

SOS Children's Village Kenya

Annual report 2023: We are reliable Partners.



This is very nutritious and ready for the market: Accountability at best, the Uasin Gishu Youth County Executive Committee member, the Chair of SMATTKEY ,youth group and Leave No youth Behind (LNYB) Project agronomist inspect vegetables produced by Young care leavers through the support of the LNYB project.

(Photo by Joan Rotich, M&E Officer Eldoret)

| | |
|--|---|
| Member association: | SOS Children's Village Kenya |
| National director: | Mr. Walter Shikuku Odhiambo |
| Reporting period: | 2023 |
| Date & MEDIABOX-ID of most recent child rights situation analysis: | Click or tap to enter a date. Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Report compiled by: | Shadrack Douglas Kombe – National M&E Co-ordinator |
| Date of report: | 15/01/2024 |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. National context and stakeholders

Kenya is a leading economy in East Africa thanks to several market-oriented reforms that together with favourable regional and global conditions propelled the economy to a middle-income country in 2014. Historically, the country has been successful in translating economic growth to poverty reduction; this can be attributed to the foundations laid after independence in 1963. Post-independence, Kenya has endeavoured to address the three key issues; low education levels, disease and poverty to attain social justice, human dignity and economic welfare for all.

In the year under review, the country suffered the longest drought in decades affecting the agricultural sector, historically the backbone of the country's economy. The global rise in food and consumer good prices also affected the purchasing power of most households. The burgeoning food prices have seen inflation soar and the Kenya shilling depreciate against all major currencies further affecting household vulnerabilities. Kenyan households have shown resilience against all these shocks, a phenomenon referred as "recovering from a polycrisis."

2. Member association analysis

Strategy implementation status [see 2.1]

Achievements

- The MA reached 994 children and young people (742 through SOS family like care and 252 through Supervised Independent Living)
- 60% of young people leaving the MA's Kenya youth programs were self-reliant.
- The MA's Alternative Care, Youth development, Family Strengthening, Advocacy, Education and humanitarian action programs across 6 counties reached 49,689 participants (16,563 directly and 33,196 indirectly).
- 53% of the families that exited from FS programs were self-reliant.
- A total of 3,685 young people received Care and Employability support for their journey towards self-reliance through the MA's Education and Youth Empowerment programs.
- 101 children and young people actively voiced their opinions in various platforms such as the pre-Summit and main sessions of the Africa Children Summit and the inaugural Africa Climate Summit and Africa Climate Week held in Nairobi, Kenya.
- The MA engaged in the development, review, validation and launching of over 11 policies, guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the benefit of children in our target group.
- The MA successfully applied for the Maintenance Campaign 2022 funding for the repair and maintenance of the desalination plant in Mombasa program location.
- The MA sustained the automation of routine tasks to either provide room for the ICT department to address more critical issues or ease operations within the organization such as the Team viewer for remote assistance, Jira Service Desk- as well as ICT4D projects
- The MA raised Kenya Shillings 9,051,693.00 (€ 70,777) against a target of Kenya Shillings 27,214,020 00 (€212,792) this accounted for 33.26% of the year's target. The overall local income raised by the MA for the period was Kshs 113,177,737 (€ 884,962) against a target of Kenya Shillings 153,812,795 or €1,202,812,796, this accounted for 74% of the target

Challenges

- Movement of Family Strengthening caregivers in urban informal settlements from one location to the other poses a major challenge in sustained service provision, leading to premature exits from the program.
- The MA experienced significant budget constraints, which coupled with the effects of the high rise in the cost of living and inflation during the reporting period.

Lessons learned [see 2.2]

- Training of community led child care and protection structures on alternative dispute resolution increased the number of families seeking services in an effort to reduce cases of family separation.
- The introduction of Community digital i-hubs for youth employability in all the MA's program locations has helped in the advancement and utilization of technology by children, youth and SOS parents. 26% of the children and SOS parents have acquired basic skills in ICT.

Cross-cutting topics [see 2.3]

- The MA strengthened the quality of program delivery by developing key policies to ensure inclusion and equity in programming; these include a Gender & Social Inclusion (GESI) policy and a draft policy on Climate change which will be finalized and validated in quarter 1 of 2024.
- The MA is part of a core expert team working on Localization alongside SOS Denmark, Somaliland, Ethiopia and the Regional Office; during the reporting period, the MA contributed to the development of Localization guidelines and assessment tools which will help in integrating localization in its Strategy, Programs and operations.
- The MA's Child Safeguarding (CS) was strengthened by a mapping of key like-minded partners at the program location and national levels to identify priority areas in Prevention, Awareness, Reporting and Responding; 21 safeguarding committee members from Meru, Nairobi, Mombasa, Eldoret and Kisumu location and National Office were also trained on Case Management and documentation of CS incidents.
- In response to the ISC recommendations, the MA provided holistic Support, Justice and Incident Management for all children who suffered historical abuse using the Listening and Responding guidelines.
- The MA worked on the HGFD minimum funding criteria and closed the year with all the active program locations meeting the 75% compliance threshold by posting 80% up to date core assessments. The national M&E Manager and the M&E Officer were successfully certified on PDB2.

Sustainability actions [see 2.4]

- The MA responsibly reintegrated 57 children back to their families and communities of origin.
- Project participants were linked to existing government safety nets with 498 children and youth registered for the Orphans and Vulnerable children – Cash Transfer (OVC – CT), 67 caregivers enrolled in the Cash Transfer (CT) for the elderly and 24 program beneficiaries enrolled in the Cash Transfer for Persons With Disability (PWDs).
- The MA developed a Partnership policy to further structure and enhance partnership mapping, selection, engagement and management in line with its Strategic Plan (2021-25) and localization agenda.
- In an effort to further enhance its sustainability, the MA developed a draft roadmap for Program changes whose focus is sustained reintegration of children; social integration of families from SOS Family Like Care to the external community settings; rationalization of staff in the context of reducing numbers of children and youth in the respective Children's Villages (CVs); gradual removal of institutional features in the CVs; and re-purposing the vacant premises in the CVs for diversified child care and protection interventions and local income generation.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|--|
| AAC | Area Advisory Council |
| AC | Alternative Care |
| AU | African Union |
| CAC | Children Advisory Council |
| CBC | Competency Based Curriculum |
| CCI | Charitable Children Institution |
| CDW | Community Development Worker |
| CHV | Community Health Volunteer |
| CPIMS | Child Protection Information Management System |
| CPV | Child Protection Volunteer |
| CS | Child Safeguarding |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| CSR | Corporate Social Responsibility |
| CT | Cash Transfer |
| DCS | Directorate of Children Services |
| DHL | Dalsey, Hillblom, and Lynn Company |
| DSD | Directorate of Social Development |
| ECD | Early Childhood Development |
| ESAF | Eastern and Southern Africa Federation |
| FS | Family Strengthening |
| GESI | Gender Equity and Social Inclusion |
| HA | Humanitarian Action |
| HGFD | Hermann Gmeiner Fund Development |
| HR | Human Resource |
| ICSR | Independent Child Safeguarding Review |
| ICT | Information Communication and Technology |
| ICT4D | Information Communication and Technology for Development |

| | |
|----------|--|
| IGA | Income Generating Activity |
| IPD | Institutional Partnership Development |
| ISC | Independent Special Commission |
| JFA | Joining Forces for Children Alliance |
| KESCA | Kenya Society of Care Leavers |
| KSG | Kenya School of Government |
| Kshs | Kenya Shilling |
| LVC | Lay volunteer Counsellors |
| LVCT | Liverpool Voluntary Counselling and Testing |
| MA | Member Association |
| MHPSS | Mental Health and Psycho Social Support |
| MIMR | Misconduct Incident Management Regulation |
| MODA | Multi-dimensional Overlapping Deprivation Analysis |
| MOH | Ministry of Health |
| NCCS | National Council for Children Services |
| NDMA | National Drought Management Authority |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NHIF | National Hospital Insurance Fund |
| NITA | National Industrial Training Authority |
| NPPP | National Positive Parenting Program |
| NSSF | National Social Security Fund |
| OVC - CT | Orphans and Vulnerable Children - Cash Transfer |
| PDB2 | Program Data Base Version 2 |
| PFA | Psychological First Aid |
| PSHEA | Preventing Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse |
| PSS, | Psycho Social Support |
| PWD | Person with Disability |
| RBM | Results Based Management |

| | |
|--------|---|
| RLC, | Regional Leadership Centres |
| SGBV | Sexual and Gender Based Violence |
| SITRep | Situation Reports |
| SKF | Statistical Key Figures |
| SMS | Short Messaging Service |
| SMT | Senior Management Team |
| SOP | Standard Operating Procedures |
| SRHR | Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights |
| TVET | Technical and Vocational Education Training |
| UN | United Nations |
| VSLA | Voluntary Saving and Loaning Association |
| WASH | Water and Sanitation and Hygiene |
| YCL | Young Care Leavers |
| YLC | Youths Leaving Care |

