in the phrase “life-giving forces” in the discovery phase, the individual workshop participants now challenge their creative ability and openness to envision the future. Usually participants are asked to imagine their team, organisational unit or community at its best. Often an attempt is made to identify common aspirations of system members and to symbolise this in some way. The Dream phase often results in something more symbolic.

In the Harvesting workshops this dream phase is **individually oriented** and the rationales are:

- To inspire individuals 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
- The fact that an individual co-worker is able to dream for the organisation with the great opportunity of seeing the dream come true, is evidence that the dream phase is a reliable stepping stone for consolidating a sense of ownership

Besides this we keep the mandate for Harvesting workshops (see p. 12) in mind and also take the constitution of the participants’ group into consideration. We therefore work with the reality that each workshop participant comes from different hierarchical positions within the organisation and reports to different leadership levels. The organisational context must be taken into consideration in order to implement the dream. Participants therefore need to address and involve the different stakeholders in an appropriate manner.

We therefore introduce the widely-known concept of the “**Circle of influence**” by Stephen R. Covey (2013) which is helpful for acquiring ownership for action. According to Covey, a “Circle of influence” encompasses those issues that we can do something about, those we have some control over.

The point of departure in the dream phase is to find out “what might be”. The participants are introduced to this part of the programme either by a dream journey or a philosophical circle (for details see Harvesting Handbook, page 17).

In this phase we focus on building on the potential of creativity as a basis for innovation. The participants are asked to give their dream a tangible form by creating a symbol for the future they envision within their circle of influence.

The outcomes from this are as diverse as the areas of work, scope of influence, power of imagination and cultural context of the “dreamers”. The participants individually dream up ideas and concepts to be put into action according to the design developed in the next step of the AI process.

## Design

### *Determine what should be*

#### **Design a prototype of your dream**

In this workshop phase we focus on how to connect the dream to reality. Like an architect, participants start to design a “prototype” of what they want to realise in the future. They find a title for this enterprise and give shape and structure to their expectations and desires. The goal is to develop an outline that can be presented, so that others can understand the Harvesting participant’s aims of what to do, how, with whom, with which resources, with what outcome etc.

In contrast to a collective design phase, we work on designs based on individual dreams. However, the motto of SOS Children’s Villages “A loving home for every child” and the vision “Every child belongs to a family and grows with love, respect and security” make a strong link between co-workers beyond hierarchies, borders or work fields and integrate the individual design into a common goal.

#### **The Power of Collective Intelligence**

Besides focussing on the circle of influence we build on the power of collective intelligence by using a method called “**Design for wiser action**”. This enables “Harvesters” to benefit from the wisdom of their colleagues. It widens the participants’ perspective on a project and helps them to see things in a different way. They get immediate feedback on their design. The whole process stage aims at getting people into action, by clearly defining the initial steps and milestones.

#### **“Design for wiser Action”**

This method was developed within the “Art of Hosting Community” – a professional network of practitioners in the context of participatory leadership and facilitation (Art of Hosting 2016). “Design for wiser action” allows participants to build on the experience of colleagues in developing an idea into a definite and attractive plan. A comprehensive handout that contains the most important aspect of a “project design” provides

orientation and helps Harvesting participants to define the important criteria of their imagined future project. After an individual work phase each of them presents a first draft of their design to a small group of their colleagues. They then develop the project design by asking questions on how the project might be set up in the real life situation. This group coaching happens in self-selected groups of approximately five people.

#### **Group reflection is of great help**

- to deepen understanding of the purpose and needs of a project
- to find out which stakeholders will be involved, who the partners are, who is in the team
- to find out what the purpose of the planned outcome is
- to define what the project looks like in practical terms
- to clarify the Harvesting participant’s underlying vision: what is he/she aiming for?

This process is nourished by the diverse experience of the group, focussing on asking important and constructive questions instead of giving advice. Once the participants have jointly worked on a project in the role of a peer coach they are keen to find out how things are going at a later date. People who have worked together in this exercise often keep in close contact and support each other during implementation. Time and again this is the beginning of a “community of practise”<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, colleagues not only help to generate ideas but increase the participant’s

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<sup>2</sup> “Communities of practice (CoPs) are groups of people who share a specific area of work, interest, or passion in a knowledge domain. CoPs share knowledge, learn from each other and interact regularly with peers in an enabling networked environment. Organisations use CoPs to share knowledge based on specific themes and areas, to break down organisational silos and stimulate interdisciplinary teamwork.” (Find out more: Knowledge Management Toolkit, Roumiana Iordanova 2014)

faith in the project implementation. The most important milestones for the realisation of the design are discussed and decided together. In designing together, the benefit of the collective intelligence and the collective courage of a group transform words into action.

### Destiny

#### How can it be?

“The Destiny phase represents both the conclusion of the Discovery, Dream and Design phases and the beginning of an ongoing creation of an ‘appreciative learning culture.’” (David Cooperrider 2016).

The goal for the destiny phase is to integrate new images of the future and to start implementing these by clarifying and naming the first practical steps. Sharing each design in the larger group not only creates commitment, but also visualises the communalities of the projects based on the shared SOS mission. Harvesting participants experience a strong motivation to start implementing their first steps, driven by the awareness that they as individuals co-create the future of SOS Children’s Villages. Going home after the workshop they build on a collective sense of purpose.

Appreciative inquiry generates a repatterning of the relationships with ourselves and others, and how we perceive the world. The process of integrating the AI worldview in one’s own life is thus a process that is potentially endless. It is “a time of continuous learning, adjustment and improvisation (like a jazz group) – all in the service of shared ideals.” (ibid. 2016)

At this stage the AI process releases high potential for change. Workshop participants have discovered a shared positive image of their future within SOS Children’s Villages. Not only do they feel the value of their contribution but they will invite stakeholders to share and support their design. Together they will discuss and find out how the dream can become reality.

At an organisational level, the destiny phase of the appreciative inquiry process aims at positive transformation through empowering employees to connect, cooperate and co-create. In this way the results will continue to surface in new, innovative and bold ways.

## Storytelling

Storytelling is a powerful method used in a variety of settings. In telling stories analytical arguments and valuing statements are left out, while contextualised knowledge is added. Structural connections become visible in pictures. "By telling stories, people identify and analyze the unique factors – such as leadership, relationships, technologies, core processes, structures, values, learning processes, external relations, or planning methods – that contributed to peak experiences." (Elliott Charles 1999: 3)

Formerly the tool was meant for analysis whilst practice of storytelling shows that change already starts during the process of telling the story in front of an audience. It begins by selecting what to mention. Whilst listening to a story its positive power emerges.

In Harvesting, Storytelling serves as instrument to

- develop personal experiences
- give background information and
- make implicit knowledge accessible
- by doing this to start change

### Storytelling within the AI Process

Harvesting is designed as an instrument for organisational learning, including through knowledge sharing. In Harvesting workshops we use the method of Storytelling based on AI as described above. Storytelling unleashes the implicit knowledge of long-term co-workers by using the power of narrative.

"The process involves interviewing and storytelling to draw out the best of the past, to understand what one wants more of and to set the stage for effective visualization of the future." (David Cooperrider, Diana Whitney, Jaqueline Stavros 2008: 4).

In Harvesting, Storytelling is mainly used in the first two phases of an AI process – discovery and dream (see p. 18-21).

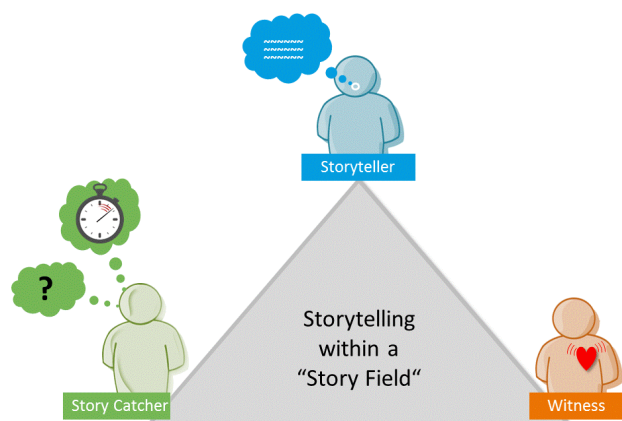
### How we conduct Storytelling in Harvesting workshops

Storytelling is used in different settings (knowledge management, education, marketing etc.). When we talk about Storytelling as a method or tool, we do not mean working with given stories. The stories we work with are based on real-life events, situations that someone really went through. We encourage people to find these stories and make use of them as a means of knowledge sharing.

In Harvesting we conduct Storytelling in two different settings and with two different purposes.

"Storytelling in a story field" is the initial and intimate setting in which the participants find a safe space for discovering and crafting their individual story. Later we open the storytelling space to a wider group of people using a format called "Collective Story Harvesting" (Art of Hosting).

"**Storytelling in a story field**" offers the needed intimacy to engage in or get into an intensive storytelling process. A clear set of roles helps to create a safe environment for the storyteller to open up. These are the Storyteller, the Story Catcher and the Witness.



The **storyteller** fulfils an active role. He or she accesses their personal database of experiences and makes a choice by deciding what he/she wants to talk about. The story is

never a mirror image of reality, as the storyteller decides – consciously or unconsciously – how to tell their story. This choice gives them a feeling of empowerment, of being in charge of reality.

The **story catcher** is the person who listens and asks the “right” questions to keep up the flow of the storytelling process. Listening also means developing a picture of the story’s scenes in the story catcher’s mind. These pictures can never be the same as the ones of the storyteller, but the listener is taking an active part in co-creating the story. By doing so, they find connections to their own life and history and automatically reflect on how they would have resolved the situation or reacted to it. In storytelling the listener learns as much as the storyteller, but on a different level.

The third role in the story field is called the **witness**. This person listens without interfering. They are able to give feedback about the emotional quality of the story and the observed reaction in themselves. This meta-level offers another perspective on the stories and intensifies the joint learning experience by seeing how the different stories relate to each other and blend into the joint mission of SOS CV.

