

Donor report 2023

Akelius Foundation

Projects and programmes in
Palestine, Ukraine, Haiti, India,
Cambodia, the Philippines, and
Bolivia.



*Peer group activity in
Palestine.*



**SOS
BARNBYAR**

Published in May 2024

Your investment keeps children in school.

Although 2023 was marked by many serious wars and disasters – such as in Palestine, Ukraine, and Haiti – many children in these and other hard-hit countries were still able to live in safety. This was possible thanks to your long-term commitment, and all other partners and donors who have chosen to make a difference by investing in our work this year.

In this report you can read how your investment in Palestine, Ukraine, Haiti, India, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Bolivia, together with our long-standing expertise and experience, has enabled many children and young people to go to school and grow up in a supportive environment, so they can shape their lives and contribute to a sustainable future for themselves and their communities. The report describes how you bring hope to children and young people living in the most difficult contexts.

There are still many wars and difficult situations in the world. Our way of meeting these challenges is to continue to stand up for children. Working in more than 130 countries around the world means we are there for children before, during and after a crisis takes place.

Your end-of-year initiative to double donations for children's education enabled us to strengthen our work and allows us to continue to fight for children's education and a better future. Thank you for being an important part of the world's largest child rights organization for the ones who have lost, or are at risk of losing, parental care.

Stockholm in May 2024



Petra Nyberg, interim Secretary General

Palestine

2023 saw many changes in Palestine and for SOS Children's Villages Palestine. SOS Palestine had the vision to go through a localization process and the creation of a national board, implementing a national strategy, Result-based management and to fulfil the federation's minimum requirements for funding, as well as the finalization of national policies and procedures to unify its work.

In October 2023, however, an unprecedented attack on Israel by Palestinian factions in Gaza has changed the course of almost everything. The constant Israeli bombardment and airstrikes that followed has seen some of the most devastating destruction and death toll numbers in the Gaza Strip. More than 30,000 Palestinians, including several participants from SOS Children's Villages Family Strengthening, youth and re-integration programmes.

Tensions also rose in the West Bank, with hundreds of Palestinians killed since October 7th, in addition to increased settler violence, arrests in different cities, and movement restrictions.

The programme location in Rafah, Gaza, has thankfully been unaffected from bombardments. Several of our staff sought refuge in the SOS Children's Village in Rafah, and a partnership with UNICEF to host Unaccompanied & Separated Children (UASC) was established. Discussions are also underway to expand this partnership and to even include activities in the West Bank.

An urgent humanitarian appeal was established, which saw the implementation of the emergency project, consisting of cash vouchers to cover food, non-food and WASH needs to families, ensuring continuation of education, family counselling sessions and recreational activities in both the West Bank and Gaza. Since the 7th of October and the escalation and war on Gaza Strip, SOS Children's Villages in Palestine worked on a Humanitarian Appeal with the overall objective to contribute to strengthen protection mechanisms, alleviate psychological distress among children, caregivers, and gender-based violence (GBV) survivors, and enhance food security for vulnerable populations, support small-scale projects, provide cash assistance to alleviate socio-economic vulnerabilities, and protect livelihoods, fostering resilience and well-being. Total target group is around 10,055 persons from both locations Gaza Strip and West Bank. Main activities include mental health and psychosocial support services, financial support, awareness raising sessions and recreational activities.

A crisis management team led by the National Director has kept constant updates with the team in Gaza, making sure they have sufficient resources in the SOS Children's Village. The team also drafted contingency plans which included relocation plans, resource management plans and evacuation plans despite the highly volatile and constantly changing context on the ground, not to mention the restriction imposed by borders and authorities.

SOS Children's Villages in Palestine completed *the GEP-V project* after two years, with the aim to strengthen gender equality and protection of children from violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Rafah

Family-like care

The programme in Rafah underwent immense pressure as relentless aggressions on the Gaza Strip started on October 7th. Efforts to ensure the safety and security of the children, caregivers and the premises was continuously communicated on high levels through SOS Children's Villages International office. Despite the current situation, the program managed to provide the care for all the children under its care, around

76 children, in addition was able to support as much as possible families that was reachable through the family strengthening team. Also new projects were implemented as emergency projects as a response to the war in Gaza and new partnerships agreements were signed with new partners mainly with UNICEF to

2023 in brief

- 76 children

provide unaccompanied and separated children with family-like care services. During the last month of the year some emergency plans and projects was launched in Rafah program, related to security and humanitarian appeal, in addition to the adaptation of *the GEP-V project* to be fit to the needs of the beneficiaries during the war period.