1. NATIONAL CONTEXT AND STAKEHOLDERS

1.1 General description of national context

Kenya is a leading economy in East Africa thanks to several market-oriented reforms that together with favourable regional and global conditions propelled the country to a middle-income economy in 2014. Historically, the country has been successful in translating economic growth to poverty reduction; this can be attributed to the foundations laid after independence in 1963. Post-independence, Kenya has endeavoured to address the three key issues; low education levels, disease and poverty so as to attain social justice, human dignity and economic welfare for all¹.

As 2022 came to a close, the country's economic trajectory showed signs of softening, due to the many headwinds that ushered in 2023. The country suffered the longest drought in decades affecting the agricultural sector that has been the backbone of the country's economy. The global rise in food and consumer good prices also affected the purchasing power of most households. The burgeoning food prices have seen inflation soar and the Kenya shilling depreciate against all major currencies, further affecting household vulnerabilities. Kenyan Households have shown resilience against all these shocks, phenomena referred to as "recovering from a polycrisis."

Despite this being a global trend, households in Kenya had to also overcome price related shocks, health related and climate instigated shocks. A Policy brief on the impact of household coping mechanism to income shocks on children (Policy Brief Number 2/2023 – 2024, *Income Shocks and Household Coping Mechanisms: Implications for the Welfare of Children in Kenya*, Dr. James Ochieng) provides a good contextual summary of households in Kenya under the Polycrisis. The brief appreciates that households do have sufficient buffers to shocks, with rural households being the most vulnerable to shocks compared to urban households. The brief further notes that the most common coping mechanism for households in Kenya when affected by income shocks is to reduce basic consumption spending. This has notably had an adverse effect on child nutrition. For children under the age of five incidences of stunting and malnutrition become imminent. For older children, this coping mechanism affects their nutritional status and the attainment of their developmental milestones in the long run. Children from low-income households, who constitute part of the MA's target group, are at a higher risk of stunting and wasting due to malnutrition. Cutting down on spending exacerbates these risks. Social protection Programs though critical for protection of vulnerable households, their children, are generally limited, and households have to rely on unsustainable sources of getting assistance from family and friends. This has never been a sustainable coping mechanism as friends and families are also exposed to the same challenges and may not be able to support vulnerable households. The last and unfortunate coping strategy is to withdraw children from school. This has negative implications not only on children's educational outcomes and may affect their future opportunities and quality of life but is also the onset of other child rights violations and abuse.

In addition to the income shocks, the organization faced dwindling resources, which was exacerbated by the MA's clustering under the New Sustainability Cluster. Further, the review of the third phase of the Federation's Global Strategy 2030, led to the establishment of a programs expert group to improve on the quality and reach of SOS Children's Villages programs. Nationally, the commencement of the implementation of the national Care Reforms Strategy (2022-32) and the operationalisation of the Children's Act (2022) took the centre stage with the development, validation and roll out of key policies and guidelines. These include the Child Welfare programs guidelines and national guidelines for Transitioning Children from alternative care, which will eventually transform the MA's existing Programs in terms of registration and focus. Lastly, the country experienced skirmishes in the

¹ Sessional Paper 1 of 1965: African socialism and its Application to planning in Kenya (1965)

first quarter of the year instigated by the disputed presidential election results and the run-away food prices and cost of living. The later part of the year, the government introduced a raft of measures to cushion the economy against a looming recession; the measures included raising taxes on commodities, introduction of levies such as a national Housing Levy and a recalibration of the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) to high premiums for salaried Kenyans. To accelerate the attainment of Universal health coverage, the Government pushed for a repeal of the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) in a bid to make it more accessible and targeted. All these measures have the potential of negatively affecting families and communities living in poverty and facing other vulnerabilities, making self-reliance more difficult.

Key partners at national level

Table 1.2 Key partners

| Name of partner | Description <i>(purpose of partnership)</i> | Progress in last year <i>(key actions taken)</i> | Effectiveness of partnership <i>(contribution to results)</i> | Formal agreement signed |
|--|---|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Department of Children's Services | Joint implementation of child care and protection Programs especially in the five counties where the MA has Programs. | Implementation of national laws and policies including the Children's Act (2022) and the national Care Reforms Strategy (2022-32); roll out the Alternative Care options indicators, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and embedding the same in the child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS); and reintegration of children and youth. | Effective especially in relation to Strategic Result 1 of the MA Strategic Plan (2021-25). | No |
| The National Council for Children's Services | Joint planning and implementation of child care and protection Programs especially in the five counties where the MA has Programs | Launch of the National Care Reform Strategy; development of strategy support documents. Development of National child welfare guidelines and guidelines for transitioning children from alternative care. | Effective especially in relation to Strategic Result 1 of the MA Strategic Plan. | Yes |
| Deaprtment of Social Development | Joint planning and implementation of child care and protection Programs especially in | Development of the National Positive Parenting Manual and certification of Community Managment Committee | Effective especially in relation to Strategic | No |

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|----|
| | the five counties where the MA has Programs | members as Lay volunteer Counsellors; and mobilization of vulnerable families for enrolment in the national social protection programs. | Result 1 of the MA Strategic plan | |
| State Department of Youth Affairs | This partnership seeks to promote youth internships and employability and establish strong networks for youth programming | Director, State Department of Youth Affairs Launched the Youth Can! Project. | Effective especially in relation to Strategic Result 1 of the MA Strategic plan | No |
| Ministry of Education | Discussions forums on education trends and review of policies | Development of the positive discipline manual. Participation in various thematic technical working groups. | Effective especially in relation to Strategic Result 1 of the MA Strategic plan | No |
| National ICT Authority | Curriculum Support when rolling out the Ajira courses to youth to enhance employability and entrepreneurship. | Trained Youth on online jobs through their county trainers as well as used their curriculum. | Effective especially in relation to Strategic Result 1 of the MA Strategic plan | No |
| County Governments: Meru Mombasa Kisumu Nairobi Uasin Gishu | Joint implementation of child care and protection Programs especially in the five counties where the MA has Programs. | Youth participation in the County Integrated Development Plan | Effective especially in relation to Strategic Result 1 of the MA Strategic plan | No |
| The National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) | Assessments, relief coordination & resource mobilization at the National level with devolved structures, Information sharing & | Humanitarian action programming in Meru and Isiolo Counties in the areas of; 1. Coordination and capacity building 2. WASH | Fairly effective especially in relation to Strategic Result 1 of the MA Strategic | No |

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| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|-----|
| | county reporting Personnel support for appropriate trainings. | 3. Food security and Livelihood support 4. Resource Mobilization | plan and Humanitarian Action | |
| Kenya Red Cross Society | Personnel support for appropriate trainings, Information sharing/ Situation Reports (SITRePs); dissemination of National Disaster Risk Management bill & Policy, relief food Referrals for PSS, tracing & reintegration. | Humanitarian action programming in Meru and Isiolo Counties in the areas of; 1. Peace & Security 2. Food & Nutrition 3. Coordination and Capacity Building 4. Resource Mobilization | Fairly effective especially in relation to Strategic Result 1 of the MA Strategic plan and Humanitarian Action | No |
| National Industrial Training Authority (NITA) | This Partnership supported the certification of Youth who undertook vocational training under various programs such as Vijana na Skills in Mombasa | | | |
| Kenya Society of Care Leavers (KESCA) | Support system for young care leavers to jointly advocate and address issues of YCL Collectively | Conducted entry meetings to sensitize on stakeholders on KESCA. Mobilizing and recruitment of 1500 young care leavers to join the society is ongoing. | The partnership is key to deliver outcome 3: Young care leavers actively claim their right to social protection assistance and active participation. | Yes |
| Jesuits Eastern Africa | Position YCL in advocacy platforms to help YCL claim their rights and access social protection services | Content Creation, social media Management, Smart Advocacy Strategies and Determining the Ask. | The partnership will support in delivery of outcome 3, where YCL structures are strengthened to serve the rights and interest of YCL. | Yes |
| MIRAMAR Foundation | Provide young people with entrepreneurship skills through an Agribusiness model | Training on Hydroponics targeting 45 young care leavers and installation of a green house has commenced | The partnership is key to deliver outcome 2: Social protection systems respond to the needs and | Yes |

