

International Annual Report

2021



**SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES**

As a child, you need someone who truly sees you – who stands by you no matter what. But today, **1 in 10** children and young people are separated from their families, abandoned, neglected or forced to live in an abusive environment, growing up without the support they need to prepare themselves for their future.

It happens in every country, rich and poor – in every city and in every community. For the child, the effects often last a lifetime, which can create a harmful cycle that repeats itself from one generation to the next.

We exist to change this.

Truly
bonding
with a **child** has the
power
*to change the **world**.*

Youth message

Duangchai, 23, grew up in family-like care in Laos. In 2021, she graduated university and founded her own business, refusing to let the challenges of the pandemic stop her. She also represents Laos as a member of the SOS Children's Villages International Youth Coalition.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the world. For many ambitious young people, life came to a halt; we started losing hope as our education, internships, every aspect of our life was badly affected.

The first fear was to remain safe from the coronavirus, but there was always an anxiety about what next? How will we complete our education, when will we see friends again, how will I survive without a job? I was trying to put a lot of things together because I realized how important it is to have my own savings. Coming from an alternative care background and living in a semi-independent arrangement, I was assuming my future would be dark.

Nevertheless, I was always a creative person and during the lockdown I decided to give wings to my ideas: I am now the founder and CEO of an eco-printing business.

I promote my company through Facebook and put up stalls to increase my sales. To support myself financially, I secured a job in the hotel business after receiving skills training on CV writing and applying for jobs from SOS Children's Villages in Laos. I aim to give back some percentage of my profits to them as I always received immense support from my village, especially my SOS mother. I also want to give training on eco-printing to my siblings there.

All this turmoil made me realize how important it is to have a passion. It is equally important to learn some employability skills so that you can support yourself at a time of adversity.

I invite all organizations working with young people to prepare us better for independent living. Start identifying passion in children from an early age and extend support. Provide entrepreneurship training so that we can bring change in our lives as well as in the lives of other young people. Improve the coping and self-management skills of young people and increase our general awareness about society and community. Make us civically empowered so that we can transition smoothly to independent living.

I hope my story can make some young people believe in themselves more and encourage them to do just a little bit more because hard work pays off and with those extra efforts you can reach your goals.

”

Start identifying passion in children from an early age and extend support.



© Latdavanh Thongphany | Laos



Duangchai | Young entrepreneur, Laos

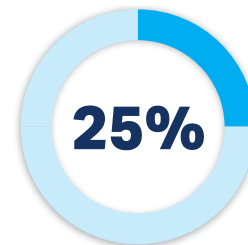
Year in review 2021

The year 2021 continued to be dominated by COVID-19, along with other alarming topics such as the climate crisis and political instabilities. How did these compounding pressures affect children and young people without parental care or at risk of losing it, and what can we do to mitigate the impact?

For a second straight year, the pandemic and its associated consequences added mental, physical and financial stress to many people around the world. The effects were even harder on families already struggling to stay together and for children and young people growing up without the care and support they need for their full development.

Mental health

More people died from COVID-19 in 2021 compared to 2020: yet the virus' mental health toll took the world's focus. According to the World Health Organization, in the first year of the pandemic, the global prevalence of anxiety and depression increased by 25%. Of particular concern was how this affected child and youth development. A UNICEF study found higher levels of depression, fear, anxiety, anger, irritability, negativity, conduct disorder, and alcohol and substance abuse among children and adolescents compared with pre-pandemic rates.¹



increase in anxiety and depression worldwide during the pandemic

Children and young people growing up in difficult family environments were at even higher risk of having their mental health negatively affected this year. Prior history of abuse, neglect and family dysfunction were associated with an increased risk of stress and anxiety. Also, children living in poverty or in families with lower socio-economic status were found to be at increased risk of stress and depressive symptoms. Fortunately, there are things that can be done to improve children and young people's mental health in these difficult times: regular communication with loved ones, engaging in recreational activities and overall social support were found to be important strategies for children to cope with the year's stressors.