Financial report Palestine

Donated by Akelius University Foundation, EUR	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024 Budget
Programme Rafah, Palestine*	364 051	364 964	335 852
Total Donation	364 051	364 964	335 852

SEK (using exchange rate at the time of payment)	3 989 996	4 000 000	4 000 000
Average exchange rate	10,96	10,96	11,91

Total budget/actuals, EUR	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024 Budget
Investments/maintenance	-22 708	28 692	-7 297
Current working expenditures	-775 856	-735 753	-777 152
Personnel expenditures	-1 196 520	-961 666	-1 185 393
Other expenditures	-55 543	-124 715	-69 313
Total	- 2 050 627	- 1 793 442	-2 039 155*

Share covered by Akelius	17%	19%	16%
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* From 2023 the costs for the whole location Rafah, Palestine is included according to SOS CVI's new programme structure.

Palestina, evacuation

Donated by Akelius University Foundation, EUR	2024 Budget
Evacuation Rafah, Palestine	500 000
Total	500 000

SEK (using exchange rate at the time of payment)	5 955 000
Average exchange rate	11,91

Total budget/actuals, EUR	2024 Budget
Evacuation Rafah, Palestine	-1 000 000
Total	- 1 000 000

Share covered by Akelius	50%
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A total of 68 children and 11 staff and their families have been evacuated from the children's village in Rafah, Gaza. We have been working through diplomatic channels with all relevant authorities to bring the children and adults to Bethlehem in the West Bank, where they arrived safely on 11 March. The post-evacuation budget covers the costs of supporting the evacuated children, staff and families for the next year.

Ukraine

In 2023 lives and wellbeing of children in Ukraine remained under threat due to Russia's ongoing military aggression, which is causing losses of tens of thousands of lives, livelihoods, millions of refugees and internally displaced persons, deportation, and transfer of Ukrainian citizens, including children, to Russia and Belarus, massive destruction of physical infrastructure and further occupation of Ukrainian territory by Russia.

The situation in the regions differs depending on the proximity to the front-line, being relatively stable in the western part with lower need in direct humanitarian assistance, but still remaining emergency throughout the country.

SOS Children's Villages in Ukraine entered 2023 with a well-developed network of SOS Family strengthening centers and implementing partner NGOs, thus covering 15 regions of Ukraine to meet the needs of the target group, which remained unchanged compared to 2022 – IDP families with children, families of injured children, foster families. Massive blackouts throughout the country, caused by bombardments, revealed a lack of sustainable and safe locations for children to learn and play; we responded to this challenge by establishing and equipping a network of child-friendly spaces in the regions of its presence or implementing partners' operation.

Due to the uncertain funding prospects, in the middle of the year the budget for emergency response programme activities was revised, leading to revision and reduction of some activities, including cash and material assistance. Funding of implementing partners was also reduced with only two implementing partners left by the end of the year. At the same time, we focused on deeper and more diverse support of the participants and realization of its strategic goal, having launched new programs, such as Self-employment and Alternative family-based care development. Apart from the emergency humanitarian response in the frame of the Humanitarian Funding Pool (HFP), we implemented other public-funded projects, aimed at emergency support as well as at the realization of the strategic de-institutionalization (De-I) goal. In 2023 we successfully completed several cases of reunification of families of deported children in close cooperation with governmental and NGO partners.

The activities were split between two main directions:

- ✓ Strategic - which included De-I advocacy at different levels, communities' capacity building, Alternative family-based care development and support, Fundraising and communications to raise awareness of our needs and deeds;
- ✓ Existing - which included multi-dimensional support of participants from target group, having integrated previously regular activities into emergency response actions.

The constant work is taking place at the highest level on issues of child rights and protection: Office of President, Vice Prime Minister, through the weekly working group. SOS Children's Villages in Ukraine is coordinating with both Human rights and Child rights ombudsmen. At the Ministry level, SOS Children's Villages in Ukraine cooperates with Ministry of Social Policy and newly established inter-Ministerial body The Coordination Center for Family Upbringing and Child Care Development. We meet regularly with highest advisory body on coordinating measures to protect the rights, freedoms and legal interests of children affected by military aggression. The most important achievement in Child Safeguarding (CS) area was that we fully adapted our CS system to the emergency response context. The National CS Adviser was hired in 2023. The structure and composition of the CS teams at the national and local levels was updated: today we have 11 local CS teams and the National CS team.

New procedures, instructions and rules have been developed and implemented:

- Procedure for responding to complaints and concerns about child abuse or other inappropriate behaviour for the child safeguarding team;
- Instructions on use complaints boxes;
- Rules for visiting the locations of SOS Children's Villages Ukraine;

- MEMO "Responding to reports of child abuse".

Onboarding training and orientation regarding SOS Children's Villages CS policy and the child safeguarding approach are provided to all those working for or on behalf of SOS Children's Villages Ukraine, including partner organisations. A new channel for CS complaints and concerns has been created. For today a separate phone number, email, complaints boxes, face-to-face reporting to the members of the child safeguarding team both at local and national level are in place. Posters with CS channels are placed in each location next to the complaint's boxes. A child and youth - appropriate reporting mechanism is in place in every location. Anonymous reporting is also possible using a special phone number and email.

National and local CS risks assessments have been successfully carried out in 2023 by all our CS teams. During this process we provide involvement of children and young people in the process of local (program) CS risk assessment.