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|-----|
| | | | rights of young care leavers. | |
| LVCT Health | To enhance access of SRHR and MHPSS services by Young Care Leavers | Trained SRHR 24 champions and installed them in the community to start the process of recruiting young care leavers and link them to one2one services. | Besides providing a digital platform to track access of services by Young Care Leavers, the partner is also crucial in mapping and addressing gaps in service provision. | Yes |
| Joining Forces Alliance (JFA); a consortium of the 6 largest child-focused NGOs in Kenya namely SOS CV Kenya, World Vision, Save the Children, PLAN, Childfund and Terres Des Hommes | Joint resource mobilization, program implementation and advocacy for the implementation of children rights in Kenya. | Conducted joint advocacy campaigns with the Government, media and other partner CSOs for the development, improvement and implementation of national laws and policies in favour of children. | The partnership has been very effective especially in advocacy and media engagement. | Yes |

2. MEMBER ASSOCIATION ANALYSIS

During the year in review, the MA implemented Alternative Care, Youth development, Family Strengthening, Advocacy, Education and humanitarian action programs across 5 counties in the country reaching 49,689 (16,563-participants directly and 33,196 participants indirectly) participants. This is a 15% increase in reach compared 38,499 in 2022. The increase in reach has been attributed to the humanitarian action project that was implemented in Isiolo and Meru Counties.

Table 2-1: Direct participants reached by the MA in 2023.

| Program | Statistics |
|----------------------|------------|
| Youth development | 3,685 |
| Family strengthening | 6,097 |
| Alternative care | 994 |

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| | |
|---------------------|--------|
| Humanitarian Action | 5,787 |
| Total | 16,563 |

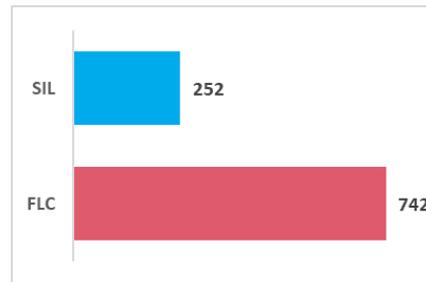
2.1 Strategy implementation status

2.1.1 Alternative care

(a) Achievements

| |
|------------------------------|
| 994 |
| Children in Alternative care |

The MA planned to provide quality care and protection 924 children and young people in alternative care during the reporting period. However, it reached 994 children and young people (742 through SOS family like care and 252 through Supervised Independent Living) as shown on Figure 2-1.



The actual achievement (994) accounts for 107.6% of the 2023 target as summarised in Figure 2-2 below.

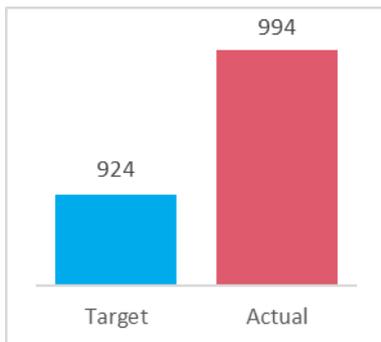


Figure 2-2 Comparison of the target and achievement for 2023.

This achievement is attributed to the MA's Strategic Plan (2021 – 2025) which emphasizes on high quality, large scale, sustainable and locally relevant Child Care and Protection programs for the MA. The MA defines High quality programs as those that are in compliance to both internal and external policies and grounded on evidence.

Figure 2-1: Children who received quality Care and protection through Alternative Care programs

Through capacity building workshops conducted jointly with the Government of Kenya the MA skilled 487 people; these include 204 children, 150 staff (including caregivers and 133 staff from partner organizations) on selected internal and external policies and guidelines. These included the National Care Reform Strategy (2022-32), the Children's Act (2022), the New Program Structure and Regulations and the Federation Guidance on Program Changes. These trainings were central in the implementation of programs like the Reintegration program that was conducted seamlessly by staff, children and external stakeholders to successfully reintegrate 57 children and youth back to their families of origin. In addition, the Government of Kenya certified 75 SOS Parents and Aunts as Foster Care Parents after successfully completing a Foster Care training Program. As a trusted partner and having obtained skills from the Children Officers, the MA subsequently supported the certification of 50 additional community foster parents. The certification was aimed at strengthening gate keeping mechanisms for placement of children without adequate parental care in foster care as opposed to institutionalization. As a result, 10 children were placed under community foster care. In addition, 20 social workers (10 SOS Staff and 10 Government Children Officers) were trained and certified child care professionals, a process undertaken by the Government of Kenya to standardise the child protection approach in the country to improve on service delivery. Following their certification, the 20 social workers conducted para professional trainings at county levels reaching 88 para-professionals.

Lastly, the MA partnered with other child focused CSOs and the Government to develop, validate and launch the National Child Welfare guidelines and the National Guidelines for Transitioning children from Alternative Care under the leadership of the National Council for Children services (NCCS). These guidelines are critical in guiding the MA and other CSOs to align the registration of its Children's Villages as child welfare Programs as it gradually

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transitions children and youth from the Children's Villages (CVs) which are currently registered as Charitable Children's Institutions (CCIs).

2.1.2 Family Strengthening (FS)

| |
|------------------------|
| 6097 |
| family Participants |

The MA's FS programs reached 18,291 adults, children and young people directly and indirectly. This accounted for a 102% achievement of the 2023 target. However, 53% of the families that left the FS programs were self-reliant² against an annual strategic plan target of 85%. It has been difficult especially following the rising cost of living and ever-rising commodity prices to trace and track families as they move from one informal settlement to another seeking affordable housing and alternative livelihoods. This has forced the program to exit some families on the basis of difficulty to trace a support them due to the relocation.

During the period under review, the program supported family participants in their journey towards self-reliance by addressing barriers and strengthening good practices around the three areas of self-reliance measures. The MA's FS Strategy that sought to contextualize FS programs in the country as well as improve on the quality of service delivery and chart a way forward for the program, was finally launched. Currently, the 2024 Annual Plans for all the five locations were aligned to this strategy and will be evaluated in June 2024.

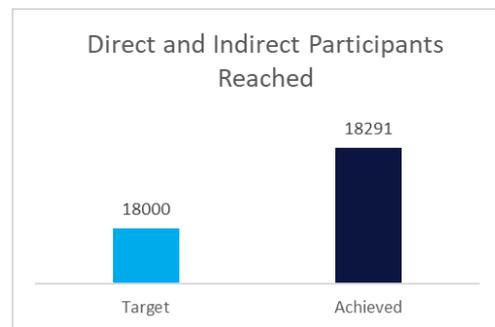


Figure 2-3: Comparison of FS Program 2023 target and achievement

2,612 caregivers and youth were empowered to provide care and protection to 3,485 children, reaching 6,097 participants in the family strengthening directly. The program collaborated closely with the Ministry of Labour and Social Services through the Department of Social Development (DSD) to complete, validate and launch the National Positive Parenting Program (NPPP) Manual. The program further trained and commissioned 42 child protection officers as NPPP delivery agents. The trainees developed action plans to empower families in their respective localities on positive parenting from 2024. In addition, children, caregivers and families were supported to take up existing social protection services. In this regard, 487 Children were registered on the government's Orphans and Vulnerable Children Cash Transfer (OVC – CT); 67 care givers enrolled for Cash Transfers for the elderly while 24 people were registered for the Cash Transfer for Persons With Disability (PWD). These cash transfers will go towards supporting families meet their basic needs, school fees, clothing, health care and other basic necessities.