“**Collective Story Harvesting**” is the next step of working with these knowledge-filled stories. After the Harvesting participants have gained confidence in the power of their stories, we encourage a sharing of the stories at the workshop venue and invite all co-workers who are able to come through the format of “Collective Story Harvesting”. Throughout the Harvesting workshop we conduct numerous “Collective Story Harvesting” sessions in order to disseminate the stories more widely (see Handbook for Harvesting workshops, p. 13). We experience this format as a powerful method for creating space for sharing knowledge and practices within the organisation. Co-workers from the International Office as well as the management of SOS Children’s Villages are invited to listen to the stories of the Harvesting participants.

During the “Collective Story Harvesting” the whole group is encouraged to reflect on the meaning of the story by taking on different listening perspectives. These listening perspectives are created around the core values of the organisation and around other topics linked to the organisational culture. By jointly analysing success factors we create collective wisdom about core experience and leading principles and values within SOS Children’s Villages.

### Positive effects of Storytelling

Storytelling is a very egalitarian method that enables people to connect and create strong relationships across hierarchies. People easily feel attracted by storytelling as we experience it as a simple and natural means of communicating views and experiences. But Storytelling offers even more advantages (Monika Frenzel et al 2004: 58):

#### Storytelling is a natural process

- We tell stories whenever we communicate in our everyday life
- We tell stories to make ourselves understood by others

#### Storytelling creates participation

- People feel appreciated by being invited to share their experiences in the form of a story
- By actively telling their story, co-workers become part of it
- Individuals realise how their story fits into the bigger picture of the organisation

#### Storytelling gives orientation

- To new co-workers with regard to the existing rules about what members of an organisation take for normal, practical, desirable, etc.
- by allowing the individual to adapt to the organisational "reality"

#### Storytelling enables exchange and open communication

- Openly communicated experiences give room for discussion

- Storytelling serves as a way to connect people
- Storytelling strengthens the feeling of belonging and activates our emotional memory
- Implicit knowledge becomes explicit, visible and usable. Storytellers and listeners find similarities and connections
- Compact story analysis focusses on specific knowledge (in Harvesting the focus is on what works well within the daily activities of SOS Children's Villages)
- Bringing together different functions and hierarchical levels enables the creation of a multi-perspective and multidimensional 360 degree picture

#### **Storytelling releases energy for change**

- Stories help us to digest experiences and integrate new learning into our identity. A new collective self-view arises
- Listening to a story is a form of appreciation. It has the potential to set free new motivation and energy
- New and alternative ways of acting come to mind
- Presentations focus on key factors and on the context
- By understanding the context of a story, new unexpected ideas emerge





## Didactic concept and approaches

When implementing Harvesting in the context of SOS Children's Villages, we ensure that the high quality standards of contemporary adult education are adopted. The didactic concept clarifies which assumptions underlying learning guide our attitude in facilitating the process of Harvesting.

Harvesting is set up as an in-house training integrated in the SOS Children's Villages strategic initiative 2030 "Create a Movement". Harvesting as a learning programme aims at increasing the co-worker competencies needed for the fulfilment of the assigned tasks as a way of ensuring a high quality outcome.

In Harvesting the learner is positioned at the centre of the development process and the learning procedure itself. The process is integrated into the professional context. The transfer of acquired competencies is part of the didactic concept and is monitored via various means of evaluation (See page 49).

## Didactic principles applied in Harvesting

### Life-long Learning

The concept of life-long learning views learning as integrated into our everyday lives. "Learning in this sense is not a separate activity. It is not something we do when we do nothing else or stop doing when we do something else. There are times in our lives when learning is intensified, when situations shake our sense of familiarity, when we are challenged beyond our ability to respond, when we wish to engage in new practices and seek to join new communities." (Etienne Wenger, 2009: 213)

In Harvesting we consciously draw attention to the life-long learning processes that take place during everyday work routines, but especially during times when co-workers are pushed to the limits of their comfort zone due to challenging circumstances. Within the

storytelling process we focus on these moments of learning and heighten the participants' awareness of the importance of sharing this acquired knowledge within their teams and the organisation. In this sense the Harvesting team focuses on the sustainability of the learning process by linking the increased competencies to existing knowledge and by establishing routines of ongoing learning through reflection. In Harvesting we actively ask for existing skills and know-how and build on them.

### Experience-based learning

Adult learners bring a wide range of experience into the learning setting. We see and value these experiences as a key element of the learning process within Harvesting. First, the story told and analysed builds the centre of the joint learning process, meaning that we build on existing experience. Second we offer a learning environment in which the participants are able to gain new knowledge in an experience-based way. The underlying theories (e.g. Appreciative Inquiry, Circle of influence) are learned by practical and direct application. In this way new knowledge is integrated into existing mental patterns. "In relation to learning, the crucial thing is that new impulses can be included in the mental organisation in various ways." (Knud Illeris, 2009:13)

We use a variety of experienced-based learning methods, which build on integrating creative and visual elements and create new neural pathways that enable new ways of thinking. Extensive visualisation is another element on which our didactic concept builds. Visualisation activates different parts of the brain and supports the integration of learned content. It enables complex thinking by making links and patterns visible. Furthermore it is helpful when working with people who may be using a language in which they are not confident.

Some examples for visual learning elements are:



Figure 1: Visual process map of Harvesting 2016 workshop

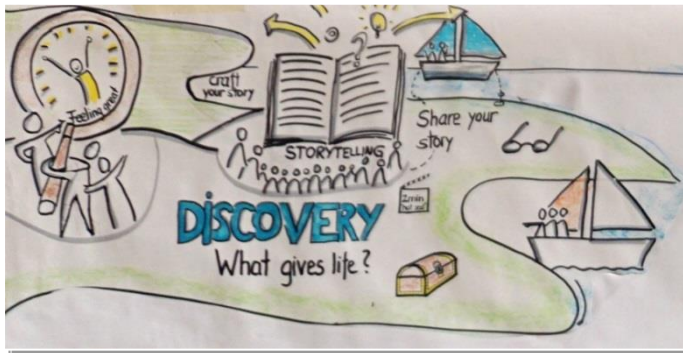


Figure 2: Visualised process stage "discovery", part of process map

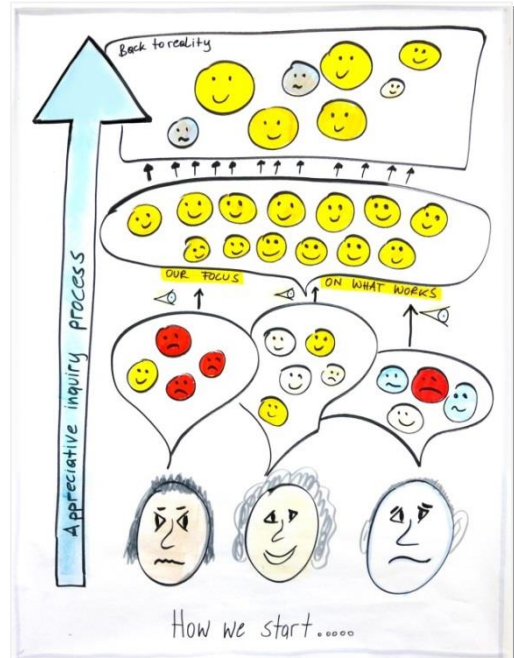


Figure 3: The AI process explained visually

### Participation and learner centred learning

Adults learn best when the learning takes place at eye level. In Harvesting we therefore create a learning setting based on the principles of respect and engagement. We actively engage the participants and create an environment of shared responsibility. In this approach the trainers step back from the active role of transmitters of knowledge into the role of process facilitators, coaches or hosts.

The learners are actively encouraged to find solutions that are suitable and adapted to the

specific circumstances they face in their workplace (e.g. in design-coaching, see page 19).

By creating this form of engagement the learner gains control over the learning process, increasing the motivation to implement the developed dream-design as well as general learning.

## Methods used in Harvesting Workshops

As described earlier, this curriculum is one part of the SOS Children's Villages Knowledge Harvesting Workshop documentation (see page 7). Please refer to the Handbook for an in-depth description of how to apply the variety of methods used.

As a complement to the curriculum, the Handbook serves as a reference for participants or other interested people who want to apply the methods in their own work environment. In Harvesting workshops participants experience participatory leadership and change management approaches, and are encouraged to learn these by doing: by taking on facilitation roles throughout the workshop. In this way co-workers acquire qualifications that help them to actively participate in the future development of SOS Children's Villages.

The methods used as listed below are described in the [Harvesting Handbook](#).

### Face to face knowledge sharing within the Harvesting workshop group

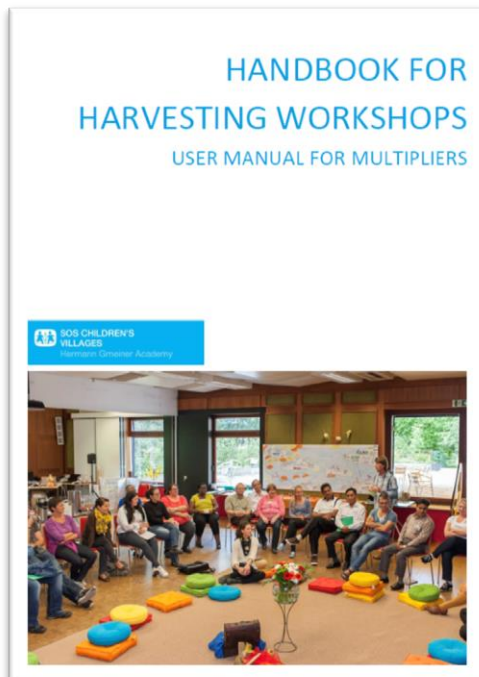
- Appreciative Inquiry Interview
- "Storytelling in a story field"
- Collective Story Harvesting
- Circles around the "fireplace"
- Philosophical Round
- Collective mind-map
- Design for wiser action

### Knowledge sharing beyond workshop participant group

- "Storytelling in a story field"
- World Café conversation
- Open books
- World Kitchen

### Morning exercises – framing each day

- Rope knotting
- Drawing with the balance pen
- Identify sound and find me
- Feeling the spark of energy in space
- Constructing your image
- Breaking rules – widening horizons
- Unknotting the rope





## Knowledge Transfer

### Can knowledge actually be shared or transferred?

Such a question is legitimate considering the fact that there are always “different contents in personal knowledge and also differences in experience levels” (Dan Paulin, Kaj Suneson 2012:88).