Operational status

In 2023 the following assistance was provided via SOS Children's Villages in Ukraine's **Family Strengthening Centers**:

- Psychosocial services (individual and group sessions)
- Financial support
- Food and non-food support
- Medical support
- Educational support
- Professional trainings and courses for parents
- Trainings for service-providers in local communities

Emergency support

We provided medical assistance; food assistance both in kind and in the form of certificates for the purchase of products in widespread supermarket chains; providing humanitarian assistance, mostly in kind; assistance with housing rent; educational support for children; legal support of families.

- Health
- Food
- Accommodation
- Education
- Legal support
- Child-friendly spaces

Foster Family Care

In 2023, Foster family care was provided to children, including young people, from the Kyiv and Luhansk programs (foster families relocated abroad to SOS Children's Villages in Poland and other countries, and safer regions of Ukraine).

Alternative Care Capacity building

- information campaign at the national level, which would contribute to increasing the number of candidates for Alternative family-based care.
- development of the capacity of the Organization's specialists of six locations of presence to provide social support services to Alternative family-based care.

Children with Injuries

Comprehensive assistance to children who suffered injuries (damage to health) due to hostilities in Ukraine in 2022-2023 and their families to restore functioning, promote full and efficient participation in society, and prevent, overcome, mitigate the repercussions of difficult life circumstances.

Number of people from Ukraine we have supported, since February 2022:

- 369 778 children, adolescents and young people in Ukraine
- 12 433 children, adolescents and young people outside Ukraine
- 382 211 children, adolescents and young people in total.

Mental Health Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)

- Psychological resilience lessons by mobile teams of psychologists in schools for IDP children and local communities affected by Russian military aggression.
- Trainings with specialists (teachers, specialists of social services) who work with children and families on the prevention of professional burnout, recognition of injuries in children and primary psychosocial support, referral, as well as training in coping strategies of specialists.
- Events for cohesion and communication for children and their parents
- Psychosocial support camps in safe regions for children from vulnerable categories from different regions.
- Mutual support groups for parents of children who have been physically injured.
- Individual consultations for children and their parents.

Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA)

In 2023, CVA team provided cash assistance to participants; some of them received cash assistance only, others – under complex support of our Family strengthening centers. Multi-purpose cash assistance was provided among foster families, families of guardians, as well as internally displaced persons with children. Conditional cash assistance was provided to adoptive parents to meet the needs of adopted children; children placed in Alternative family-based care in 2023; families of internally displaced persons with children who have medical needs; families with children injured because of the military aggression against Ukraine; families with children affected by the military aggression against Ukraine to ensure the basic needs of families. In 2023, the CVA team continued to be a member of the Cash Working Group by OCHA, participating in meetings and regularly providing Activity reports and post distribution monitoring reports.

Self-employment

In 2023, *the Self-employment project* was launched, aimed at contributing to increasing incomes, self-sufficiency of families and, accordingly, improving the level of well-being of children in vulnerable families.

Implementing Partners

The strategy of working in a consortium with partners was chosen to use the strengths of other NGOs, build synergies, learn from experience sharing and coordination, and to reach more participants, both geographically and in terms of target groups.

Financial report Ukraine

Donated by SOS Barnbyars stödstiftelse, EUR	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024 Budget
Emergency programme Ukraine	260 400	261 053	419 815
Total	260 400	261 053	419 815
SEK (using exchange rate at the time of payment)	2 853 984	2 861 137	5 000 000
Average exchange rate	10,96	10,96	11,91

Total budget/actuals, EUR	2023 Budget	2023 Utfall*	2024 Budget
Closing/Opening balance	21 532	21 532	0
Emergency programme Ukraine	-35 000 000	-19 010 305	-10 899 960
Total	-34 978 468	-18 988 773	-10 899 960
Share covered by Akelius	0,71%	1,31%	3,67%

The budget decreased according to available funds.

Haiti

Since 2020, Haiti has been facing an unparalleled socio-political, economic and security crisis. For the year 2023, the situation has not improved; all branches of government have remained inoperative, worsening the lives of the population while continuing to plunge the country into an abyss with no hope of a better tomorrow. Port-au-Prince and the surrounding areas have been under attack from highly violent armed groups who have not ceased to commit all kinds of acts of violence against the population (loss of life, impoverishment of families and loss of property). In a report published on November 28, 2023, the UN details the shocking increase in gang violence in Haiti as criminal gangs forge alliances and expand into rural areas previously considered safe – murders, rapes, kidnappings, and destruction of property, among other abuses.

In the same report, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH) called for the urgent deployment of a multinational security support mission authorized by the UN Security Council to help re-establish the rule of law in Haiti in accordance with international human rights norms and standards. It also highlights the need to step up efforts to strengthen the country's rule-of-law institutions, in particular the police, judiciary, and penitentiary systems.