² Family Self – reliance Family is defined as: a) Caregivers have the ability to provide quality child care (e.g. parental skills, awareness of child rights) b) Sufficient family resources are available (e.g. economic security, stable accommodation, food security) c) Children have access to essential services (e.g. health, education)



Figure 2-4: Let there be light! One for the FS Beneficiary receiving solar solution for her household. The solution will go a long way in ensuring children learn.

Moving forward, the MA will support families to access financial management skills through capacity building to further support them to attain self-reliance. In collaboration with the Department of Social Development under the Ministry of Labour and Social Services, the MA was heavily involved in the development, validation and launching of the National guidelines on child protection in emergencies. This involvement was key during the implementation of the Humanitarian action project in Meru and Isiolo Counties, as it allowed the program to not only disseminate the guidelines to 35-selected Child Protection actors from Isiolo County but also implement its provisions within the project.

In collaboration with Department Children Services (DCS), the MA trained and commissioned over 40 child protection actors drawn from different counties, key government departments and CSOs as ToTs for the Management of Child Protection Services towards promotion of quality Programs for children without or at risk of losing parental care nationally. Finally, the MA supported the Kisumu Annual Paralegal Network Meeting towards becoming a more vibrant and accountable local child protection structure in close collaboration with Kisumu Central DCS office. Performance Reflection, Group identity, harmonization of plans and reporting structure/tools featured strongly for address in 2024. The family strengthening program in SOS Children's Villages Kenya, equally supported caregivers to access financial and material resources through the implementation of Voluntary Savings and Loaning Associations (VSLAs). The program has 48 active VSLAs with a membership of 927 caregivers. These groups have an accumulated annual saving of Kshs. 3,438,655.00 (€19, 985. 71). This provides a foundation for caregivers to borrow, settle basic needs bills such as their children's school fees, food, health needs, clothing, and support to family income generating activities. In addition, 487 families were trained on various livelihood practices. Among those trained, 343 families were supported to start their own income generating activities through provision of seed capital. It is expected that such skills and business opportunities will go a long way to support the families to meet their basic needs and more.

The MA's 15 FS staff benefited from capacity building through various ESAF and I.O facilitated Webinars and Physical trainings among them being Results Based Reporting, Social Protection & Family Strengthening, Basic Training on Humanitarian action, Fundamentals in Safety & Security Training, Mental Health and Psychological First Aid (PFA), PDB2 Compass and Multi-dimensional Overlapping Depreciation Analysis (MODA) reports for Family strengthening.

2.1.3 Youth care, Education and employability

60%
of young people were self-reliant upon exit

60% of young people leaving SOS Children's Villages Kenya youth programs were self-reliant. 3,685 young people received Care and Employability support for their journey towards self-reliance through the MA's Education and Youth Empowerment programs.

487 Young people were supported to undertake various professional courses through Technical, Vocational, Education and Training (TVET) Institutions and University education. In addition, 61 young people were equipped with employability and entrepreneurial skills having successfully completed their various courses; 42 with TVET Diplomas while 19 attained University degrees. The MA also took initiative to provide young people with labour market orientation through various initiatives including the DHL Go Teach Program through which 53 young people were taken through a highly experiential program at the DHL complex in Nairobi. In addition, 802 young people in their journey to self-reliance received various services through the Digital hubs in the MA; 110 of them were certified through the Government's Ajira digital employability training. Ajira is a government program that introduces young people to online work, provides them with the tools, training and mentorship needed to work and earn an income from online/remote work. Transcription, virtual assistant services and web design are but some of the work sourced by young people while the rest-utilised services at the ihub including undertaking online work from the resources at the hub. Lastly, 356 were skilled through various life skills initiatives such as the Outward Bound Trust experiential leadership training; a training

that builds creativity and resilience, on dealing with life challenges. Further, young people are more prudent in managing financial resources as well as saving through financial management sessions.

72 caregivers and care professionals have the requisite skills to prepare and support young people in their care-leaving journey after successfully completing the leaving care training under the leaving care program.

2.1.4 Advocacy



10+

child focused TWGs

In line with Global Strategy 2030's ambition to ensure that the MA's target group is given a voice, the MA continued to solidify its place as a trusted partner in improving policies, guidelines and laws in favour of children without adequate parental care the MA sustained advocacy actions at community, County, National and International levels.

During the year under review, the MA gave 101 children and young people an opportunity to add their voices in various platforms. 26 children and youth from Meru, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nairobi and Eldoret program locations actively participated in the pre-Summit and main sessions of the Africa Children Summit. They engaged members of the various child rights committees of the UN and AU, and the national level policy makers and aired their voices on issues affecting them. In collaboration with partners, the MA strengthened the capacity of 65 young care leavers on advocacy and youth participation. The 65 have aggressively engaged in the development of various policy documents. These include the Adolescent and Youth Sexual Reproductive Health policy for Mombasa County in which Young care leavers have been recognised as a special interest group that requires support to access key services; the draft Uasin Gishu Youth development Policy, which also includes issues, raised in a memorandum that was drafted by youth from Uasin Gishu County. Lastly 10 children representatives five of the MA's locations (Meru, Mombasa, Kisumu, Eldoret and Nairobi) participated in the inaugural Africa Climate Summit and Africa Climate Week that took place in Nairobi. Together with over 400 other children and youth from Africa, they held discussions on the impact of climate change on children and youth. They had opportunities to deliberate on numerous thematic areas including Energy Transition, Renewable Energy and Green Minerals and Manufacturing, Sustainable Agriculture, Land and Water/ Ocean Use, Sustainable Infrastructure and Urbanization, Natural Capital, Adaptation and Resilience to Climate Risk. The Children developed key asks and submitted the Children Declaration to the chairperson of the African Union Commission and heads of States representatives including the host, His Excellency President William Ruto of Kenya. As a result of this, the views of children and youth were included in the Africa Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change Call to Action.

During the year under review, the MA undertook numerous advocacy actions in partnership with Government, other child focused organisations and the Joining Forces Alliance agencies. In this regard, the MA participated in a consultative workshop with 40 representatives from the National Council for Children's Services (NCCS), UN Development partners, child focused organizations and other state agencies. Key recommendations from the workshop and priority actions identified for implementation included; development of Rules and Regulations to operationalize the Children's Act (2022); improved coordination of the sector by the NCCS; strategic engagement of stakeholders in National and County Government budget making processes; and investment in child participation at all levels. Further, in partnership with non-state actors from the Joining Forces Alliance (JFA) for Children in Kenya and Civil Society Organizations, the MA participated in a policy dialogue forum with state agencies to reflect on the progress made towards the implementation of the Children's Act (2022). The forum took stock of the achievements realized; gaps to be addressed and proposed policy and programmatic recommendations for consideration to ensure the provisions of the Act are fully implemented. Following a call for public participation by the Rules Committee of the Judiciary, the MA participated in an advocacy exercise with other child rights organizations to review the draft Adoption Proceedings Regulations, the Children in Conflict with the Law Procedure and Practice Rules, the Foster Care Procedure and Practice Rules, and the Guardianship Procedure Rules. Subsequent to the exercise, the organizations submitted a Memorandum to the Judiciary Rules Committee for consideration.

Lastly, the MA sensitized 463 staff, Country directors, teachers and paralegals on the Children's Act (2022) through various forums; 315 of these were drawn from the Joining Forces Alliance, a consortium of the six largest child-focused NGOs in the country (SOS CV Kenya, PLAN, Save the Children, Terres Des Hommes, Childfund and World Vision). Upon the training of the JFA Country Directors, the Alliance identified key areas of interest that the

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JFA leadership would engage both state and non-state actors to ensure that the provisions of the Act are implemented. 148 MA staff drawn from the various Program locations were also sensitized on the Act; key to their session was the reflection on how the Act affected their work and its implication on the MA's Programs moving forward. In collaboration with the JFA, Mtoto News and the International Budget Partnership, the MA facilitated a virtual civil society-led awareness session on budget advocacy for 100 children. This equipped the children with information and skills in advocating for increased budgetary allocation for child welfare programs.