At SOS Children's Villages, we are equally concerned with the mental health of parents and caregivers, which also suffered in 2021. Mental well-being is the foundation for parents being able to connect with a child or young person, and provide them with care and a sense of security. The same study found that caregivers' depression and anxiety scores were significantly correlated with their children's emotional and behavioural difficulties, including sadness and depression. Poor mental health of both children and caregivers can lead to increased tension or neglect at home and is a common contributing factor to child-family separation.



When parents and caregivers do not have the resources they need to manage their own stress and work through any personal traumas, this can detract from their ability to care for their children. Championing their well-being benefits the entire family and is crucial to ensuring that children have the support they need to get through challenging times.

This year, as part of our family strengthening programmes, we held our parenting workshops online, with many of them dedicated to handling the stress of lockdown – promoting the use of positive, non-violent discipline, providing guidance on self-care as well as tips on how to enjoy family time and maintain some kind of structure for children stuck at home. A silver lining of the pandemic and the global focus on mental health is that the topic is becoming gradually less stigmatized, and the need for governments to invest more in this area is being discussed.

5.2
million children



have lost one or both
parents or primary
caregiver to COVID-19

Increased need for care and protection

It is deeply concerning that as of October 2021, worldwide 5.2 million children have been affected by COVID-19-associated orphanhood or caregiver death.² Some are being cared for by extended relatives, some are now in care systems, and some are completely alone. Many have been traumatized in some way. There is a growing understanding that support for children who have experienced trauma should be specifically tailored and delivered by skilled professionals trained in how to deal with trauma and mental health issues.

Efforts are underway to address this gap – for example, our online course on working with children who may have experienced trauma – developed as part of the EU co-funded project, [Safe Places, Thriving Children](#). Crucial to anyone working in the child protection sector, the course is available to anyone with an interest in the topic.

Forced migration rising

Even more likely to be growing up on their own, and in need of psychological support, are children who have been forced from their homes – with their families or without – by natural disasters, wars, persecution or loss of livelihood. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that at the end of 2021, the number of people forced across borders or displaced within their own countries reached 89 million.

89
million



people forcibly
displaced

In 2021 alone, we supported families hit by catastrophes in Haiti, Honduras, Lebanon, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nicaragua and the Philippines; food insecurity in Ethiopia, Somalia, Somaliland and Sudan; and refugees, displaced people and host communities in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Colombia, Greece, Niger, Palestinian territories and Ukraine. The climate crisis is expected to exacerbate forced migration. Worldwide, over half a billion children live in areas with extremely high risk of flooding;³ 115 million are at high or extremely high risk from tropical

cyclones, and almost 160 million are exposed to high or extremely high drought severity. The number of people forcibly displaced from their homes has more than doubled in the last decade, many of them children who could spend their entire childhood stateless.

In fact, in 2021, one in two refugees worldwide was a child.⁴ The most travelled migration routes can also be the most dangerous, and young people are vulnerable to exploitation along the way. Hundreds of thousands are unaccompanied minors. Our work in recent years has expanded to address the unique needs of these children and young people – whether through short-term care, support in reunifications with their families, or integration into the host country. New psychosocial interventions, such as the play- and movement-based “Team-Up,” have been developed to support refugee children to deal with their emotions and to socialize with other kids, in order to prevent mental health problems in the future.

1 in 2



refugees worldwide
is a child

115
million



additional people now
living in poverty

Growing inequality and reduced access to services

After 25 years of steady progress in reducing poverty, this trend has now reversed and the number of people living in extreme poverty is rising again.⁵ Poverty is one of the main drivers for children losing the care of parents. According to research by Brookings, 115 million more people were pushed into extreme poverty in 2021. Governments around the world stepped up their efforts to strengthen social protection systems that help families to stay together. But there was growing acknowledgement that much of the progress towards reaching the world’s Sustainable Development Goals has now been lost.