In the UN report of November 28, 2023, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, indicated that during 2023 at least 3,960 people were killed, 1,432 injured and 2,951 kidnapped in gang-related violence across Haiti, this year alone.

"The situation in Haiti is cataclysmic. We continue to receive reports of killings, sexual violence, displacement, and other violence - particularly in hospitals."

The Haitian people are stunned to witness the collapse of the country's socio-economic and political system, with no short-term recovery plan in sight. Growing insecurity in all areas of social life and hunger are the population's greatest concerns, and the state is taking no decisions that could improve people's living conditions. On the contrary, the public administration is demanding more taxes from taxpayers, such as increased prices for vignettes and vehicle plates. The cost of living has risen, as all food and other distribution routes are under the control of armed bandits. Suppliers must pay more taxes, as in addition to the customs duties imposed by the State, they also must pay the gangs to guarantee the safe passage of their goods; this increases the price of products on the market.

In addition to the security situation, which is hampering the country's operations, there is the "Humanitarian parole" program, which enables Haitian nationals to join their families and friends in the United States by legal means. This program is decapitalizing the country of skilled and young people, who are a useful force for production and development in the country.

The "Humanitarian parole" program, set up by US President Joe Biden, is deeply divisive in Haitian society. Some see it as an act of humanitarianism, enabling thousands of discouraged Haitians and victims of insecurity to join their loved ones in the USA without having to risk their lives on illegal journeys. However, the illegal journeys continue because not everyone is able to find a sponsor for the humanitarian program known as the "Biden Program", as in recent months there has been a resurgence of illegal immigration by sea. Not a week goes by without the press reporting the interception on the high seas of makeshift boats attempting to reach the Florida coast.

Other citizens cry scandal as the humanitarian program encourages a brain and skills drain, the very skills Haiti will need to get back on track for a positive future. "This bleeding of our human resources, they say, will contribute to weakening Haiti's already fragile institutions, which are in need of arms and brains".

One thing is clear: the Biden program is robbing Haiti of many middle-class professionals, many of whom were trained in the country by the government.

If we take for granted that a country is only as good as the education of its people, it is obvious that the "Biden Program" will have a destructive effect on the nation, whose best skills are already abroad. The last fifty years have seen a massive exodus of Haitians, for both economic and political reasons, to other horizons.

According to the latest statistics published by CBP (Customs and Border Protection) on November 14, 2023, President Joe Biden's Humanitarian Parole Program has enabled a considerable number of people to enter the United States legally. Among the beneficiaries, Haitians account for a significant proportion, with 107,697 people authorized to set foot on American soil.

Of these, 99,110 Haitian nationals have already arrived in the United States. From the beginning of the year to the end of October, CBP reported that 269,744 people have been authorized to enter the United States through this humanitarian program. In addition to Haitians, Cubans, Nicaraguans and Venezuelans have also benefited from these legal travel authorizations.

Besides this program, which elicits rejection from some and praise from others, is Haiti's complicated and tumultuous history with neighbouring Dominican Republic. For many years, the migration of Haitians to the Dominican Republic has been a subject of discussion between the two nations, and in the face of insecurity and misery, many Haitians from all walks of life emigrate to the Dominican Republic in search of a better life. In September 2023, following an initiative by the peasants of the border town of Ouanaminthe to build a canal to irrigate the Maribaroux plain, a granary in the country's north-eastern region, with the aim of developing agriculture that would feed a whole section of the population, the Dominican Government led by Luis Abinader, who disagreed with the initiative, unilaterally decided to close the borders and airways with Haiti until the construction project was halted, thus causing a major trade crisis between the two countries, since the Dominican Republic is one of Haiti's biggest sources of supplies. The Haitian people remained firm in their decision to build the irrigation canal, and there was a vast surge of solidarity across the country and the diaspora to lend a helping hand to the farmers so that the canal work could be completed. The government had made promises of support, but never got involved and never provided it. "Construction of the canal will not stop" is the slogan heard in every street and on every social network.

Due to concerns raised by international reactions, Dominican merchants who trade with Haitians across the borders; the Dominican Government was forced to reverse its position and decided to open the borders and air travel. However, apart from air travel, which allows Haitian citizens to travel to the Dominican Republic, the borders remain open only for trade, and the Dominican Republic has stopped issuing visas to Haitians.

We continued to align our operations to the rhythm of national events, with many issues at stake and enormous needs for programs. Although the security situation and tensions caused by political instability slowed down our activities during the year, we developed initiatives focused on safeguarding children and teens, supporting young people, and strengthening families. We were able to complete the national needs analysis study with the support of INSUCO, which will lead to a workshop on service descriptions, the development of a national strategy and preparations for the introduction of results-based management. We also carried out awareness-raising campaigns on child protection and responsible parenthood.

The year 2023 ended with a gloomy end to the year and no holiday cheer. There was an apparent lull that allowed some festive activities to take place, but with armed gangs still at work and misery continuing to grow, in the face of fear and despair the Haitian people can't say that the festive spirit was present; however, families did their best to celebrate, while hoping that 2024 will be better.