Knowledge transfer is meaningful when seen from the perspective that actual knowledge in the form of hard data, experience, information etc. is “redeveloped by each individual recipient”. According to Dan Paulin (ibid. 88) this process of “redevelopment” is an integration process transforming the data of experience and information into knowledge by sense-making. In this sense therefore, knowledge is something objective, subjective and also context oriented.

This reflects three components of knowledge management:



The concept of knowledge transfer in Harvesting is based on the assumption that individuals are knowledge holders. They are carriers of knowledge acquired by experience and training in communities, families, institutions of learning, organisations, work life conditions, activities, etc.

From this perspective, in Harvesting we consciously practice knowledge transfer by means of face to face experience sharing. This can be understood as **“collecting knowledge – linking people to information”** and **“connecting knowledge – linking people to people”** (Roumiana Iordanova 2014:10).

The Harvesting workshops are structured in such a way as to provide opportunities and

possibilities for this process of sense-making, transformation and integration.

Through storytelling and the exploration of one’s specific circle of influence (see p.18), design for wiser action (see p.19) and other Harvesting methods (see p. p.27), the participant’s capacity for action is broadened and their repertoire of behaviour is strengthened in order to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. Moreover, the appreciative attitude inherent in the AI approach, coupled with the daily morning exercises and fireplace sessions ignite sparks of insight and friendship. Harvesting offers the social context where knowledge as actual objects is constructed, shared and transferred.

### Benefits of knowledge sharing

The benefits of sharing knowledge through Harvesting Workshops can again be described on **three levels**. These build the basis for understanding where the transfer of knowledge is taking place. On the level of

- the individual co-worker
- the Harvesting workshop group
- the worldwide federation of SOS Children’s Villages International

## Benefits of Harvesting Knowledge Transfer



### Individual co-workers

- Get a multi-perspective view of the SOS mission through Harvesting stories and face to face exchange
- Acquire good insights about the mission of SOS CV through specific examples
- Develop a broad view of the organisational culture of SOS CV



### The Harvesting workshop group

- Is facilitated using the appreciative inquiry approach
- Is a powerful community of practise
- Inspires through its cross-functional and cross-regional nature
- Enables exchange based on strong work relationships



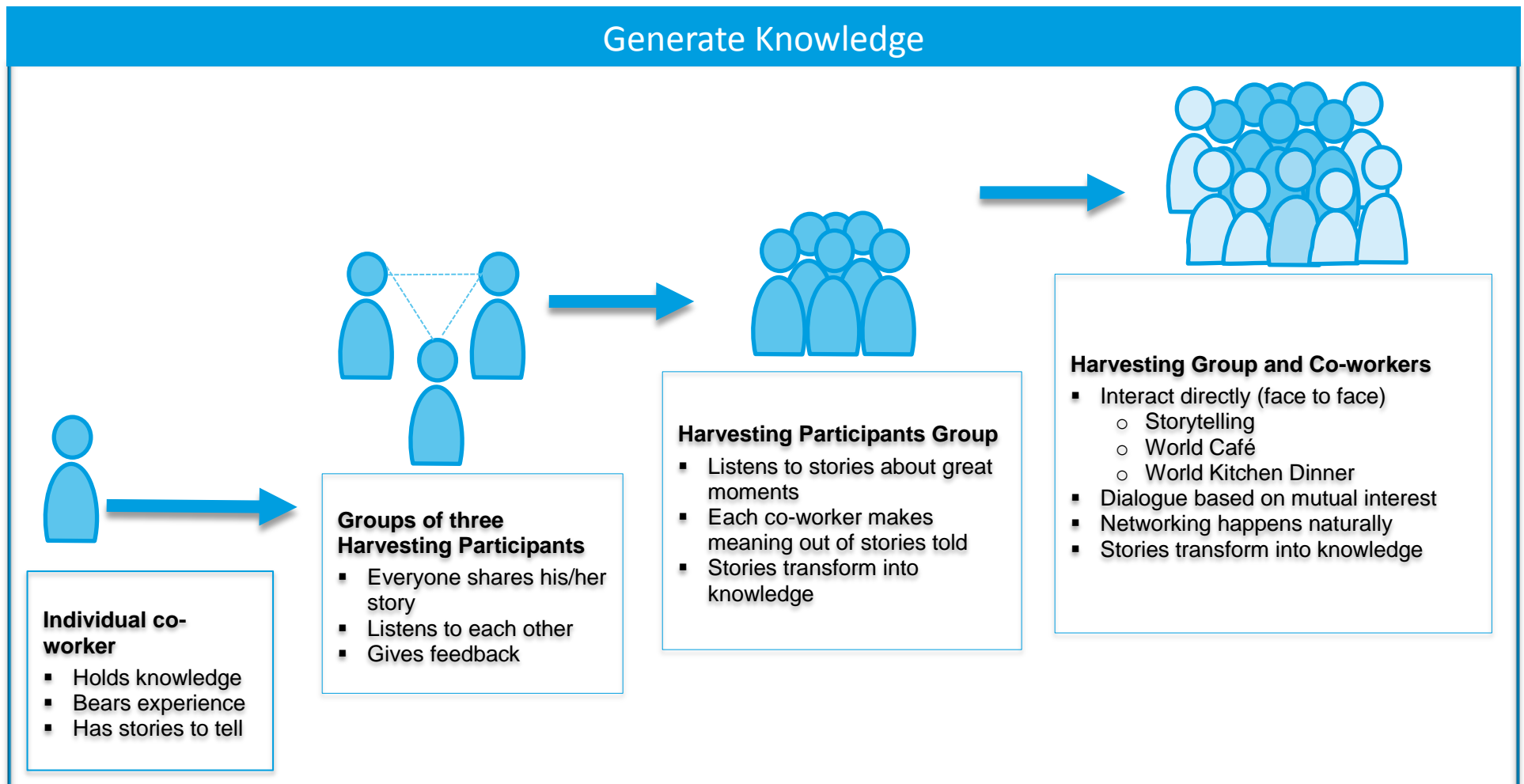
### SOS Children's Villages International

- Benefits from the implementation of the AI world view that releases energy and motivation
- Benefits from the mutual understanding that develops out of one-to-one knowledge exchange
- Benefits from Storytelling as an instrument for knowledge exchange
- Benefits from innovative ideas spread more easily through the Harvesting network

## Generating Knowledge

The planned use of the knowledge generated determines what information is received and how it is transformed into applicable knowledge. Careful planning is required of what kind of knowledge needs to be created in the Harvesting process. "The key difference between

knowledge and information is that knowledge gives us the power to take action. We can USE it. That is why, in organisational terms, knowledge is generally thought of as being 'know-how' or 'applied action'" (ibid: 6). A careful documentation of the collected results is important. The figure shows one way of handling this process stage.



## Organise knowledge

### Data gained in the Harvesting Workshop

In Harvesting we generate knowledge not only through storytelling but also through dialogue e.g. in a world café. Before we describe examples of such dialogues we shall explain how we organise the knowledge gained in stories.

### Storytelling in the Discovery phase of AI

It is our aim to consolidate the best experiences of many co-workers. We therefore put great efforts into analysing the documentation of the inquiry.

First of all we jointly inquire into the **life-giving forces** which participants find in their own stories. This is done in a group exercise, attempting to catalogue the “positive core” of SOS Children’s Villages (David Cooperrider, Diana Whitney 2001 in: Bushe). (ibid: 88)

In order to systematically filter out the stories about flow moments, we ask each participant to take notes about the story told. This is done straight after having told the story in the story field – the “interview” in groups of three.

This leads to another stage in story crafting (see also pp. 16). Participants may wish to reformulate their story or perhaps change or leave out elements of the story and add other aspects that seem important to them.

Later, participants use these notes to further craft their story, i.e. they get hand-outs which help them to restructure their narration. This support helps the storytellers retell the story. The purpose of retelling stories is to dig further for deeper insights and to share the knowledge with a wider group of people. Thus every participant tells his or her story at least twice during the course of the workshop. Feedback from the audience helps the storyteller to highlight the most important findings for them.

At a later stage, every participant writes the story in a Word document which allows the workshop team to analyse all the stories

according to the above-mentioned key questions.