Violence against children

Reduced access to violence prevention and response services was of particular concern to us given the rise in domestic violence seen around the world during pandemic lockdowns. Approximately 1.8 billion children live in the 104 countries where violence prevention and response services have been disrupted due to COVID-19. In addition to the harm it causes to children, violence in the home can also lead to child-family separation. About half the world’s children are subjected to corporal punishment at home.⁶

19,000
young people



took part in ECOSOC
Youth Forum

Youth participation in high-level forums

On a more positive note, the global community continues to expand the inclusion of young voices in forums and debates. In April 2021, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum took place online. Attended by over 19,000 young people from over 190 countries, it was the largest, most inclusive and diverse gathering of young people hosted by the United Nations. It provided a platform for youth to contribute to policy discussions by sharing their ideas, experiences, good practices and challenges with fellow young people, government representatives and others. Participants emphasized the importance of inter-generational dialogue and engaging youth meaningfully in the decisions that will shape the world they inherit.

² H Juliette T Unwin et al. (2022), The Lancet: Child and Adolescent Health, Vol. 6, Issue 4.

³ Joining Forces (2019), A Second Revolution: Thirty years of child rights, and the unfinished agenda.

⁴ <https://data.unicef.org/resources/international-data-alliance-for-children-on-the-move/>

⁵ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty>

⁶ UNICEF (2020), Protecting children from Violence in the Time of COVID-19: Disruptions in prevention and response services.



© Diana Ruiz | Colombia

Ending corporal punishment

Another positive development of 2021 was that the slow march toward the universal abolition of corporal punishment of children continued. Two new countries were added to the list: Colombia and the Republic of Korea, bringing the total to 63. We are very excited as our member association in Colombia was deeply engaged in the process.

The new law – Law 2089 – prohibits physical chastisement, cruel, humiliating or degrading treatment as ways of disciplining children and young people, in favour of positive child-rearing based on the protection of the fundamental rights of the child. The journey to reach passage of the bill was undertaken alongside the Colombian Family Welfare Institute, the Alliance for Children, and others. We are now working with the government and partners to develop a national strategy that provides parents with positive alternatives to physical punishment.

63
countries



have abolished the
corporal punishment
of children

Evolving our understanding of parenting

We have learned that the work to create supportive family environments for children does not end with the passage of a law. The hard work begins with implementation. Often this involves changes in attitude toward childhood, child rights and parenting. For example, our positive parenting workshops, part of the training for our own care practitioners and a service for parents in our family strengthening programmes, are now being offered to teachers in kindergartens in Latvia; the assumption being that many communities, parents, teachers, and care professionals need new tools in order to create safe, loving, supportive environments for children and young people.

Luis Chamarro, a father from Peru, explained it best when he spoke about the challenges of raising a family during the pandemic at the UNICEF Global Forum for Children and Youth, and shared about the benefits of the workshop. “We got more involved in the lives of our children, so the union in the family became stronger.” These are very difficult times for families struggling to stay together and for children who have lost parental care. Yet, we hope that through dialogue, a new awareness about mental health, parenting and child rights continues to evolve.

”

Our societies need another model of father, a type of father who is involved in household chores and in the loving care of children.

— Luis Chamarro, Peru, parent in family strengthening programme

Reconnecting and transforming

In 2021, the world began to slowly emerge from the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools reopened, and families and friends reconnected. But for millions of children and young people, the effects of the pandemic continued. By October 2021, more than 5.2 million children had been orphaned or lost a caregiver to COVID-19. Millions more are at increased risk of losing parental care due to major setbacks in global development, such as the rise in extreme poverty. Other issues, like the climate crisis, economic hardship, and conflicts are forcing a record number of people to migrate, making it harder for families to stay together. In our programmes, including our response to emergencies in countries like Ethiopia, Haiti, Pakistan and Ukraine, we remain focused on the core of our work: keeping families together, reunifying them when they are separated and protecting children when they are alone.

This year, we responded to these concerning global trends with a renewed emphasis on preventing the loss of parental care and working with partners and governments to ensure there is a range of high-quality care options in place when children cannot remain in their families. Within our own programmes, we achieved a 14% increase in people reached directly through our family strengthening services and further expanded innovative livelihood projects. We also intensified our research and advocacy efforts with partners, and we celebrated that more countries formally recognized prevention services and enacted policies that ensure a child's right to be free from violence.