Les Cayes

Compared to the previous year, 2023 was not as eventful in the southern region. However, popular vengeance against alleged gang members, the forced displacement of the population to regional towns in general and to the south in particular, all this added to the external migration encouraged by the migration policies of Canada and the United States, had a considerable impact on the smooth running of the

services conducted by SOS Children's Villages. Despite all this, the community facilitators, support team and direct attention team collaborated constructively to meet the essential needs of the children and families of the services in terms of technical and physical support within a dynamic family and community environment.

The service has focused its efforts on accompanying participants and offering services that tend towards the personal development of young people, the integration and participation of children and teens, the reunification of participants, the diversion process, and the strengthening of families of reunited young people.

Within the framework of child protection, our efforts will focus on capacity building, training, discussion forums, awareness campaigns and activities linked to the prevention of violence and abuse and to the reporting and response process, risk assessments and audits. Regarding gender and mental health, we will conduct relative diagnostics, training, discussion forums, campaigns, gender-affirmative activities and other emotional recovery activities.

Challenges and prospects

- ✓ Ensuring a protective environment for participants in the face of a growing climate of insecurity in the southern metropolis.
- ✓ Ensuring food security for participants in the face of the blockade of the capital's southern entrance and exit by armed groups, making transport and trade extremely complicated, difficult, and worrying between the south region and the West department.
- ✓ Management of the prolonged absence of certain employees due to roads being blocked by armed gangs.
- ✓ Recruitment of a new youth worker to monitor activities in some services
- ✓ Coping with rising prices for necessities that may affect the distinct items in the family budget of the Houses.

Family-like care

34 teens and young people have been trained in stress and trauma management, non-violent communication, and social skills; 16 teens have been trained in gender-based violence and a training session has been carried out for 24 teens and young people on problematic and abusive sexual practice. In this youth care service, four have been reunited with their families of origin, and one has achieved autonomy and set up a small business. All care participants have their individual development plans in the process of implementation. During the year, one young person achieved autonomy and four others were reunited with their families of origin.

2023 in brief

- 68 children and young people

24 teens and young people aged fourteen and over, took part in three training sessions on leadership, communication, and civic participation; 62 children, teens and young people took part in five days of excursions and cultural activities.

Four participants were reunited with their biological families based on a pedagogical plan to support family reunification. Five new participants were placed by the IBESR rector body (Haitian Central Adoption Authority).

Eleven out of twelve youth reunited families have been trained in positive parenting and stock management for small-scale trading. They have obtained funding to create or strengthen an income-generating activity and have signed a Protocol of Commitment concerning the management of this fund. Nine young people are on advanced training courses in four beauty studios; seven teens and young people have completed their training course in a sewing workshop. Fourteen girls have completed their internship in a cosmetology workshop; seven young people from the program are in technical training;

nine other young people from the same modality have entered university. All employees have been systematically made aware of Cholera. An emergency management protocol has been put in place, defining the conduct to be adopted during the health crisis period, not to mention the administration of tests to direct-care staff and the department manager. Systematic educational support has been provided for children, teenagers and young people and direct-care staff. When needed; support has been provided including schoolwork groups; Twenty-six teenagers and young people are receiving support in physics/chemistry and mathematics. Awareness-raising sessions for direct-care staff on the importance of home schooling and pedagogical approaches. Twenty direct-care staff and fifty teens and young people have twenty computers available for practice. In addition, six staff have been trained on the SOS Virtual Platform.

Education

The educational service, that was launched in 2013 through the SOS Hermann Gmeiner school, has been a key player in the intellectual, scientific, and social development of its participants for over ten years. The service is administered by a team comprising a director, responsible for the overall management of the service, a pedagogical assistant, an administrative secretary, a psychologist, a computer specialist, and a librarian. The educational staff, teachers and direct personal care number around thirty-one. In 2023, educational services began with 480 participants in thirteen classrooms. The results of the official ninth-grade examinations for the 2022–2023 school year were as usual outstanding, with a passrate of 100%. For the 2023–2024 school year, the service welcomed 470 participants, distributed as follows 43 from the village, 90 for reinforcement and the rest from the surrounding community. The latter benefit from an environment conducive to quality education, with appropriate classrooms, a resolute teaching staff, and a hot meal served to each child during the lunchbreak. The service is not limited to traditional courses, but also includes a wide range of activities such as music, sports, vocational training, and other extracurricular activities. In this way, participants are encouraged to take part in a variety of activities that enrich their educational experience and promote their overall development. With its record of success and commitment to quality education, the service continues to play a significant role in the lives of participants, contributing to their personal and academic development.