### From story to “Harvest”

There are several fruits that can be collected in a Harvesting workshop. Our main focus lies on the answers to three questions as they affect the personal as well as the organisational level of the participants’ endeavours:

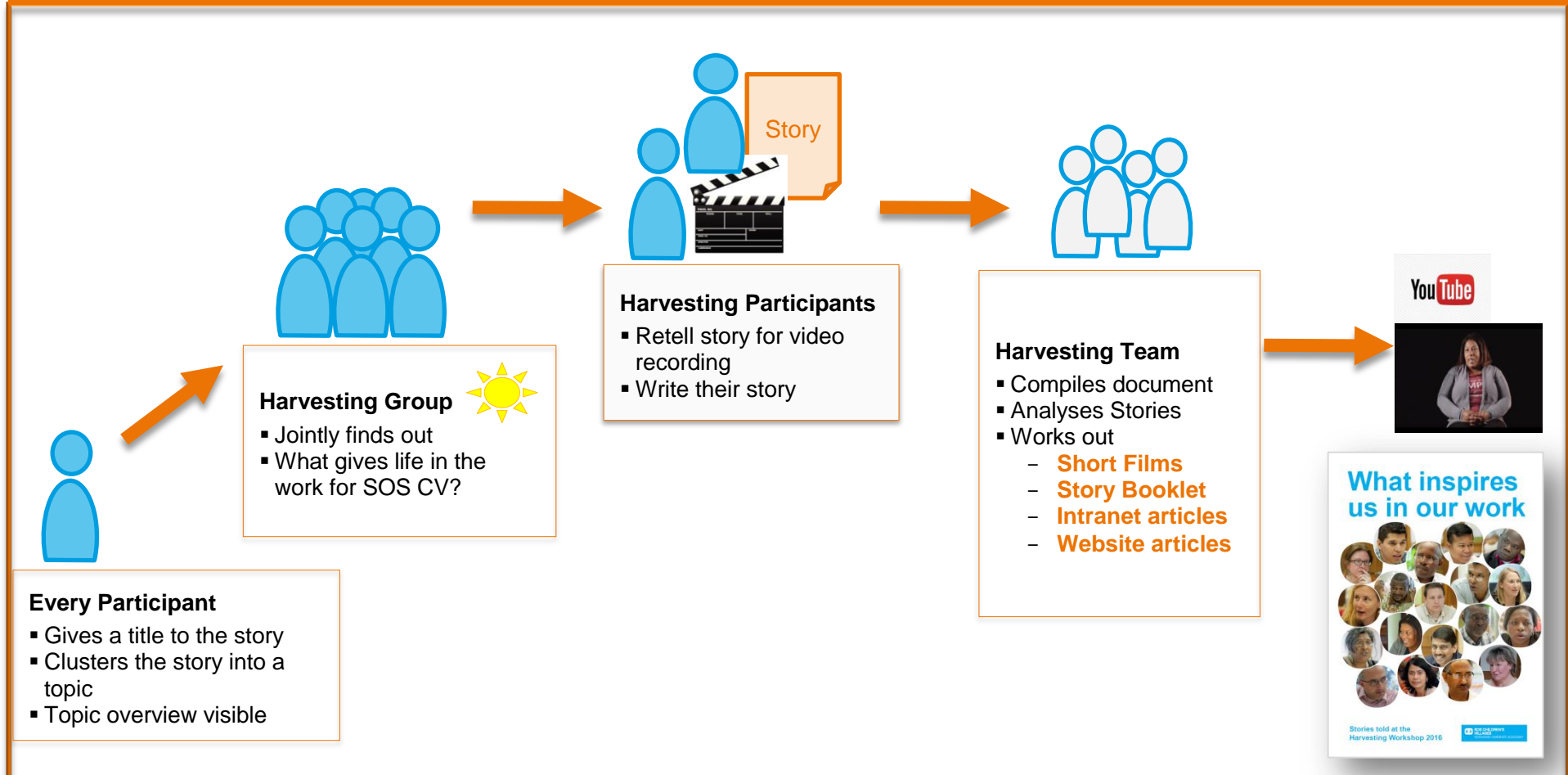
- What works well in the daily activities of SOS Children’s Villages?
- What gives strength to SOS co-workers?
- What can we build on in SOS Children’s Villages?

We call the conclusion derived from the individual stories “fruits”. These are e.g. the harvest of all the stories told, summarised and compiled into general aspects related to the subject matter of SOS Children’s Village’s work.

This enables us to illustrate the collective wisdom of the group. We cluster the “fruits” and present them in relation to the above-mentioned key questions. We also present each story separately in the “What inspires us ...” document. Participants in the Harvesting 2014 workshop have called their outcome “What inspires us in our work for SOS Children’s Villages”. As this title describes the subject matter perfectly, we will stick to it from now on.



## Organise Knowledge



## Output and Outcome

Coming together in Harvesting offers participants the opportunity to share ideas and reflect on the vision of SOS Children's Villages. Participants learn and benefit from each other's wealth of experience in being effective.

Before we show a tangible output we focus on **intangibles**. They may be slightly more elusive but nonetheless important.

Intangible

Harvesting workshops prove that telling one's own story and relating it to the stories of colleagues

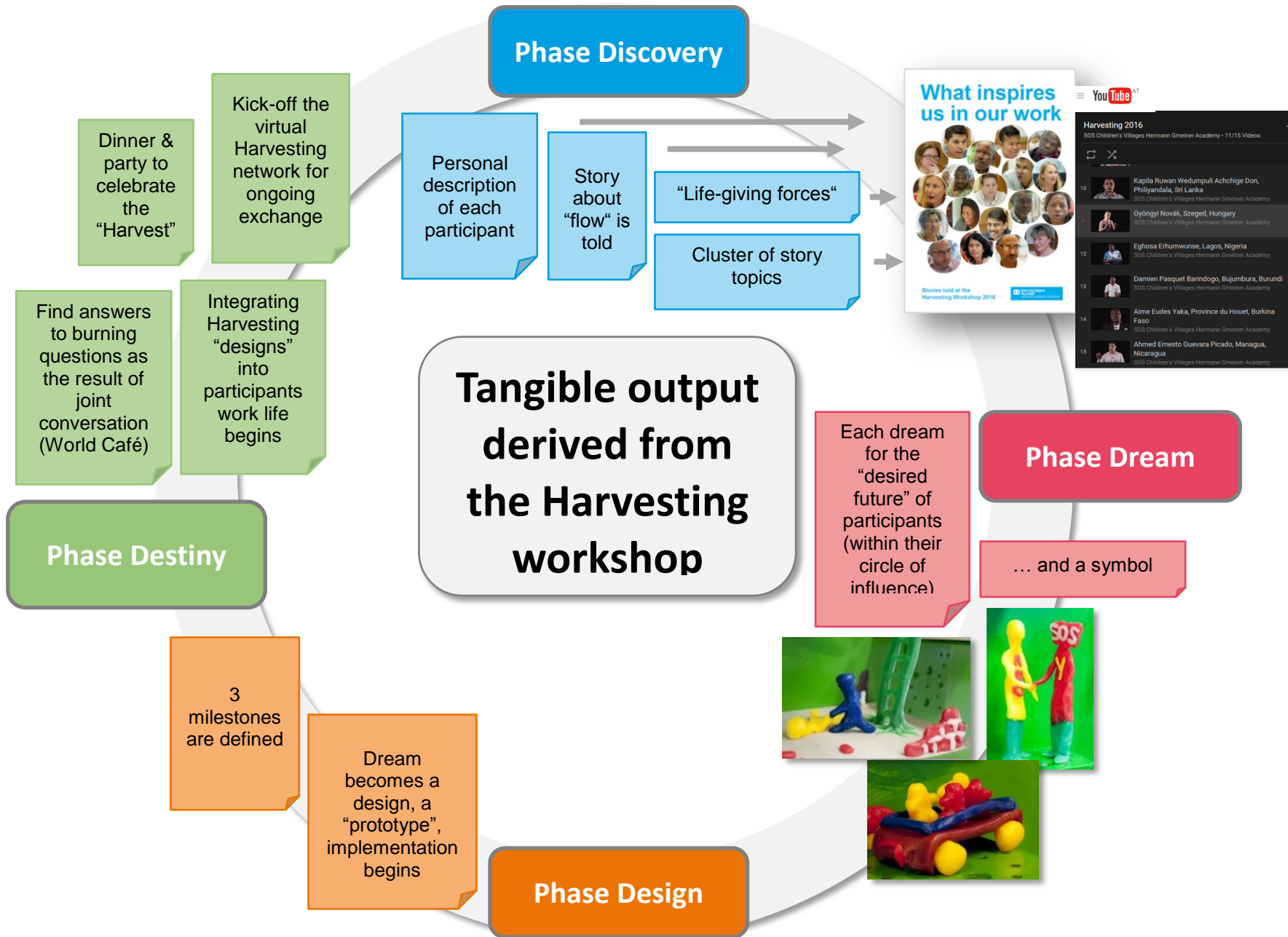
- fosters a feeling of belonging
- is an opportunity for a re-rooting in the organisation
- is an inspiration to take action
- provides motivation and
- gives a feeling of being appreciated

The methodology used in Harvesting

- opens up co-workers' thinking and widens their horizons
- broadens awareness about the historical roots and current developments of SOS Children's Villages
- sticks to a modern approach of organisational development
- fosters participatory collaboration and
- enables sustainable learning and the application of all the methods used

We are planning to create an evaluation tool in order to prove the impact of Harvesting within SOS Children's Villages and beyond (see Future Perspectives, p. 51).

To visualise the tangible outputs of each workshop phase we use a diagram. Some practical examples provide even deeper insights.



## Examples of how Knowledge is shared

### World Café Conversation

In the Harvesting World Café we create a room where Harvesting participants can connect with more SOS co-workers. World Café is a method for collaborative dialogue for the benefit of our work around questions that matter. We have named our café “Meet the Harvesting people World Café”.



For instance, participants of the 2016 workshop developed the following questions which are meaningful to them and also to the expected guests. These questions were developed jointly by “Harvesters” and colleagues of the General Secretariat of SOS Children’s Villages International in a preparation session:

- How can we make SOS CV an even better place to work?
- How can we contribute to sustainability?
- How can we strengthen the feeling of community across the federation?
- Who are we? Today – Tomorrow – Yesterday
- How can we be more effective and faster in our response?
- How do we live our values in a practical way?
- What is the role of co-workers at different levels in effecting a change for a child?

The World Café outcome is available on request. Please contact the Harvesting team (<mailto:irene.Gleischer@sos-kd.org>).

### World Kitchen Dinner

“World Kitchen” builds on the metaphor of a Harvesting feast, which is a tradition held by many cultures, even though it is celebrated in different ways. World Kitchen is used to invite the wider community e.g. more co-workers of SOS Children’s Villages, donors and friends to interact with the Harvesting participants and hold meaningful conversations. Sharing a meal with other people is a very natural way to enable social interaction.