2.1.5 Human Resource (HR) and Administration

The process of aligning the MA's human resource to internal and external dynamics commenced during the reporting period. The MA took reviewed the Terms and Conditions of staff. The review captured Safeguarding of children, young people, staff and assets as appropriate. The policy is poised for roll out in 2024 during which Board of Directors, staff, children and youth in all programs will undergo an orientation on its provisions. The MA also finalized and operationalized guidelines on Safe Recruitment and Selection of staff. The guidelines were applied in the recruitments conducted in the fourth quarter of the year, and sensitization of staff on the guidelines will be sustained in 2024. In addition, the International Office trained five staff on Preventing Sexual Harassment Exploitation and Abuse (PSHEA). Based on their training, the staff conducted a cascade training on the policy and later provided a link to the online course on PSHEA as at the time of reporting, 100% of staff had completed the PSHEA online training, Misconduct Incident management and regulations as the time of reporting 289 of the 310 staff had been certified.

In the year under review, the HR department began the implementation of recommendations from the HR assessment conducted by Eastern and Southern Africa Federation (ESAF) region. Among the recommendations implemented, include the restructuring of the MA's organizational structure and reporting lines; among the major changes was the merging of roles specifically Education & Training and Youth development to form a new position Education and Youth Empowerment Coordinators at the locations and Manager at the national Office. Fund development and Communication Manager as well as the Institutional Partnership Development Manager position remained vacant as at the close of the year. This affected the MA's resource mobilization performance in the year.

The MA successfully applied for the Maintenance Campaign 2022 funding. The funds will be utilized for the repair and maintenance of the desalination plant in Mombasa Location. Once repaired, the plant will support water needs for the location and provide an opportunity for the sale of fresh water to the community as a fundraising venture. Lastly, the department secured organizational capital assets by maintaining the rents and rates for all land assets.

2.1.6 Internal processes and digitalisation

The MA continued to automate routine tasks to either provide room for the ICT team to address more critical issues or ease operations within the organization. Association's operations efficiency was enhanced during the period under review through the roll out of Team Viewer; A remote desktop access and collaboration solution that allows the ICT team to connect to Staff computers from anywhere and provide the users with instant, reliable, and efficient ICT support. Secondly, accountability on tracking ICT support request by staff was improved by the roll out of Jira Service Desk; a support service desk application that empowers the ICT team to deliver excellent service experiences and ensures that staff gets help quickly and track the progress of their support request. At the same time, the ICT team can also escalate the ICT support requests to the regional team. During the period of reporting, the MA through the ICT department implemented ICT for Development (ICT4D) projects, the first being the refurbishment of the Nairobi location community ihub through which 312 young people accessed training on online work. The department also supported the other 4 ihub in the other locations. These ihubs have been instrumental in providing young people with alternative and flexible forms of employment. Secondly, mothers and Aunts from Nairobi and Kisumu locations implemented the Rafiki Application. Prior to the roll out cybersecurity training was offered to assure online safety. In addition to implementing ICT4D, digitization of the Paperless payslips and Leave management was initiated and will be rolled out in 2024.

Organizational governance was enhanced by the recruitment of new Board members to fill in the vacant Board of Director positions. The recruitment of the board members optimized the functioning of the board committees, which

provided technical guidance to management. The period under review also witnessed greater involvement of the board with staff, the board took the lead to share the Independent Special Commission (ISC) report to the national management team and their response to the recommendation as well as encourage the organisation to keep getting better where safeguarding is concerned.

The internal compliance team conducted 80% (4 of the 5) planned internal audits during the period under review. The shortfall in meeting the targeted audits was occasioned by requests to conduct internal investigations in some of the locations hence affecting their schedules. The Internal Audit reviewed policies and guidelines in the MA. Of the 38 policies 12 have been adopted from ESAF as is, 17 have been approved and six policies at development stage, six at SMT level. The remaining policies to be approved and rolled out in 2024.

2.1.7 Fund development

The MA, during the period under review raised Kenya Shillings 9,051,693.00 (€70,777) against a target of Kenya Shillings 27,214,020.00 (€2122,792) this accounted for 33.3%% of the year's target. The overall local income raised by the MA for the period was Kshs 113,177,737 (€ 884,962) against a target of Kenya Shillings 153,812,795 or €1,202,812,796, this accounted for 74% of the target. The Fund development projections for 2023 were based on the implementation of the Impact Fund for Children, which was approved later in the fourth quarter of the year. In addition, in anticipation of the Impact Fund for Children grant, budgetary allocation was reduced contributing to the performance. This can be attributed to the design and implementation of new products such as in-kind donations, house donations and donations for Events. Online Campaigns, such as many children need many friends was sustained online through bulk SMS and direct mail to raise funds. The organization visibility was enhanced as the organization marked 50 years of existence in Kenya. The celebration took to the social media Accounts where impactful stories of staff and children were shared. Through this online campaign the new visitors grew by 9,300 followers; efforts to convert these to individual givers is underway through the Impact for Change Funds to be implemented in 2024.



Figure 2-5: Thank you! Karcher Kenya paid a courtesy call to the national officer with a donation worth Kshs. 1,800,000 (€ 11,259) in cleaning and washing appliances.

The MA retained the 12,215 sponsors that were there at the beginning of the year, despite the exit of young people who had aged out of sponsorship. This was achieved by timely update of progressive child-oriented activity reports. Besides that, thank you letters were sent to sponsors for the gifts received on behalf of the children. The MA also acquired new sponsors for children closing the year with 12,350 sponsors a 1.1% increase in the year. Project evaluation for sponsorship work was done to track

progress of key sponsorship activities against indicators. Training for mothers and aunts in Nairobi, Mombasa and Meru was done for gaps identified in order to enhance sponsors retention. The findings, lessons learnt, and best practices will be disseminated in the first quarter of 2024. The MA piloted community sponsorship for the children who were identified for reintegration with their family of origin while communicating the new dynamics to their respective sponsors.

2.2 Lessons learned

Table 2.2 Lessons learned

| Type | Lesson learned | Action(s) to be taken | Status of action |
|---------------|--|---|------------------|
| Good Practice | Cross functional collaborations in development of standard | Promote cross functional collaboration teams in IPD grant applications to | Ongoing |

| | <i>projects and program change concept notes</i> | <i>enhance quality of applications</i> | |
|----------------------|--|--|--------------------|
| <i>Good Practice</i> | Training of community led structures on alternative dispute resolution increased the number of families seeking services hence reduction in cases of family separation | <i>Share this learning across locations to harness accruing benefit</i> | <i>Ongoing</i> |
| <i>Good practice</i> | Regular monitoring of youth enrolled in TVET institutions increased retention of youth. | <i>Schedule regular visits to youth in tertiary institutions</i> | <i>Completed</i> |
| <i>Challenge</i> | Movement of Family Strengthening caregivers from one location to the other brings about challenges in providing services | <i>Encouraging the caregiver to regularly give updates on their whereabouts</i> | <i>In Progress</i> |
| <i>Observation</i> | The introduction of Community IHub in the location has helped in the advancement and utilization of technology by children and youth. 26% of the children and caregivers now have basic intermediate skills in ICT | <i>Work closely with the ICT coach to develop/initiate programs that will continuously expand ICT skills among the youth</i> | <i>On-going</i> |

2.3 Cross-cutting topics

During the reporting period, the MA strengthened the quality of program delivery by developing key policies to ensure inclusion and equity in programming. The gender and social inclusion policy was developed and validated during the year, dissemination and roll out is poised for 2024. In addition, the MA developed a draft climate change and adaptation policy. The policy strengthens MA programming to include climate change and adaptation. The policy also provides the MA standpoint with regard to climate change mitigation. The implication of this policy will also affect internal processes such as procurement of eco-friendly service providers among other implications. The dissemination is scheduled for quarter 1 of 2024.

The MA is part of a core expert team working on the Localization Agenda together with SOS Children's Villages Denmark. During the reporting period, the MA strategically incorporated localization in the national strategy. The action incorporated targeted the 4th Strategic results area on partnerships. A training on how to localize partnerships in the MA will be conducted to operationalise localization in the strategy in 2024.