Financial report Haiti

Donated by Akelius University Foundation, EUR	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024 Budget
Les Cayes programme, Haiti	364 964	378 245	335 852
Total	364 964	378 245	335 852
SEK (using exchange rate at the time of payment)	4 000 005	4 145 563	4 000 000
Average exchange rate	10,96	10,96	11,91
Total budget/actuals, EUR	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024 Budget
Opening balance			
Investments/maintenance	-54 119	-36 424	-26 864
Current working expenditures	-656 576	-529 576	-551 968
Personnel expenditures	-478 282	-324 634	-397 280
Other expenditures	-46 313	-43 808	-47 498
Total	-1 235 290	-934 442	-1 023 610
Share covered by Akelius (incl funds from India/Haiti agreement)	41%	56%	54%

From 2023 the costs for the whole location are included according to SOS CVI's new programme structure.

India

Due to changes in childcare regulations in the country, and a less favourable funding environment in the social sector, made 2023 a challenging year. In response to these circumstances, we dedicated the year to consolidating our program, prioritizing the quality of care, and ensuring appropriate care options for our children, especially within alternative care settings.

To assess the status of children living in difficult circumstances, a Child Right Situation Analysis was conducted on the vulnerability of children in national context as well as vulnerability in all states and Union Territories of Republic of India, which will enable the organisation to make relevant and specific program interventions.

Child safeguarding has been the topmost priority area of our work. Risk Assessment and Local Mapping was completed for 31 locations. Physical and Virtual child safeguarding training and sessions were organised for program participants.

Throughout the whole year, we focused on enhancing the standard of care provided to children under our supervision. This involved streamlining our Family Like Care program to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. We strategically expanded our involvement in family strengthening and kinship care programs to better support families and maintain crucial connections within communities. By concentrating on consolidation and expanding into areas of increasing need, we aimed to adapt proactively to the evolving landscape of child welfare and social services in 2023.

Tirupati

Family-like care

In a remarkable accomplishment, our 10th-grade students achieved a perfect 100% score in their examinations. A group of 22 students embarked on the journey of the NIIT computer certification course, while another 28 students took up the English Bolo program to bolster their English communication skills. Every single student successfully navigated through their respective courses and were awarded certificates upon completion. To further support our 10th graders, we organized daily evening tuitions and night-time self-study sessions. In addition to academic support, we also focused on health education. Health workers held informative sessions for caregivers, discussing a range of topics from parenthood to changes in a woman's body post 40. They highlighted common health issues like diabetes, thyroid problems, and high blood pressure, stressing the importance of regular medical check-ups. The health workers also discussed menstruation, and the importance of proper nutrition and exercise during menstruation for the caregivers and children. They suggested that the caregivers practice yoga and meditation every day to maintain good physical and mental health.

2023 in brief

- 89 children
- 12 family homes

Youth care

SOS Children's Village is home to three Youth Facilities, each with a capacity of eight. Currently, these facilities house 28 young boys, who are pursuing their education from class VI to X. In a significant achievement, we saw a 100% pass rate in both class X and XII board exams. All the girls passed with first division. We've noticed a shift in course selection, with students moving from traditional degree courses to technical, job-oriented ones. Three girls have successfully found their first jobs, becoming self-reliant. Computer and English communication skills have also been provided to our youth in small group homes through programs like NIIT Computer Education and English Bolo. Our final year degree students had the opportunity to participate in eAge online classes and employability skills workshops to enhance their soft skills. Some of our youths are now busy preparing for job-related competitive exams.

2023 in brief

- 104 youths in supervised independent living
- 28 youths in small group homes

Financial report India *and* Haiti

Donated by Akelius University Foundation, EUR			
	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024* Budget
SOS Programme Tirupati, India	201 643	192 959	92 840
SOS Programme Les Cayes, Haiti	163 321	172 004	243 012
Total	364 964	364 964	335 852
SEK (using exchange rate at the time of payment)	4 000 000	4 000 000	4 000 001
Average exchange rate	10,96	10,96	11,91

Total budget/actuals, Tirupati, EUR			
	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024 Budget
Investments/maintenance	-27 494	-2 081	-575
Current working expenditures	-282 573	-251 689	-266 787
Personnel expenditures	-145 936	-119 239	-103 522
Other expenditures	-15 712	-14 507	-15 774
Total	-471 715	-387 516	-386 658
Share covered by Akelius Tirupati	41%	47%	23%

Total budget/actuals, Les Cayes, EUR			
	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024 Budget
Investments/maintenance	-54 119	-36 424	-26 864
Current working expenditures	-656 576	-529 576	-551 968
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Other expenditures	-46 313	-43 808	-47 498
Total	-1 235 290	-934 442	-1 023 610

Share covered by Akelius Les Cayes (see Haiti).

*According to updated agreement funds will be phased out in Tirupati, India and re-allocated to Les Cayes, Haiti.

Cambodia

Cambodia has achieved significant strides in economic development and reducing poverty over the past two decades, attaining lower-middle income status in 2015. Nevertheless, the country continues to have a predominantly young population, with children accounting for 34.8% of its population in 2019. Poverty is still widespread, particularly in the informal job sector, where 81% of employment is deemed vulnerable. The rate of unemployment among young people is three times higher than that of adults and a considerable portion of families, still live below the poverty line. Children are disproportionately affected, with nearly half of those aged 0-17 being classified as multidimensionally poor.