With World Kitchen we create an atmosphere that encourages openness and makes it easy to enter into conversation. We set small tables where groups of four sit together. Simple questions on cards placed at the tables help to find common ground.

### Examples of a Question Menu

- How do you celebrate a harvest in your locality?
- What are the three things that you feel most grateful for in your life?

- What were the most important turning points in your life?



### The Harvesting network

One very important tangible outcome of Harvesting workshops is the growing Harvesting “community”. Today it consists of more than 100 co-workers of SOS Children’s Villages and this number is increasing continuously. 34 of them participated in the years 2002, 2003 and 2004 and many still speak of the workshop in which they took part. It is seen as a real incentive and as a great sign of appreciation for many participants to be nominated or to have the chance to participate in one of the workshops.

### Keep the fire burning - Virtual circles



The Harvesting network grows with each new Harvesting group. We keep the “fire” of Harvesting “burning” by regular virtual meetings that we call “virtual fireplace”. We use the structure of the circle practice (see handbook p. 16). This is done to

- Enable sharing of how participants integrate the Harvesting experience into their day-to-day work.
- Give another “boost” to motivation
- Follow up the implementation of the methods learned

The Harvesting participants feel committed to the “milestones” developed in the design and destiny phases of the Appreciative Inquiry process.

The virtual fireplace strengthens the motivation to keep working on the positive change the participants envisioned. The ongoing Harvesting network increases the impact of the workshop by enabling tangible results.

### Where to find results

#### [SOS Children’s Villages co-workers find results on the Global Intranet and Harvesting Workspace](#)

The workshop material is available and accessible on the “Harvesting network workspace”, a page on the global Intranet of SOS Children’s Villages.

There we publish tangible outcomes (see above) which we have developed during the course of the workshops. There you can find

- this curriculum,
- the multiplier handbook and
- “What inspires us in our work for SOS Children’s Villages”.

#### [Hermann Gmeiner Academy Website](#)

Most of the above-mentioned material is also published on our website in the section “Adult training”.

## Use of Harvesting Knowledge

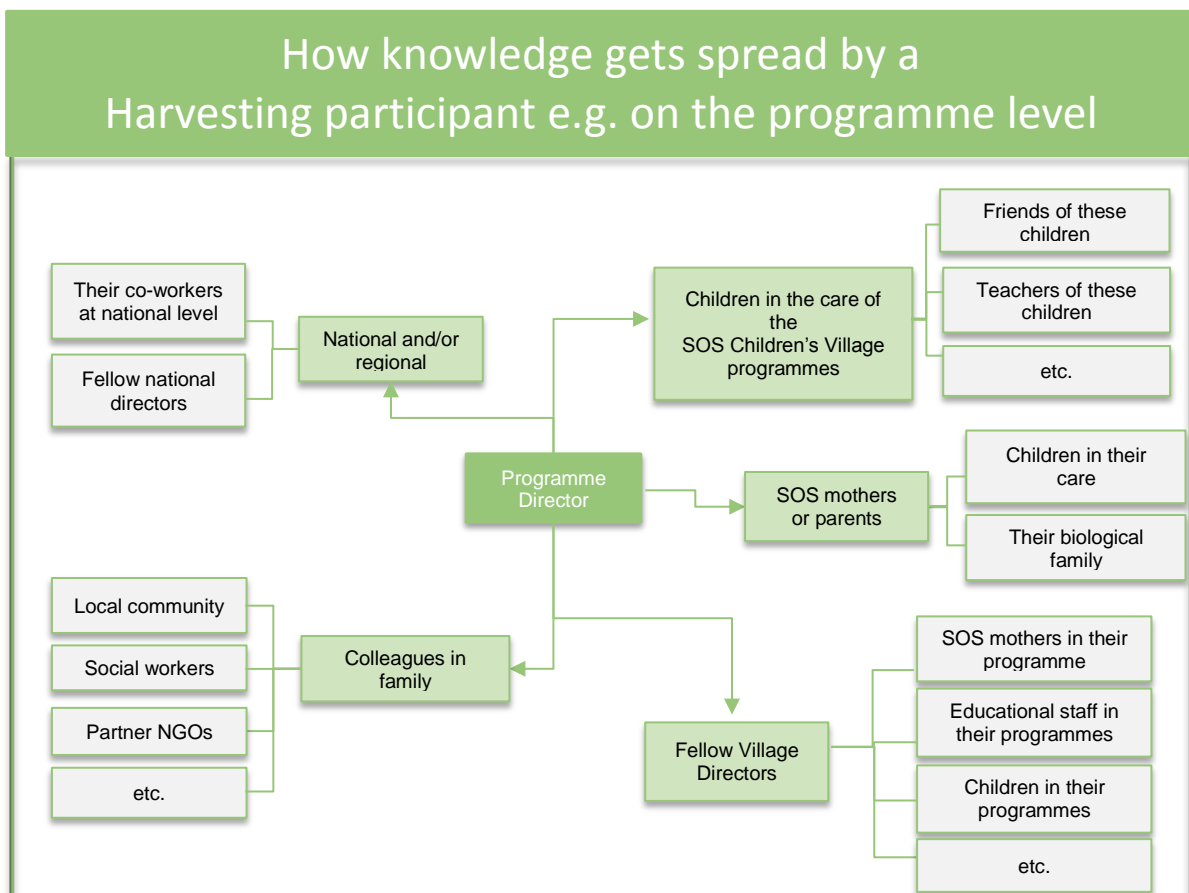
Analysis is necessary for structuring the events, changes or actions found in the material generated. Experiences are brought to the surface. In the process, new possibilities for contributions arise: both the storyteller and the listener acquire new information and space for dialogue emerges.

“Much of the intellectual capital of an organization is not written down anywhere but resides in the minds of the staff. Communicating this know-how across an organization and beyond typically occurs informally through sharing stories.” (Denning 2005: 30)

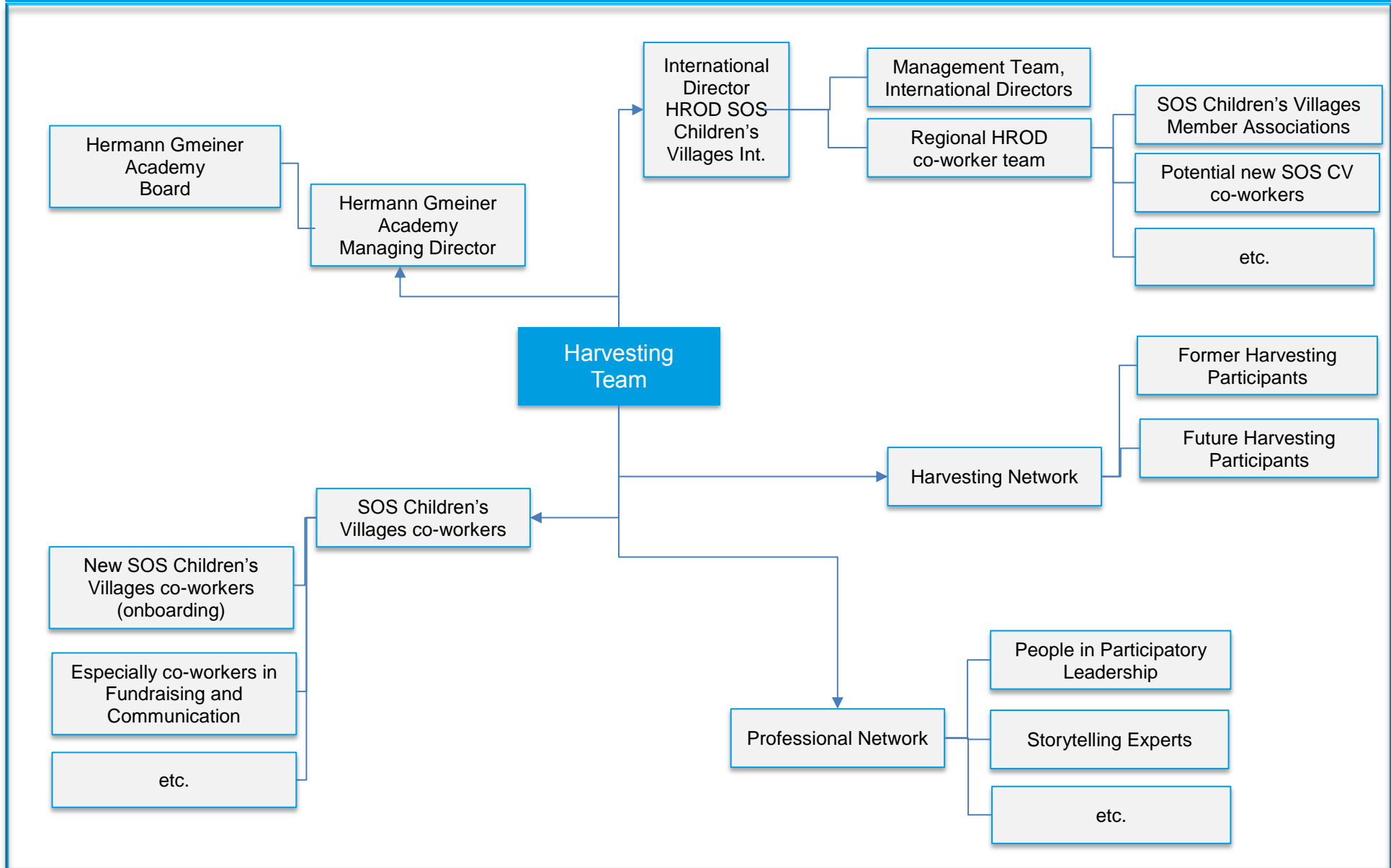
The collective assumptions of co-workers that differ from the official rules can be identified in the storytelling process (Monika Frenzel et al 2004: 58). Besides this, the analysis of the stories, creates “learning organisations”. They are valuable contributions to change.

