

SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT: COUNTRY SNAPSHOT



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
INTERNATIONAL

TOGO



Location: Kara

BACKGROUND

Located approximately 430 km from the capital city, Lomé
Operating since 1979

Core services

110 children have been cared for in
family-like alternative care since start of operation
329 children have been supported through family
strengthening services since start of operation

Supporting services

1 kindergarten
1 primary school
1 Social centre
1 medical centre
2 youth care programmes

Methodology

In October 2015, a social impact assessment was carried out at SOS Children's Village Kara in Togo. It involved interviewing 60 former participants of the programme, as well as carrying out 41 stakeholder interviews and focus group discussions with programme staff, community-based organizations and local authorities. This assessment was led by an external consultant, i.e. the Nordic Consulting Group (NCG), together with two local researchers.

The assessment aimed to determine the impact of SOS Children's Villages in Kara, in terms of the following:

1

Individual level

Eight key dimensions of personal well-being were assessed through interviews with former participants. For each dimension, former participants were given a rating, on a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is the most positive.

2

Community level

Six dimensions of impact at the community level were assessed, based on desk review and the findings of semi-structured interviews with key programme staff and representatives of relevant stakeholders. For each dimension, researchers assigned a rating, on a scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is the most positive.

3

Social return on investment (SROI)

This quantified the social impact of the programme in financial terms. It was calculated by comparing the cost of inputs to the realized financial benefits of the programme for individuals, the community as well as society.¹

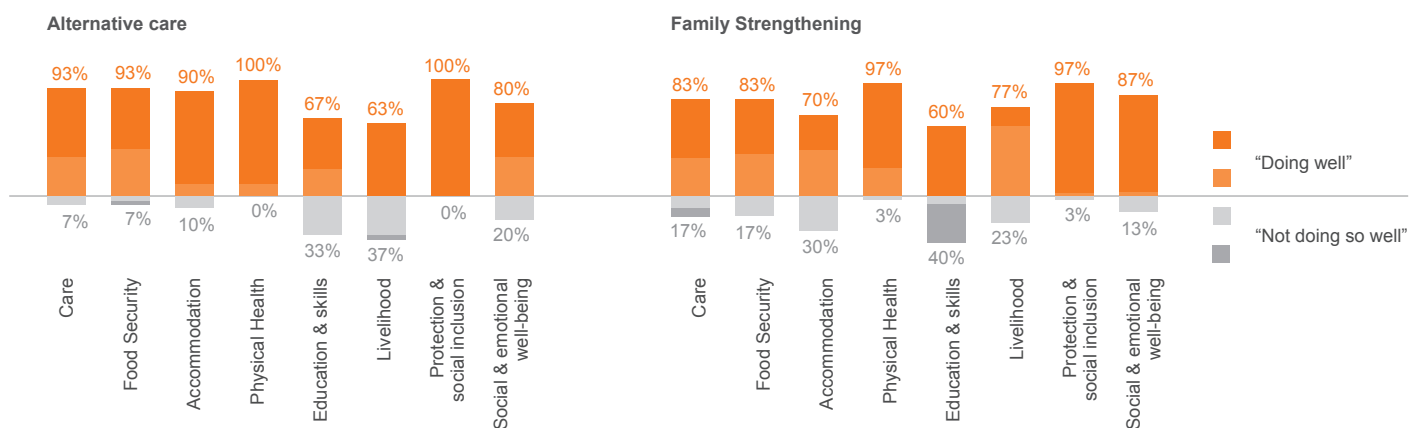
¹ Please see SOS Children's Villages International (2017): *Social Impact Assessment in SOS Children's Villages: Approach and Methodology for a more detailed description of the dimensions.*

Results

Overall, the findings provide evidence that SOS Children's Villages has had a positive impact on the lives of the children who participated in the programme.

1

Individual level



The findings show that former programme participants are generally doing well in all eight dimensions. More specifically, 67% of former participants in family-like alternative care are doing well in at least 6-of-the-8 dimensions. Former participants are doing particularly 'well' in terms of fulfilling their parental obligations towards their own children and family relationships, as well as food security and protection and social inclusion. They are doing less well in the dimensions of livelihood and education and training. It is interesting to note that participants who have done relatively well in terms of educational achievements, have more stable jobs, higher employability and higher average income than the national average. Those former participants with lower educational achievements are struggling to make ends meet in informal and irregular employment. A number of former participants found leaving care and their integration into society difficult.