In 2023, we have successfully prioritised and fortified our efforts in Child and Youth Safeguarding (CS). Each location now has a dedicated CS focal point, and all action plans are designed to mitigate potential CS risks. In our commitment to sexual and reproductive health, we have collaborated with external experts to conduct comprehensive training for children, young people, and co-workers. This initiative has significantly improved their understanding of body health, independence, education, and healthcare, empowering them to make informed decisions about their sexual activities and prevent sexually transmitted diseases or unplanned pregnancies.

As part of our continuous work towards gender equality, we ensure equal participation of boys and girls in all meetings, trainings, and workshops. Our projects have been successful in maintaining a balanced representation of both genders. We also motivate all children and youths to participate actively in environmental protection and promote a green environment. This initiative has instilled a sense of responsibility towards the environment in our young participants.

Prey Veng

Family-like care

The village in Prey Veng is home to 42 children and young adults. This includes 34 children under the age of 14 and eight young adults over 14. Among these children, 34 are currently attending Kindergarten and Primary Schools, while seven are enrolled in Secondary School. In 2023, we established a Children and Youth club to enhance their abilities in various areas such as education, personal growth, environmental stewardship, and social development activities. We also arranged various capacity-building activities covering topics on child rights, boundary violations, child abuse, sexual and reproductive health, child and youth safeguarding, the effects of drugs on children, gender mainstreaming, and job employability. These trainings aimed to empower them with essential knowledge and skills, ensuring they can make informed decisions and protect themselves in various situations while preparing them for an independent life. Our caregivers and co-workers have also undergone training in several key areas. These include parental skills, psychological first aid, parental welfare, child safeguarding, child rights, and child abuse prevention.

2023 in brief

- 42 children

Ratanakiri

Family-Like Care

The village is home to 72 children, including 25 boys and 47 girls, with 20 youth boys also reside in our youth houses. The children and youth receive family care, individual development plans, education, and training in life skills, vocational skills, and employability skills. This tailored support together with the care from our SOS mothers and youth leaders enables them to gradually adapt to independent living. All our team members, including mothers and aunts, have also undergone training in parenting skills, psychological first aid, parental welfare, child protection, children's rights, and prevention of child abuse. This training has empowered them with the essential skills and knowledge to deliver the highest standard of care for the children and youth in Ratanakiri.

2023 in brief

- 72 children
- 20 youths

Financial report Cambodia

Donated by Hugo research foundation, EUR	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024 Budget
SFC, YC Ratanakiri and SFC Prey Veng, Cambodia	574 817	546 699	530 293
Total	574 817	546 699	530 293
SEK (using exchange rate at the time of payment)	6 299 997	5 991 823	6 315 789
Average exchange rate	10,96	10,96	11,91
Total budget/actuals, EUR	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024 Budget*
Investments/maintenance	-8 765	-8 031	-754
Current working expenditures	-461 001	-338 067	-414 415
Personnel expenditures	-311 927	-266 955	-275 883
Other expenditures	-27 231	-21 596	-27 981
Total	-808 924	-634 649	-719 033
Share covered by Akelius	68%	82%	70%

* From 2023 the costs for the whole locations Ratanakiri and Prey Veng, Cambodia is included according to SOS CVI's new programme structure.

Philippines

In the wake of a three-year battle against the pandemic, the nation has witnessed positive strides in both health and the economy. President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. officially terminated the state of public health emergency, marking a significant milestone in overcoming the challenges posed by COVID-19. The economic landscape has also seen improvement, with a reduced unemployment rate by the end of the year, albeit with lingering challenges such as a decline in purchasing power and inflation, which affected food security in the first quarter of the year.

Amid these circumstances, SOS Children's Villages in Philippines has actively contributed to the Federation's goals, particularly by anchoring actions on child rights and preventive strategies. The collaboration with key national partners, encompassing advocacy networks and corporate donors, plays a pivotal role in ensuring financial sustainability and the effectiveness of the programs.

The organisation's unwavering commitment to safeguarding is evident through actions in prevention, raising awareness, training, reporting, and responding. Collaborations with government units, key partners, and advocacy networks have bolstered child protection initiatives, ensuring a comprehensive and proactive approach.

Tacloban

At present, SOS Children's Village Tacloban is the only organization in the city that offers a Family-Like Care Program, extending its support to 58 children and 40 young people. It works in partnership with various stakeholders in the region, whose contributions have been crucial in optimising the project's resources and enhancing its impact on vulnerable children, their families, and the wider community. In addition, SOS CV Tacloban holds a distinguished position in the Committee Council for the Protection of Children, both at the city and provincial levels. This affiliation emphasizes our dedication to collaborative efforts aimed at prioritizing the welfare of children.