They also offer a very special way of showing appreciation to the participating co-workers. The more people are involved in a process, the greater the chance for cross-functional solutions.

It is impossible to describe comprehensively how the knowledge generated in Harvesting gets spread. We illustrate ways in which it nourishes SOS Children's Villages using the following two **examples**.



# How knowledge gets spread by the Harvesting Team



## Workshop Implementation

What does a Harvesting workshop look like in practical terms? In this section you will find information about how the programme is set up, what the timeframe looks like and how the requirements for participation are defined. This chapter also provides information about the venue and the costs for participation.

### Timeframe

Including programme visits, Harvesting workshops last seven and a half days. The agenda consists of the following parts:

- Appreciative Inquiry and Storytelling process
- SOS-related excursions and programme visits
- Joint leisure time activities
- Conversation and dialogue sessions

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
Morning	Arrival	Orientation, introduction of group & AI process	AI process continues	Topic-oriented guided city tour in Innsbruck	Visit to SOS Children's Village Imst	AI process, peer coaching	Knowledge sharing with co-workers	Wrap up and Harvesting multipliers workshop
Afternoon			Knowledge sharing through storytelling	AI process continues	Joint leisure time options	Open Knowledge sharing (beyond Harvesting participants' group)	Appreciative Inquiry process continues	Networking with former Harvesting participants – the network grows
Evening	Opening		Joint dinner		AI process continues	AI process continues		Preparation of meals for "World Kitchen" dinner
								"World Kitchen" dinner – open exchange

**Workshop times:** are usually from 8.30 to 12.30 and from 1.30 to 6.00 p.m.

The workshop starts at 6 p.m. on day 1 and ends at 11 p.m. with a dinner that we call "World Kitchen". Participants jointly prepare meals for a special dinner with guests and celebrate the harvest.

**Settings:** all group sessions, group work, individual time, circle practice.

### Post Harvesting Workshop

Since 2016 we have organised a half-day Storytelling Workshop in Vienna to reach even more SOS co-workers. This is an optional part of the workshop programme. Due to limited resources this is restricted to a small number of the workshop group.

Day 1	Day 2
Joint trip to Vienna	Knowledge sharing through Storytelling with co-workers from IO Vienna.
Arrival at International Office Vienna	Visit to city centre
Joint dinner with colleagues from IO	Trip back to Innsbruck



## Participants

Diversity is essential for maximum exchange in Harvesting. Co-workers from all member associations, from National Associations to Promoting and Supporting Associations to the General Secretariat are therefore welcome to join. Socio-economic, geographical and professional background is relevant, as is the number of years of service in SOS Children's Villages.

The maximum number of participants per HARVESTING workshop is limited to 24. The group should ideally consist of co-workers from all working fields, preferably a minimum of one or two care co-workers and a minimum of one or two fundraisers.

However, to ensure an equal distribution of participants across the federation, a distribution key has been produced. It reflects the approximate number of participants per organisational unit and region. The distribution for the HARVESTING workshops allows for:

Region / Organisational unit in the federation	Maximum number of participants
ASIA	4 - 5
ESAF	4
LAAM & the Caribbean	3
EUCB	2
WCAF	1 - 2
MENA	1
PSA co-workers working in domestic programmes	2
PSA office co-workers	2 - 3
International Office Innsbruck and Vienna	1 - 2
International Offices Region	1 - 2
<b>Total number of participants per year: 24</b>	

## Requirements

- Participants must be capable of working in English
- 1/3 of the group of participants should have 10 years' experience in SOS Children's Villages and
- 2/3 should have a minimum of 5 years' experience within the organisation
- Participants should have a minimum of 5 years left until retirement
- Participants should be open to sharing experience and knowledge and willing to engage in an intense learning process
- In the intensive group process constant attendance is highly recommended, not least as a matter of respect for the sharing practice.

## Registration Process

- Participants can apply themselves or can be nominated by their supervisors.
- Interested co-workers have to fill in a registration form and send it to the HROD co-worker of their region/administrative unit.
- The registration period and form are available on the Intranet.
- Approval of the participant list is done by the HROD Function Network team approximately 4 months before Harvesting takes place.

## Workshop venue

Harvesting usually takes place at the SOS Children's Villages Hermann Gmeiner Academy in Innsbruck, Austria. It is a place of intercultural exchange for staff members from all over the world. It extends its warm welcome to the many friends of SOS Children's Villages as well as other non-governmental organisations.

The building facilities include 8 seminar rooms of different sizes, 32 comfortable guest rooms, one wheelchair accessible guest room, excellent cuisine and diversified leisure

facilities such as a swimming pool and sauna. The house is surrounded by beautiful green spaces and is located in the outskirts of Innsbruck. For more information please see the Link below.

**Address:** SOS Children's Villages, Hermann Gmeiner Street 51, 6020 Innsbruck, Austria, [www.hermanngmeineracademy.org](http://www.hermanngmeineracademy.org)

### Roots of the Hermann Gmeiner Academy

Herman Gmeiner founded the SOS Children's Village's Hermann Gmeiner Academy in 1981 to provide a common place for education and encounter for the staff of SOS Children's Villages from all over the world. Today it is a place for the exchange of expert knowledge beyond all cultural, religious, political and hierarchical structures. The Hermann Gmeiner Academy works according to the directives of its board of directors and is a member of the umbrella organisation of SOS Children's Villages International.

### The Hermann Gmeiner Academy's mission

Dedicated to education, especially in the field of adult training, we offer a space and ambience for encounter, for the exchange of experiences and for reflection: an opportunity to enjoy a break from everyday life. We take care of our guests and want them to feel at home in our house. Our international cuisine, the quiet atmosphere and the infrastructure of the house combine to make a stay even more enjoyable.

We document the development of SOS Children's Villages from its origins to its present work and make it available to a broad public.

In our series of events, we deal with current social issues and discuss topical matters that are relevant to SOS Children's Villages.

Another main focus of our work is to present SOS Children's Villages as an organisation which unites different people. In this context we attach particular importance to social awareness i.e. in terms of peace and understanding of social development in given societal contexts. We work on and publish content-based topics according to academic criteria.

## Costs for participation

### Travel Costs (incl. transfer from airport)

Harvesting is part of the strategic initiative no. 5 “create a movement” of SOS Children’s Villages. The organisational unit where the participant belongs (i.e. Member Association, Regional Office or International Competence Centre) must bear the travel costs. They must therefore ensure that

1. Travel costs are budgeted adequately,
2. The trip is organised (by the participant) and
3. Travel insurance is booked for this trip.
4. Expenses for shopping, additional drinks when going out, privately organised sight-seeing tours or trips, taxis, medical care, etc. are borne by participants.

### Costs during the stay in Innsbruck

Workshop participation, accommodation, meals, drinks served with meals, coffee, tea, programme visits and excursions which are part of the workshop programme are budgeted by the Hermann Gmeiner Academy.

### Accommodation

Immediately after confirmation of participation in Harvesting a single room is booked for each participant for the workshop period. The stay can be extended by the participant if desired, depending on the availability of rooms.

### Transfers

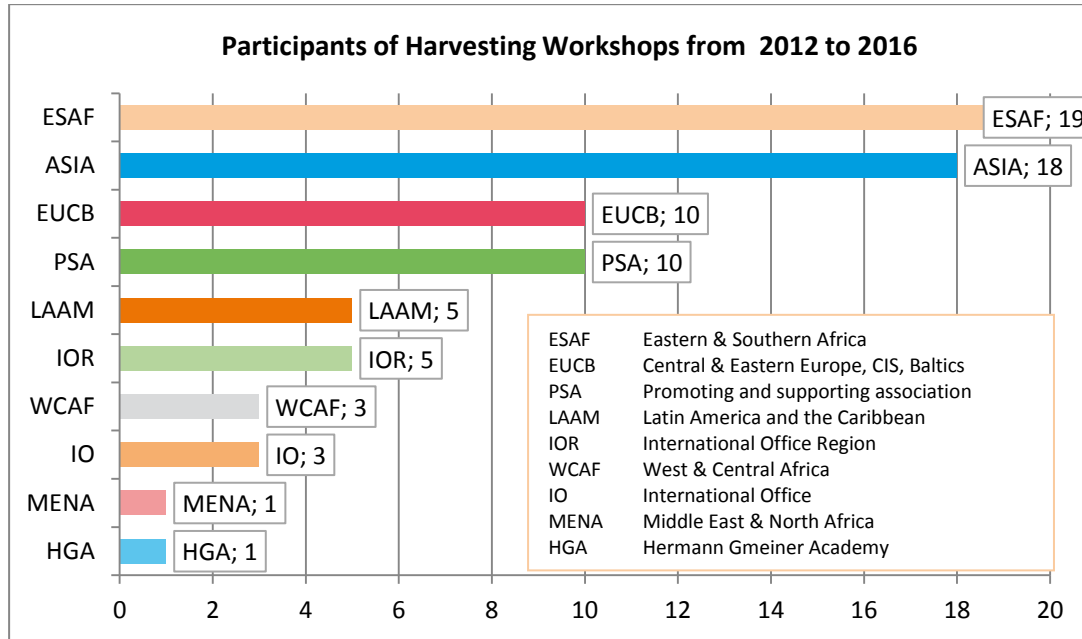
The Hermann Gmeiner Academy is based in the outskirts of the town of Innsbruck.

Travel by plane: there are direct flights to Innsbruck, or alternatively Munich. There are various public services such as bus and train or private shuttle buses available from Munich Airport to Innsbruck.