The MA's Child Safeguarding was strengthened through local mapping for key like-minded partners at the location and national levels to identify priority areas in Awareness, Prevention, Reporting and Responding mechanisms. In addition, the MA Strengthened the Internal Child Protection processes through training of 21 safeguarding committee members from Meru, Nairobi, Mombasa, Eldoret and Kisumu location and National Office team on Case

Management processes documentation process. 640 Care Providers, 381 children and 177 youth were trained on Online Child Sexual Exploitation Abuse and the reporting of the same. This being an emerging trend there is need to spread the information. 124 children, 118 Parents and 103 staff were trained on psychosocial interventions to make them resilient and mentally healthy. This will improve their intra and interpersonal relations and general welfare of the child which will significantly reduce childcare and abuse issues.

In response to the ISC recommendations, the MA provided holistic Support, Justice and Incident Management for all children who suffered historical abuse using the Listening and Responding guidelines. 4 survivors have been supported and continue to be monitored. Further, the MA strengthened Child Protection systems through training of Paralegals across the country to improve the reporting and responding mechanisms and reduce the bottlenecks that face the case management system especially involving children. Prevention of Sexual Exploitation Harassment and Abuse (PSHEA) roll out to all staff. 3 staff (Human Resource, Internal Audit and Safeguarding Coordinator) attended. Session for the Ombudsman has been conducted. Progress on the same is ongoing with the support of International Office. Work plan has been developed to roll out.

During the year under review, RBM roll out was enhanced. All the program locations were supported to develop their standard projects by developing concept notes and results Frameworks that drew from the needs Assessments conducted in the locations. Data quality was a key highlight for the year in review. The MA worked on the HGFD minimum funding criteria and closed the year with all the active locations meeting the 75% compliance threshold by posting 80% up to date core assessments.

The M&E Manager and the M&E Officer were successfully certified on PDB2, this opens the opportunity for the duo to provide technical support as well as training to local users strengthening user experience and knowledge. In the coming year, the MA plans to have all the 5 M&E assistants certified. The M&E department supported the international office by coordinating logistics for a global research study conducted by the international office on the factors that lead to child family separation. The study reflected on the child's perspective, a deviation for the normal perceptions of adults on child family separation.

Lastly, The MA undertook the development of standard programs in the year under review. The emphasis here was to take deep reflections on program changes as proposed by the program development expert group from the Federation. The program changes included in the project cycles include alignment to reduction of children in Family like Care service types to not more than 50 children by 2030, the MA prioritised reintegration of children to their families of origin; physically relocate family houses to the neighbouring community. The changes also point to how the facilities would be utilised as expansion to Family strengthening increases. The concept put in various programmatic proposal on utility of facilities ranging from renovating the facilities for short come care, day care centres as well as gender recovery centers to address needs identified in the needs assessments.

2.4 Sustainability actions

The government of Kenya through the Ministry of Labour social and social services expanded provision of Social Protection to alleviate vulnerability caused by high global commodity prices and environmental shocks affecting families in vulnerable circumstances. During the year in review, various sets of program participants were linked to available government safety nets thus enhancing their journey towards self-reliance across the 5 locations specifically 498 children/young people registered to Orphans and Vulnerable children – Cash Transfer (OVC – CT), 67 caregivers plugged to Cash Transfer (CT) for the elderly and 24 program beneficiaries plugged to CT for Persons living with disability.

The MA also commenced large scale reintegration of children back to their families and communities of origin. In light of the program changes and the care reform strategy push to responsibly reintegrate children provided impetus to carry out this activity. It was encouraging to note that community sponsorship greatly contributed to the successful reintegration of these children.

Strengthening of local child care and protection structures was another strategy the MA employed to enhance social sustainability. By identifying key structures at county and community level, and strengthening these structure paved an opportunity to identify strong local organization and structures who over time can support the implementation of direct services to these entities. In this regard, the MA also employed the end of Involvement for the education facility in Mombasa as well as medical centres in Nairobi and Eldoret. A The MA advertised for

the partners to take up the day-to-day running of these facilities. The process is ongoing. The handover of the facilities to the new partners is poised for 2024.

Lastly, the MA developed a partnership policy. The policy recognises that through strategic partnerships many more children will be reached and serviced. The development and validation of the policy happened during the year under review.

3. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM(S)

3.1 Program location: Eldoret

Significant changes occurred in the Program location's context during the reporting period, affecting both the county and the national level. Uasin Gishu County faced economic challenges, including rising unemployment rates and reduced income opportunities, which directly affected the financial stability of the families served by the Program. A sharp increase in fuel prices further strained transportation costs and daily livelihoods, ultimately affecting the overall cost of living and food prices for beneficiaries. As a result, families encountered difficulties in accessing essential resources and providing for their children's needs, including nutrition and education.

These changes have had a significant impact on the Program, leading to increased demand for assistance due to the rising cost of living, inadequate food supplies, and unemployment. The Program has faced heightened pressure to respond to these escalating needs.

To address these challenges, the Program has maintained fruitful collaborations with various stakeholders, including the Social Development Office, Department of Children Services, Ministry of Health, and others. These partnerships have been effective in terms of resource mobilization, capacity building, and awareness creation on child rights and protection issues. Additionally, the national government's rollout of the "Inua Jamii" (*Swahili for Lift the family*) social security safety net Program for caregivers is a positive development. The partnerships also have been effective in planning and implementing Programs, dissemination of child protection information, and conducting nutritional assessments, jigger removal and eradication campaigns, and medical camps. Formal agreements have been signed with some of these partners to enhance cooperation.

In the year, the Program made significant progress in various outcomes, including child care and protection, self-reliance of young people, family support, and community care and protection systems. Notable achievements include the reintegration of 24 children (14 Male 10 Female) and young people into their families of origin, the distribution of sanitary towels to 617 girls, and support for 4 ECD centres and 4 primary schools. The youth Program successfully supported 10 young people (6 male 4 Female) in their transition to semi-independent living and provided financial literacy training.

The Program empowered caregivers with income-generating activities and solar panels for households. The Program also supported families' access to medical treatment by enrolling them in National Housing Insurance Fund (NHIF). These efforts align with the Program's goals and contribute to a safer and cleaner environment for children.

The Program has learned valuable lessons, such as addressing challenges in caregiver movement, conducting home visits, involving the community in Program activities, and using community resources effectively. These lessons have led to ongoing tasks focused on improving Program implementation and outcomes.

The high cost of living due to inflation has posed financial strain, reduced Program effectiveness, and increased demand for services. To manage this risk, the Program is implementing cost-saving measures, optimizing operational efficiency, and working in partnerships to maximize resources.

The Program has focused on some cross cutting topics; these are youth participation and climate change. 3 young people (2 male and 1 female) participated in national and international forums, advocating for climate change policies and global support for practical climate solutions.

To ensure sustainability, the Program has provided entrepreneurship and agribusiness training, promoted voluntary savings and loaning associations (VSLAs), and linked caregivers to business support and grants. These measures empower participants to become self-reliant and economically independent.

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There have been changes in staff turnover and capacity building activities during the reporting period. Staff turnover provided new perspectives but temporarily affected Program continuity. Capacity building included RBM training to enhance reporting and data quality.

In the next year period, the Program will continue its efforts to empower caregivers and young people for self-reliance, expand partnerships, and address the challenges posed by the high cost of living and inflation. The focus on sustainability through entrepreneurship, VSLAs, and business support will remain a priority. The Program will also monitor staff turnover and ensure continued capacity building. Additionally, it will continue its initiatives in youth participation and climate change.

Program context and stakeholders

The changes in Uasin Gishu County's context, such as the economic downturn, fuel cost escalation, and food shortages, have intensified the challenges faced by the population we serve. This has led to an increased need for our assistance, stretching our Program's resources and interventions to meet the growing demand.

Throughout the year, our Program has maintained fruitful collaborative relationships with various stakeholders and partners in the county, including the DCS, DSD, MOH and others. These valued stakeholders and partners have extended their support in terms of resources, expertise, and guidance, thereby playing a crucial role in the successful execution of the Program. The national government through the directorate of social and children services rolled out enrolment of caregivers to the social security safety net Program referred to as "Inua Jamii" which is an initiative to support the vulnerable.