2023 in brief

- 58 children
- 40 youths

Financial report Philippines and Bolivia

Donated by Akelius University Foundation, EUR	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024 budget*
Programme Tacloban, Philippines	235 935	236 526	147 986
Programme Santa Cruz, Bolivia	128 437	128 437	187 866
Total	364 372	364 964	335 852
SEK (using exchange rate at the time of payment)	3 993 522	4 000 001	4 000 000
Average exchange rate	10,96	10,96	11,91

Total budget, Tacloban, EUR	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024 Budget
Investments/maintenance	-8 540	-263	0
Current working expenditures	-219 315	-207 003	-200 207
Personnel expenditures	-215 388	-218 837	-209 472
Other expenditures	-26 767	-36 646	-27 582
Total	-470 010	-462 749	-437 261
Share covered by Akelius Tacloban	48%	49%	32%

Total budget, Santa Cruz, EUR	2023 Budget	2023 Actuals	2024 Budget**
Investments/maintenance	-3 936	-38 872	-25 030
Current working expenditures	-397 704	-386 124	-694 417
Personnel expenditures	-551 724	-572 714	-698 382
Other expenditures	-79 772	-168 098	-74 169
Total	-1 033 136	-1 165 808	-1 491 998
Share covered by Akelius Santa Cruz	12%	10%	12%

* According to updated agreement funds will be phased out from Philippines and re-allocated to Bolivia.

**From 2024 the programmes in Santa Cruz and Santa Cruz Plan 4000 budgets are merged, therefore the budget is higher.

Bolivia

The loss of family care for children continues to be a major and profound problem in Bolivia. In 2023, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child reaffirmed this position when responding to Bolivia's 5th and 6th country report, indicating that the country has a worrying number of children in institutions and that it must generate reforms to prevent and respond in a timely manner. With concern, the SOS Children's Villages Ombudsman's Office¹ published a national report about institutions in the country and the violated right of children to live in a family.

As a result, the Vice-Ministry of Equality initiated the construction of a national public policy and began to pressure local governments to make changes in their institutions. At the same time, without financial commitments, some local governments also showed interest in reforming the way they intervened, but were limited by lack of information, the country's complex economic crisis and political problems in public administration.

SOS Children's Villages in Bolivia made progress with the Annual Strategic Plan, while carrying out the first actions of its National Strategy for the following years. In close alliance with the national government, local governments, other partners and donors, SOS Children's Villages in Bolivia worked in eight locations in the country, reaching totally 15,957 children, adolescents, young people and 4,285 families, in services of 1) Advocacy, 2) Family Strengthening and 3) Alternative Care.

Santa Cruz

The problem of the loss of family care for children in the municipality of Santa Cruz de la Sierra was affected by family and/or domestic violence, which increased by 5% compared to previous year. Likewise, crimes of sexual abuse and rape of children and adolescents were at the top of the statistics. This scenario was compounded by the constant changes in the authorities dedicated to the issue, generating delays in processes and coordination of actions.

2023 in brief

- 1,010 children, adolescents and young people
- 22 families

Faced with this reality, the Santa Cruz programme implemented six programme services to address children at risk, managing to attend to 1,010 children, adolescents, and young people in the services of advocacy, family strengthening and alternative care. Ten children were also reintegrated into their families of origin, and 22 families had an increase in their level of self-sufficiency by the end of the programme.

In the family strengthening services, a high level of social and emotional well-being is evident in 80% of the participants, with activities that promote their leadership and self-esteem. In addition, 53 caregivers have been able to develop resilience skills through therapeutic processes, self-help groups and peer support, which helped to improve the upbringing of their children.

In terms of alternative care services, 85% of children and young people are performing well at school. The young people have strengthened their soft skills with a focus on employability and hard skills in the use of ICT, an intervention carried out with a specialised institute.

During the year, 13 young people had increased their level of self-sufficiency when exiting the programme, i.e. they have completed their academic education, have an adequate income and are emotionally stable. Four young people left the service without completing their life project due to mental health problems, but they are now feeling better and have their own income.

¹ A safeguarding system throughout the federation that represents the rights of children, young people and other program participants who have experienced abuse, or anybody seeking resolution of concerns.

In terms of impact on the local protection system, actions such as the signing of framework agreements with the Governor's Office and the Municipality of Santa Cruz, the implementation of capacity-building and mental health projects, the updating of the Action Protocol of the Agency for the Defence of Children and Adolescents, stand out.



SOS Children's Villages in numbers 2023, globally

- We operated in more than **130** countries worldwide.
- **549 800** people participated in our family strengthening programs.
- **69 000** people participated in our alternative care.
- **654 600** people were reached through health interventions.
- **238 900** people were given an education.
- **1 385 800** people were reached through our humanitarian actions.



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Photographers: Reem AlRegeb.

Source: Annual reports 2023 from SOS Children's Villages in Palestine, Ukraine, Haiti, Bolivia, Cambodia, India and Palestine

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