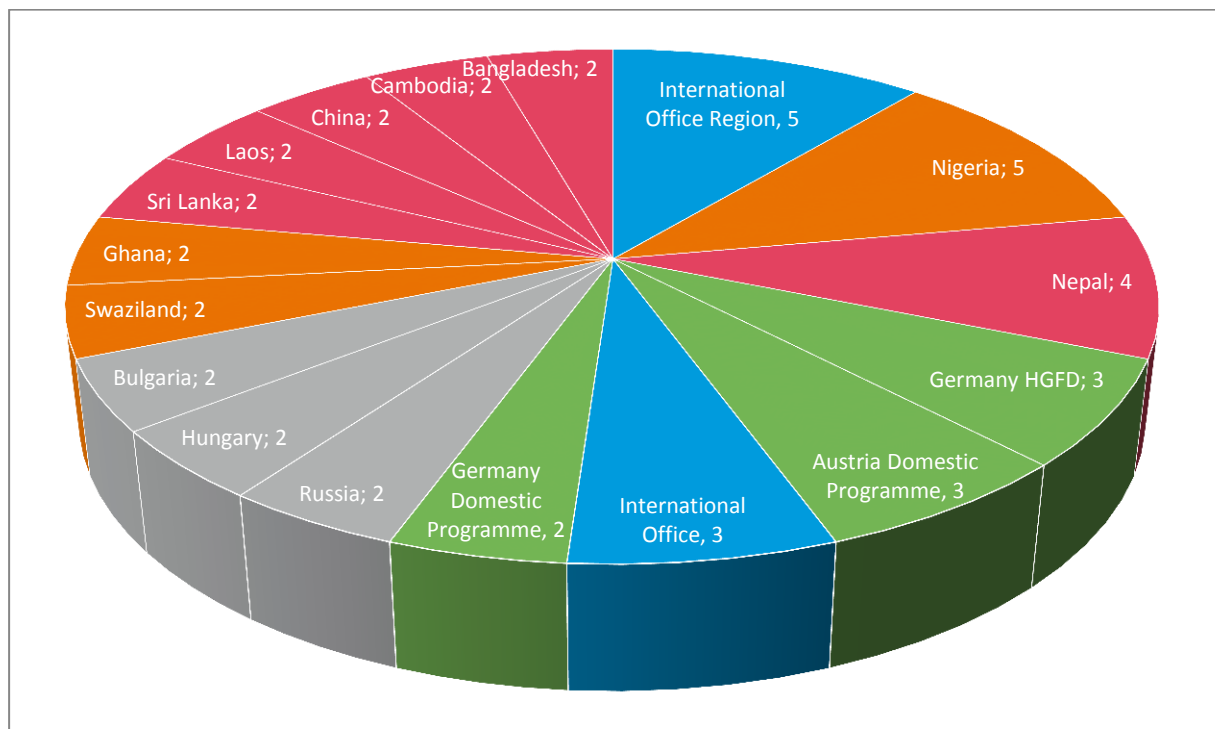
Travel by train: the nearest train station is Innsbruck main train station. A pick-up service from Innsbruck Airport and the train and bus stations in Innsbruck (arrival and departure) is organised by the workshop team.

### Harvesting Participation Statistics

A total of 127 co-workers have participated in a HARVESTING workshop to date. From 2012 to 2016 the Hermann Gmeiner Academy hosted 75 participants from 47 different countries or member associations.



Participants of the following countries and organisational units represent the highest participation so far.



## Evaluation and further development

### Impact of Harvesting

Harvesting is an intensive knowledge sharing workshop. It reaches out to co-workers from different countries and different levels of SOS Children's Villages. The diverse composition of the group of participants makes Harvesting a unique experience that has the potential to connect co-workers beyond hierarchies and nationalities.

The organisation's interest in creating a sustainable outcome must be justified by a sound documentation of the impact of the programme. Fulfilment of the goals set by the mandate givers is taken as a general benchmark for evaluating the programme.

Different forms of evaluation create the framework for assessing whether these goals have been met and how the outcome demonstrates practical actions and creates a sustainable positive impact on co-workers and the organisation.

#### Evaluation formats

There are various ways of evaluating the impact of learning programmes. A general distinction can be made between external and internal evaluation. Even though the Harvesting team would welcome external evaluation, the results presented here are the product of different forms of self- and peer-evaluation, which have been applied during and after Harvesting workshops. The Harvesting team continuously collects participants' feedback in different forms.

During and after the Harvesting workshop

- Regular reflection on learning during the workshop
- Collecting feedback on aspects such as the process, content and application after the workshop

Through the ongoing Harvesting network

- Follow-up e-mails and virtual meetings on the progress and implementation of learning outcomes
- Sharing the implementation of milestones set during the workshop, at the virtual fireplace

The methods used for feedback at the end of the workshop are tools such as rating scales, group work on specific questions and feedback letters. Through the network of former Harvesters the Harvesting team increases the sustainability of the learning process by providing a support network of co-workers to follow up on the goals set during the workshop. Besides other aspects described in the chapter on knowledge transfer we view the readiness of the participants to remain active in this community of practice as a sign of commitment to ongoing learning.

#### How we assess the impact of Harvesting

Impact can be defined as the results created by a change of behaviour and attitudes based on increased knowledge and awareness. Harvesting workshops are not a "classroom learning" provision but are a workplace-based learning setting. We use the Donald Kirkpatrick Model (2007) as a framework for assessing the impact of Harvesting as it is a widely used standard for evaluating the effectiveness of training. We investigate the value of Harvesting workshops primarily across the first two of the four levels which Kirkpatrick suggests (Kirkpatrickpartners.com):

- **Level 1: Reaction** – Evaluates how participants respond to the training.
- **Level 2: Learning** – Measures if they actually learned the material.
- **Level 3: Behaviour** – Considers if they are using what they learned on the job, and
- **Level 4: Results** – Evaluates if the training positively impacted the organisation.

This model was developed with the aim of maximising and demonstrating the value of training programmes for an organisation. In

the following pages the feedback collected from Harvesting participants through questionnaires, group feedback and e-mails and in the “virtual fireplaces” are linked to the levels of Kirkpatrick’s model. We choose significant statements to demonstrate the impact of the different levels of learning gained through the workshop.

## Reaction

### Did participants like the experience? Do they feel satisfied? Do they use what was learned?

Statements collected directly or relatively soon after the workshops can be categorised as reaction. The reactions rely on the relevance of the training for the job and the engagement experienced.

“It was a wonderful experience in life to be a participant in Harvesting. I have the feeling that I received the greatest appreciation and reward for my work in my life. To meet so many great friends from different parts of the world is not a common experience. I am highly influenced by the closeness and trust which developed naturally among us over the nine days which I am sure will last forever. [...] I was delighted to share my Harvesting experience with all the children, mothers and co-workers.” **(Bhola Nath Paudel, Project Director SOS Children's Village Bharatpur, Nepal)**

We collect feedback directly after the workshop and keep in close contact with participants via e-mail, workspace and the Facebook group site, especially for the initial period after participants go back to their workplace.

## Learning

### Can participants do what was defined in the workshop objectives? Do they show skills and abilities?

According to Kirkpatrick, learnings can be described as a tangible outcome of the workshop, without the possibility of

foreseeing whether the knowledge gained will be used in the future.

Learning can be divided into learning on the level of attitudes and on the level of practical implementation.

“Furthermore I had learned that we have to think of our future in a positive mood (positive thinking), we have to leave aside what we have done wrong in the past as our lesson learned, and then we can move forward faster for the benefit of our work as well as our children’s future.” **(Sour Chankosom, Project Director Angkor Siem Riep, Cambodia)**

The participants also mention the learning of practical skills that can be directly applied in their professional roles. Many participants reported increased skills in the method of participatory facilitation and alternative methods of project management.

The learning of practical tools is often linked to the guiding models used (eg. circle of influence) but is also a result of the practice of coaching skills or alternative ways of project management using the design templates applied during the design phase.

In my circle of influence my project is most attractive internally to the colleagues in the SOS Children’s Village Child development team, and externally to the principal and development co-workers in the primary school in the local community where we live. We have worked together on an initial project proposal which has a specific goal: to improve the integration of vulnerable children into the community by providing effective social services at the Osijek-Baranja County.” **(Zoran Relić, SOS Children's Village Ladimirevci, Croatia)**

## Behaviour

### Can participants apply what they learned during training when they are back on the job?

The next level of integrating learning shows on the level of behaviour. The following statement was collected 17 months after the workshop and proves that learning has already been integrated into behaviour as a sustainable outcome of the Harvesting workshop.

“The experiences I gained in 2012 created a lasting impression on my life personally and professionally. The "life-giving" gems I acquired and kept within me became an extra fuel that keeps the fire in me burning. Last year, 2013, was a very challenging year for me. But every time I felt down or about to give up, I looked back at the time I was "Harvesting" in 2012 and harnessed those life-giving moments, not only from myself within, but from what I learned and received from my fellow Harvesters. And it made a big difference to the way I perceive life's challenges. Now, as ever, I am ready to face the challenges ahead. The good thing about Harvesting is that it made me always look at the bright and positive side of life no matter how dark it may seem to be.” **(Bembem Leonilo N. Rivero, Village Director Davao, Philippines)**

Many statements prove that the appreciation and trust that was established during Harvesting is a life-changing experience and is carried into the participants' workplace. Inspired by the approach of Appreciative Inquiry, many participants change the way they work with SOS mothers or children in the care of SOS Children's Villages and establish ways of looking at what works within the organisation, rather than focusing on the challenges and problems.

## Results

### Which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the training?

Kirkpatrick puts results at the top of his evaluation model and describes them as the outcomes. In the Harvesting network the participants report on actual projects they have implemented based on the dream and design developed during the AI 4D-cycle.

#### Individual Child Development Plan Software

This is the dream of Kumar Muralindra, Village Director of SOS Children's Village Nuwara Eliya, implemented in Sri Lanka.

After returning to Sri Lanka on 29th April from Harvesting workshops in Innsbruck, Kumar started to apply AI in his country. He integrated the 4D cycle (Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny) into the individual **child** development plan (CDP)<sup>3</sup>. He in fact developed a module in the CDP software to mirror these four elements for child development in Sri Lanka.

The 4D cycle, Kumar discovered, is essential in preparing the plan. In his opinion it contributes to making it an even more effective tool. So his question was about ways of including the 4Ds into the **software**.