Program analysis

Key results [see 2.1]

- A comprehensive case management process was undertaken that led to reintegration of 24 children and young people into their families of origin, they were prepared overtime and the necessary support offered that focused on unique individual needs.
- The Program's overarching goal of equipping young people with essential skills for employability, including entrepreneurship and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), has made significant progress in facilitating linkages between young people and various opportunities for professional growth. 4 young individuals (2 male, 2 female) have been successfully linked to attachments, and an additional 1 individual has secured an internship position
- The Program made strides in strengthening the community care and protection systems. One significant step was the identification and formation of the county children court users committee, tasked with developing the child protection policy for Uasin Gishu County. This committee plays a crucial role in advocating for and protecting children's rights within the county's legal system.

Lessons learned [see 2.2]

- Leveraging of resources with other projects within the organization has improved on the number of FS caregivers and children reached within the quarter
- Training of community led structures on alternative dispute resolution increased the number of families seeking services hence reduction in cases of family separation.
- Community empowerment and engagement contributed to increase in number of children retained and transiting in school with community volunteers.
- Working with stakeholders and partners have extended their support in terms of resources, expertise, and guidance, thereby playing a crucial role in the successful execution of the project. For example, in planning for the nutritional assessment for ECD centre and jigger removal campaign and medical camp involving the MOH and other stakeholders contributed to the success of these activities.

Risks [see 2.3]

- Key Programs staff turnover
- High cost of living due to inflation. The country's economic situation is affecting the ability of families we support to provide food for their children, put children in school by contributing to livelihood vulnerabilities.

Cross-cutting topics [see 2.4]

- Youth Participation
- Climate Change

Sustainability actions [see 2.5]

- Strengthening community-based FS caregivers groups by ensuring their registration with social protection Programs, allowing them to access government services even after they are no longer directly involved in the project. These groups not only provide social capital to their members but also create opportunities for knowledge and information sharing. Additionally, they enable members to pool their resources together to achieve common goals effectively.

Additional learnings

A strong and collaborative partnership with the Directorate of Social Services (DSD) played a pivotal role in successfully registering the caregivers of the Program into the Inua Jamii Social Protection Program. This effective collaboration and communication with DSD facilitated the smooth and efficient registration process for our caregivers, ensuring they could access the benefits and support provided by the Inua Jamii Program once the validation process is completed. This achievement underscores the importance of building and maintaining positive relationships with relevant government agencies to empower and assist those in need through social protection initiatives.

Organisational expertise and resources

There was a moderate level of staff turnover during the year. While this led to the loss of institutional knowledge and experience, it also presented an opportunity to bring in fresh perspectives and ideas. Staff turnover temporarily affected Program continuity especially the Youth Empowerment Program.

3.2 Program location: Kisumu

During the review period, the Program diversified different alternative care options such as kinship, supervised independent living, and foster care as well as embracing the reintegration of children and young people with their families of origin as required by the National Care Reform Strategy 2022-2032.

In the spirit of ensuring accountability, the Program undertook several initiatives to improve the capacity of staff by conducting several capacity-building sessions on various policies. Among them the Children's Act 2022, Program Change, MA Kenya Strategy 2021-2025, revised Child and Youth Safeguarding policy, Safety and Security, PSHEA (Prevention of Sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse), Misconduct Incident Management regulation (MIMR) staff appraisal and Whistleblowing policy.

To improve cost-effectiveness, the Program collaborated with reliable partners/stakeholders in ensuring quality care for the children and young people is provided such as the passing and rollout of the Children's Act 2022 necessitating important changes in the government structures handling children matters. One notable one is the change from Area Advisory Council (AAC) to CAC (Children Advisory Council).

Key results [see 2.1]

- The location provided care and protection to 167 children during the reporting period. 20 children were placed under short-term care during the year; while 18 children and youth were reunified with their families of origin after rigorous case management using National protocols.
- The Program made significant strides towards improving the resilience and economic capacity of families to provide quality care and protection; by targeting medical care and access to water and sanitation (improvement in access to medical health services from 12% to 59%, access to sufficient water from 38% to 80%, and access to sanitation from 36% to 76%).
- 108 children received consistent quality care from their 24 various households, while an additional 177 households provided 815 children with consistent quality care although some improvements were still needed
- Over 270 young people were empowered by the project through various initiatives such as life skills, career choices and employability/entrepreneurship up skilling.
- During the period under review, 73 sat for their NITA exams while 6 secured plumbing and mason job opportunities.

Lessons learned [see 2.2]

- *Establishing a strong partnership with the DCS greatly impacted the project, especially in capacity building on care reform.*
- *Continuous capacity building of staff and reviewing of existing policies made the programming relevant and reliable to Program participants.*
- *Alignment of program and interventions with government priorities enabled goodwill and support by the government and other CSOs.*

Risks [see 2.3]

- The economic challenges caused by the high inflation rate made the cost of living higher and unbearable for the Program participants.
- The political challenges occasioned by the political demonstration during the reporting period made implementation a challenge as staff had to work from home for some period. This necessitated the rescheduling of Program activities to ensure all are implemented safely.

Cross-cutting topics [see 2.4]

- Child safeguarding being our license of operation, there was continuous sensitization of children, young people, staff, and other stakeholders on issues related to child safeguarding to ensure that everyone understands their role in ensuring that there is safety, especially for children and young people under our care.

Sustainability actions [see 2.5]

- The Program undertook several measures to assure sustainability, first by staff realignment, removal of institutional features, and funds drive initiatives through proposal development, sweating of assets and CSR support.
- The impact of climate change on families and children was evident during the reporting period interfering with food security. The project in Kisumu integrated climate change into its Program and commissioned vigorous research that would inform the same.

Organisational expertise and resources

The Program reviewed and launched the new Child and Youth safeguarding policy, and launched the PSHEA, Misconduct Incident Management Regulation (MIMR), and Whistleblowing policies to help improve the safety and security of Program participants and assets.

During the period under review, the Family-strengthening Coordinator was promoted to the position of Program Director while a long serving Community Development Worker (CDW) was elevated to the position of FS Coordinator following a competitive recruitment exercise. The vacant position following the transition of the CDW was also filled during the year under review.

3.3 Program location: Nairobi

During the period, the political environment was unstable due to a series of mass protests in Nairobi County. The protests, which were sparked by the government's decision to increase taxes and the high cost of living, led to violent clashes and loss of life.

Kenya's economy is currently experiencing instability, which can be attributed to a combination of factors in both domestic and global markets. Additionally, the depreciation of the Kenyan shilling against major trading currencies such as the US dollar, the euro, and the pound sterling, has also contributed to the rise in prices of imported commodities such as food and fuel.

Program analysis

Key results [see 2.1]

- During the reported period, a total of 135 children (79 males and 56 females) and 116 young people (66 males and 50 females) were supported in Family Like Care.
- Additionally, twelve children (males and females) were admitted to the facility for temporary care due to abandonment, abuse, and neglect during the year. Out of the twelve, five children from the same family were reunited with their families at the end of their committal orders and are now closely monitored.
- A 3-day foster care training was conducted for 21 caregivers, consisting of 16 female and 5 male SOS parents, who were joined by 17 other caregivers from the community. By the end of the training, participants had gained new knowledge and skills in administering foster care, which they were able to demonstrate effectively. an understanding of legal procedures for foster care, and broadened their knowledge on childcare.
- The program to monitor and mentor caregivers on a quarterly basis used village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs). The intention was to provide sustainable savings and lending organizations to enable caregivers to become self-sufficient.
- Twenty female and seven male caregivers took part in the groups in 2023. Share-outs ranging from 10,000 to 62,000 Kenyan Shillings were given to group members.
- During the reporting year, the youth development Program recorded 116 beneficiaries comprising, 50 females and 66 males.

Lessons learned [see 2.2]

- The introduction of Community I-hub in the location has helped in the advancement and utilization of technology by children and youth. 26% of the children and caregivers now have basic intermediate skills in ICT.
- Rescued children who cannot be registered in the Sponsorship program because of the nature of their cases. Some of them end up staying long than anticipated as their respective causes drag on in the court of law.
- Strong collaboration with the Directorate of Child Services has ensured critical workforce trainings are accomplished and child committal orders are secured for child admission into Family Like Care.

- Use of community resources like schools and churches in the planning and execution of our activities. This approach helped in cutting down cost and making it convenient for our beneficiaries in the community.