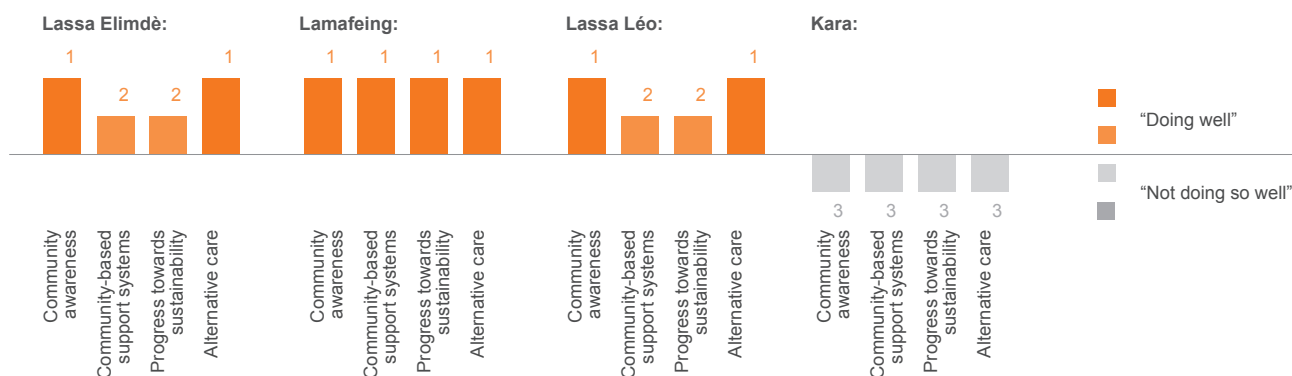
In the case of family strengthening, 80% are doing well in at least 6-of-the-8 dimensions. Critically, all children are still in the care of their families, indicating that the primary goal of strengthening the family to prevent family separation has been achieved. Former participants are also doing 'well' in terms of physical health and protection and social inclusion. While education and training is also a concern for family strengthening, accommodation is an additional dimension with room for improvement. Many families live in unstable housing and have structural issues with their accommodation. This was also seen to have a negative impact on children's school performance. Encouragingly, however, none of the children dropped out of school, compared to 9% according to secondary data on the national dropout rate for primary school (Regional Management of Education in Kara).

2

Community level

The social impact on community level was measured based on primary and secondary data collected in the communities Kara, Lassa Elimdè, Lamafeing and Lassa Léo. The results were more positive in those communities with a family strengthening project. Community awareness about the situation of disadvantaged children and their families as

well as community-based support systems are stronger in these communities. Joint community initiatives, in particular savings and loans associations, enabled community members to acquire more skills and improve their living conditions. In Kara scores were lower, as the family strengthening project does not apply a community-based approach.



The remaining two dimensions on giving and volunteering and next generation benefits were included in the SROI calculation below.

3

Social return on investment (SROI)

	SROI = benefits* : costs	SROI	€1 returns additional
Alternative care	SROI of 1 : 1	-12%	€-0.12
Family strengthening	SROI of 6 : 1	455%	€4.55
Overall	SROI of 2 : 1	53%	€0.53

*The value of benefits was rounded to the closest integer.

In **alternative care**, there is a benefit-cost ratio of 0.88:1 which means that an investment of €1 yields benefits worth €0.88. The programme has an SROI of -12% which means that an investment of €1 effectively loses €0.12 from the initial cost. In **family strengthening**, there is a benefit-cost ratio of 5.55:1 which means that an investment of €1 yields benefits worth €5.55. The programme has an SROI of 455% which means that an investment of €1 returns an additional €4.55 on top of the initial cost.

The **overall** benefit-cost ratio is 1.53:1, which means that an investment of €1 yields benefits to society worth €1.53. The programme has an overall SROI of 53%, which means that an investment of €1 returns an additional €0.53 on top of the initial cost.

It should be noted that a meaningful comparison cannot be made between the SROI figures for family strengthening and family-like alternative care. The participants in

each service have different starting points and levels of vulnerability. Children entering family-like alternative care lack appropriate care and are particularly disadvantaged. A higher investment in these children including more intense direct support services over a longer period of time is needed. The average duration of stay of former participants in the programme was 19 and a half years, meaning that the organisation invested a larger amount of resources over more than a decade to support these children in every aspect of their development. Had these children not been supported, there would most likely be a cost to society, negatively impacting on the next generation of children and societal benefits. Thus a higher SROI with family strengthening is to be expected; the children in family strengthening live with their families and the organisation provides supporting services for these families over a shorter period of time. On average, a family received family strengthening services for 5 years.

The way forward

In general, the results in alternative care and family strengthening show that the programme is having a significant impact on children, their families and communities. However, the results also reveal areas for improvement, that need to be further worked on and improved going forward. The main recommendations include:

Family-like alternative care

- Strengthen the capacity of caregivers and staff to better prepare young people for independent life
- Strengthen the collaboration with the National Employment Agency and public and private organisations to enable young programme participants to boost their employability and acquire employment
- Ensure the participation of programme participants in shaping their futures
- Ensure care placements are regularly reviewed in the best interest of children and that children are fully ready for independence when leaving the programme

Family strengthening

- Further strengthen community capacities (organisation, management, development/management of partnerships) to sustain effects and impact
- Empower the savings and loans associations as they are key players involved in building the capacity of families and communities
- Adjust the tools to assess the self-reliance of families, to ensure that the families who leave the programme are empowered enough to take better care of their children and do not fall back into risk of separation

SOS Children's Village Kara and SOS Children's Villages Togo as a whole have incorporated the recommendations, learnings and areas for improvement into their planning for the future in order to improve programme quality and the impact of the programme on the lives of children, families and their communities.



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