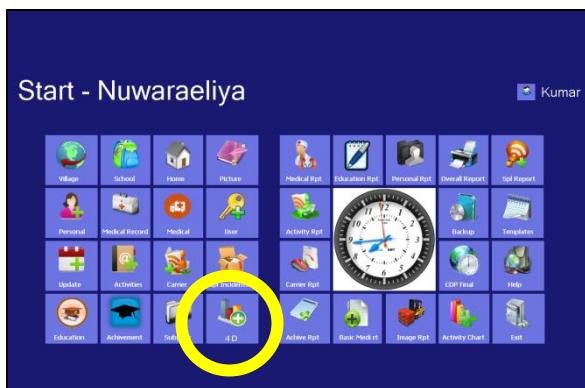
His first step was to conduct a meeting of all the locational heads along with the co-workers who are involved in the preparation of the CDP. Kumar shared the valuable experience gained during Harvesting with them. His second step was to embed what had been learned in the planning.

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<sup>3</sup> “Each child's potential is carefully considered and brought into focus through a regular and structured child development planning process. Through documentation, it also makes each child's progress verifiable and their successes apparent.” (SOS Children's Villages Manual, 2004)



### Embedding the 4D cycle in the CDP software



- 1) **Discovery:** Identify the background of the child. No development plan is possible without knowing the child's background. This helps to identify the development needs based on the child's strengths.
- 2) **Dream:** Children explain their dreams, targets and goals in life. They explain their own basic developmental needs and envision their future.
- 3) **Design:** Their expectations and goals in life are documented and organised. A well designed step-by-step process helps the child to achieve his/her dreams.
- 4) **Destiny:** Planting a seed and harvesting the results some time later is an enjoyable experience for the child and the care-givers. Here the small achievements of the children will be celebrated. This encourages the child to keep on trying to achieve his/her goals and dreams for life.

### Quality Education in Bangladesh

This is the dream MD which Faizul Kabir, Project Director SOS Children's Village Chittagong, Bangladesh, started to implement after his participation in Harvesting 2014.

Kabir named his idea "Harvesting Project in SOS Children's Village Chittagong", aiming for Quality Education for all children. In practical terms this means that 100% of children should pass in Primary Education and 90% in Junior Secondary by 2015.

To achieve this goal Kabir, along with a team, has to develop a coaching system for the children. They have adopted a detailed plan of how to achieve this coaching environment in the SOS Children's Village, the youth programmes and in the family strengthening programme locations. The co-workers of these programmes defined the following milestones for achieving their goal:

- Establish the criteria of a good teacher (05/14)
  - Qualities of a good teacher: engaging personality, knowledgeable, friendly, useful and caring.
- Conduct a study among children about their opinion of quality education.
- Develop a survey questionnaire (06/14)
  - Try to find out about the children's most loved or liked teacher
- Survey to be conducted in (09/2014)
- Prepare a list of teachers (09/2014)
  - Make list of existing good teachers
  - Select the children for interview
- Look for quality teachers (10/14)
- Select quality teaching staff (11 and 12/14)
- Start a good coaching system (1/15)
- Ensure quality monitoring (2015)

Kabir formed an "action committee" consisting of four co-workers to conduct the survey and find teachers. This has been done on schedule and the results are encouraging. Kabir then formed a Harvesting Project Committee with 3 colleagues committed to ensuring quality education.



### SOS Children's Village Colombia to be self-reliant by 2022

That was Emilce Peñon Esquivel's dream at the workshop 2012. Emilce is Regional Sponsorship Advisor in Bogotá, Colombia. The results described show the impact of the implementation of new approaches like Storytelling and Appreciative Inquiry.

"[...] The spirit of Harvesting is present in me, being itself the spirit of our organisation. It means I have been spreading the fire wherever I go, whatever I do. What made me happy in the implementation of my dream:

Storytelling: because it is the way I know best to promote the spirit of the organisation. **By telling stories of the children's progress, the first national sponsors have committed to support SOS Children's Village Colombia, firstly in Bogotá.** (It was done during the first "World Café" by last 16th December in the SOS CV Bogotá).

Moreover, the mid-year reports for international sponsorships in the National Association Colombia will include **the voice of children talking about the best moments of their childhood and the voice of the mothers expressing their appreciation of their children.** The idea has been communicated to the Programmes and their answers have been positive.

Motivation for the attention and importance all my colleagues gave to my speech on the topics we lived with in Harvesting. My National Director told me to celebrate Harvesting in our National Association. A programme director liked the topic of storytelling very much and plans to put it into action in her community. [...]"

By providing an ideal platform for listing and telling stories about successful working experiences the participants widened their understanding of the joint vision and how to rely on it, even in difficult moments. Different statements show that Harvesting has an impact on the person as a whole: the outcome of this learning journey therefore shows on the individual and organisational levels. On

the individual level abilities like resilience and positive thinking are enhanced, which has a lasting effect on the levels of motivation.



## Future Perspectives

The intensive and sometimes challenging process of planning a workshop programme like Harvesting, defining all the necessary little steps and tasks and carrying out the programme together as a team, has led to many ideas regarding the future of Harvesting.

### Evaluation for continuous development

In order to follow up especially on the two levels for assessing the impact mentioned above (see p. 45) – changed **behaviour** after having participated in a Harvesting workshop and positive **results** that indicate a positive effect on SOS Children's Villages – we plan to expand our evaluation measures.

In order to further improve the embedding of Harvesting workshops into participants' work lives our aim is to find out e.g. whether, having participated in a Harvesting workshop, Harvesting participants consistently and appropriately

- feel appreciated and valued as bearers of experiences and knowledge
- have tools at hand to implement creative action towards the strategic goals of SOS CV
- benefit from the shared knowledge in Harvesting workshops
- make use of their network of fellow "Harvesters"
- still feel closeness among the group of participants and affiliation with SOS CV worldwide after a longer period
- share their knowledge with even more co-workers beyond the Harvesting workshop group

We seek to answer these questions and therefore plan a survey to be conducted regularly. We are currently developing an evaluation concept that aims at collecting more data by using more sources at regular intervals, ideally starting by 2017.

It is our aim to constantly improve the Harvesting workshops by repurposing methods and data. This evaluation concept

will be implemented after having been properly designed and approved by the mandate givers.

### Workshop Target groups

Many organisational stakeholders are involved in the process of Harvesting workshops, but currently not all.

#### SOS parents, SOS mothers and caregivers

As the organisational core of SOS Children's Villages involves relationships, we would love to welcome more caregivers who directly work with children and young people. It would be of immense benefit to have e.g. SOS parents and SOS mothers, in many countries called SOS Aunties or psychosocial co-workers in our workshops. We believe that the stories they have to tell would be of great benefit for the group and vice versa.

This wish has also been expressed by Harvesting participants who would appreciate the participation of this workgroup.

#### Involvement of young people

We are pleased to say that so far one person in each of the Harvesting groups grew up in an SOS Children's Villages programme. What a great treasure for SOS Children's Villages to hear stories from people who have this special view of the work being done!

These people also had the idea of involving young people who are still being cared for in an SOS programme.

#### Harvesting for and with young people only

Another idea we think worth considering is a Harvesting workshop for young people. They participate in our programmes and benefit from them. Collecting their stories could be a powerful way to demonstrate the impact made on the individual life of each child and each young person.

### Venue

Travel costs are an issue for quite a number of co-workers. Every year there are more people

who would wish to participate in a Harvesting workshop but their organisation cannot afford to cover the travel costs.

One option would be for us to go to them. It would be a great opportunity for alumni Harvesters to host a workshop supported by the Hermann Gmeiner Academy Harvesting team. In this way the skills learned would be strengthened and the multiplier effect of harvesters would be demonstrated.

A regional Harvesting workshop for SOS mothers, a country Harvesting or a regional Harvesting have already been discussed.

There are many former Harvesting participants willing to co-host a workshop of this kind and promote the idea of it.

There are many ideas for spreading the idea of treasuring the valuable knowledge co-workers carry inside them.

### Harvesting Summit

During a Harvesting workshop in the dream phase, an idea emerged in the Harvesting workshop team: what about a harvest of Harvesting? What does that mean?

Would it be possible to **bring all Harvesting participants together**? Ten years after the second launch of this programme, we could again go through the AI cycle together with all of them in a short process. This means the group would consist of approximately 300 people.

- to collect examples of AI in practice
- to demonstrate the impact of positive change that has already taken place in order to refresh the AI thinking
- to broaden the AI attitude and philosophy and its method of action throughout SOS Children's Villages
- to strengthen the network of Harvesters
- to find out which topics are most vibrant and energising for this group of people

Imagine the potential of this huge network of positive power for positive change ignited in a Harvesting Summit!

### AI Summit

Sometimes when you wish to initiate change on a broad basis you have to **think big**. For that reason Organisational Development practitioners around the world frequently apply the AI methodology for large system transformation in so-called AI summits. To achieve this you have to bring the whole system together for a "**Whole System Positive Change**" of this kind (Diana Whitney, David Cooperrider 2000).

The "whole system" means that you invite a selection of all the stakeholders following a specific stakeholder analysis called "Five Is". It is recommended to invite the stakeholders who are interested, who have influence and information, who may be impacted, who have an investment. Inviting many generations to an AI summit is also recommended in order to achieve a full representation.

AI summits are often used, for example, for strategic planning or to form business alliances or when an organisation strives for a **culture change**.

We are convinced that it would be a wonderful opportunity for SOS Children's Villages:

- to craft innovative ideas
- to help co-workers experience a purpose greater than their own and to satisfy the human need to be part of a larger community
- to establish credibility in the outcomes as all participants of an AI summit are part of the decisions taken, and public commitments engender responsibility to strengthen relationships
- because commitment engenders responsibility

We would love to develop a concept for an AI summit to spread the AI world view within our organisation.



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Editorial team:



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