Risks [see 2.3]

- SRHR poses a challenge to the location as cases of teenage pregnancies are on the rise. This affects the transition to self-reliance of the project participants. Increased SRH sensitization has been undertaken to support teenager successfully navigate teenager hood.

Cross-cutting topics [see 2.4]

- 17 youths (10 males, 7 females) participated in the Youth Climate Change Summit 2023, which was organized by Yali Regional Leadership Centres (RLC), and the Yali Alumni Chapter of Kenya for young climate change action leaders to highlight their solutions at the summit aligned with AU climate action summit.
- In terms of gender, two location staff (2 males) participated in the Gender ToT 5-day training which was also used to disseminate the MA Kenya Gender Policy.

Sustainability actions [see 2.5]

- The location developed a 3-year plan to make our program location self-sustainable, based on the new sustainability clustering, the care reform strategy, and the program change guidance.

Organisational expertise and resources

In line with the government-led care reform strategy, 2 staff (Program Director and alternative Care Coordinator) participated in a 10-day certification course on Child Protection Management at the Kenya School of Government (KSG) alongside other SOS counterparts from other locations.

During the year, the location recruited 3 new staffs. An officer was recruited for Monitoring & Evaluation at the location, 1 new staff was recruited (Community Development Worker) for the Family Strengthening Program Alternative Care Department.

The Sponsorship officer participated in a 5-day Sponsorship workshop in Naivasha that brought together the sponsorship team from MA Kenya, newly employed Education and Youth Empowerment Coordinators, and Regional Sponsorship advisor. During the training, MA Kenya scored 96% in sponsorship deliverables for the year 2022.

The location generated a total income of Kshs 3,550,697 against a target of Kshs 4,878,500. A shortfall of Kshs 1,327,083.00 was realized

3.4 Program location: Mombasa

In line with the program changes and the Results based Management approach, Mombasa location has been hugely involved in the design process towards a standard project location. A concept notes and results framework was developed, that foresees a 5-year project with four outcome areas targeting child and youth protection structures, supporting families for sustainable livelihood, promoting youth participation and advocate for implementation of policies by duty bearers.

During the year, the program made strides in ensuring that families and community structures provide care and protection for children and young people. Through the alternative care service type ,2 sessions for 30 parents from both alternative care parents and family strengthening on Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) & early childhood (robotic training) and behaviour modification training.

In efforts to ensure to ensure retention of children and youth in school for quality learning. Fees and school learning requirements were provided to all 73(26female, 47male) children currently in the CV and the 46 children and youth who were temporarily reintegrated to their extended family members during the COVID19.

In efforts- to support 117 children and 82 youths to attain self-reliance, 133 (67Males: 66 Females) participated in the mentorship Program in self-awareness and self-esteem, stress and stress management and Career guidance. In addition, 46 (24 males: 22 females) were trained in entrepreneurship skills. Moreover, 90 youth were supported in the Ajira digital skills training from both the community and alternative Care. In addition, the location conducted Career week with academic professionals to provide 30 youth with technical personnel support on their studies and career choices.

SOS Children's Village Mombasa has had changes of staff in the annual reporting period. Firstly, there was changeover of the Program Director's role through transfer. Further, the roles of Program educator, Youth core care worker and support staff were rendered redundant by July 2023. When information reached, the roles of Program Educator and Youth Core care worker on matters redundancy this affected the zeal to carry on with Program activities as much effort was on administration matters of ensuring transition of the roles was handled professionally and at the same time Program, implementation is not affected.

3.5 Program location: Meru

SOS Children's village Meru has been on the forefront in implementing projects and programs specifically designed to offer care and protection to children and young persons. During the year 2023, the major projects and interventions that were under implementation include, the Alternative Care (AC) project, Family Strengthening (FS) project, Humanitarian Action Project (HA) and Education & youth project.

Program analysis

Key results [see 2.1]

- 70 Caregivers whose livelihood is farming were empowered with skills on conservative farming to adapt to reduced rainfall.
- Collaborated with the DCS to register 2,167 beneficiaries for the Inua Jamii cash transfer program, which reached out to more families with children who are at risk of losing parental care.
- Creation of awareness to 15,000 Meru residents on the role of the justice system in child protection as well as dissemination on the mandate of SOS CV in child protection.
- 120 of the children in AC (86%) had attained satisfactory educational performance against a target of 140 (100%).
- 30 Child Protection Volunteers (CPVs), Lay Volunteer Counsellors (LVCs) and Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) were empowered on para legal skills and child protection.
- A total of 187 children and young persons are able to cater for their household expenses through our support.
- 14 Caregivers were empowered with the necessary knowledge and competency on general skills on adolescent parenting and positive discipline during a refresher training.

Lessons learned [see 2.2]

- Sharing of assets and resources between programs is effectively enabling the location to adopt the one program approach
- The launch of Sub County Advisory Children's Council will be instrumental in advising the County Children Advisory Committees on, and make recommendations for the implementation of child welfare Program
- Involvement of the local administration in the planning and implementation of activities enabled effective mobilization of beneficiaries and offering coordination of community meetings. The local area chiefs have helped the Program gain acceptance and trust with the community
- Meru location is growing in number of program operations (and projects as well) which has put strain on movement logistics (cars and drivers). This has led to occasional delays during travel to and from field assignments

Risks [see 2.3]

- **Crop Failure and Food Shortages**

The project location has experienced drastically reduced amounts of rainfall in the previous three seasons. The reduced rainfall is attributable to the ongoing climate change as result of global warming.

- **Political Protests/Disturbance**

Earlier this year, the major risk was the disruption of project activities due to political interruptions as a result of the political protests against the rising cost of living in the country.

- **Rising Cost of Living**

The rise in the cost of living due to the enactment and implementation of the 2023 finance bill affected project budgets, causing some variance between budgeted against actual figures.

Cross-cutting topics [see 2.4]

- **Rising Cost of Living**

The rise in the cost of living due to the enactment and implementation of the 2023 finance bill affected project budgets, causing some variance between budgeted against actual figures.

Sustainability actions [see 2.5]

- **Strengthening Village Savings and Loaning Associations (VSLAs)**

VSLAs have been strengthened in the project location. The methodology encourages self-economic development through a culture of saving and taking loans for running IGA. At the close of the year, the groups had cumulative savings of Kenya Shillings 1,462,570 which they are now borrowing small loans from.

- **Strengthening of the Capacity of the existing Child Protection Structures**

The project has been continually enhancing the capacity of the Directorate of Children Services (DCS), Area Advisory Councils, SGBV Technical Working Group and the Court Users Committee

- **Strategic Linkages and Partnerships**

The project has purposed to continue enhancing linkage of caregivers and other vulnerable groups to government safety nets i.e. Inua Jamii cash transfer programs. This move will provide sustainable cash support to vulnerable groups, hence shifting the burden of support from FSP to government

- **Empowerment through the Provision of IGAs**

Program participants have been supported with various IGAs such as cereals and groceries. A total 78 FS project participants have also been trained on goat farming ahead of the distribution of goats.

ANNEX

ANNEX 1: HYPERLINKS TO RELATED MATERIALS

| Topic | Person responsible | Source of information | MA file should be saved to: | Hyperlink |
|------------------------------|--------------------|---|---|---|
| Actual statistics of the MA | N/A | Compass report accessed via the following path: Compass -> Federation Steering -> Statistical Key figures -> SKF Beneficiaries / SKF staff -> filter for MA and year | No longer required | Statistical Key Figures - Power BI |
| List of board members | National director | MA fills in template list of board members | Federation planning & steering: MA annual reports | N/A - please upload list of board members as separate document onto MA annual reports workspace |
| MA mid-term plan | National director | MA fills in template for mid-term planning | Federation planning & steering: Mid-term & annual plans | <i>Insert hyperlink of the mid-term plan</i> |
| MA annual plan | National director | MA fills in template for annual planning | Federation planning & steering: Mid-term & annual plans | <i>Insert hyperlink of the annual plan</i> |
| MA website | National director | Member association website | Not applicable: provide link only | <i>Insert hyperlink of the MA website</i> |
| Online directory page for MA | National director | SOS Online Directory | Not applicable: provide link only | <i>Insert hyperlink of specific page for the MA</i> |