It was a pivotal year for us internally. The release of the Independent Child Safeguarding Review accelerated a transformation that was already underway. We had commissioned the review of past safeguarding failures in order to improve our safeguarding practices. In June 2021 our General Assembly anchored a new goal into our federation's strategy, "We ensure and live safeguarding in our daily actions." Today, we are fully focused on ensuring support for anyone who has been harmed, and overall, creating an environment of safety, respect and well-being for everyone who engages with us.

At the heart of this transformation lies our commitment to include the voices of children and young people in all that we do: programme design, advocacy efforts, and more recently, in our federation governance. Through challenging times, we are grateful to our staff, volunteers and our 4.4 million donors and supporters who continue to share our commitment to children and young people who have lost parental care or are at risk of losing it. We look forward to working together – along with children and youth – to respond to changes in the world around us and to strengthen our organization.



Dereje Wordofa
President



Ingrid Maria Johansen
Chief Executive Officer



Vietnam

Hung, a student at the Hermann Gmeiner School in Hanoi, plays Dereje his song "New Happiness."

© Đặng Mạnh Dũng



Poland

Ingrid meets colleagues and Ukrainian foster families at SOS Children's Village Siedlce.

© Katerina Ilievska



Three pillars of action

SOS Children's Villages is dedicated to improving the lives of **children and young people without parental care or at risk of losing it**. Our work evolves in response to the specific issues this unique group faces, and as society and our understanding of child and youth development evolve. In recent years, for example, we have expanded our work to include "young people" (ages 15-24) because we have learned how important it is for this age group to have someone by their side as they transition into adulthood.

By "children and young people without parental care," we mean those who are temporarily or permanently growing up without the care of their families: children in residential care, in foster care, children who are living on the street. By "those at risk of losing parental care," we mean children and young people in families that are struggling to stay together and where parents are having difficulty providing the care, stability and connection their children need.

We are passionate about ensuring that children and young people have the support they need to become their strongest selves. We were founded as a practitioner organization in 1949. Today, we leverage our experience for the greatest possible impact. Our efforts are geared toward working directly with individuals, partnering with others to extend our reach, and working to change things for the future. We follow three main pillars of action.



Prevention

Keeping families together and preventing child-family separation

If possible, the best place for children to grow up is within their family. Our activities range from working directly with families and communities, to research on the reasons for family breakdown, to developing and sharing training materials related to parenting and mental health.



Protection

Ensuring care and protection when there is no family or it is not in a child or young person's best interest to stay in the family

Our activities include directly caring for children and young people, also in emergencies; working with partners to train foster parents and with governments to implement care standards; supporting young people to become self-reliant, and much more.



Advocacy

Changing policy and practice to improve the situation of children and young people without parental care or at risk of losing it

This pillar of action focuses on systemic change. Among other activities, we work with partners to create platforms for children and young people to bring the issues they face into discussions at the local, national and global level.

Activities 2021

Children have the right to grow up in a supportive family environment. Everything we do is aimed at making this a reality.

The following section presents the challenges faced by the children and young people we work for, as well as activity highlights and individual stories. Our work is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, and contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals.



Prevention

The problem

Contrary to popular belief, for the vast majority of children and youth who are temporarily or permanently placed in alternative care, one or both parents are living. By investing in strengthening families before they break down, society can significantly reduce the number of children who need out-of-home care. Such investment also serves to create stronger families overall, who are then able to provide better support to their children as they transition into adulthood. This transition time is critical in order for children to become independent adults. Child-family separation can also create additional costs to governments and strain public services. So ultimately, addressing the needs of families at risk of separation today creates an enormous return on investment and a stronger society for the future.

Understanding why families break down is crucial to our work. It helps us to develop responses for the families we reach directly and informs the work we do with partners and governments to address the root causes and create long-term change.

What we are learning is that the reasons vary from family to family and from country to country, are complex, and are often interlinked. In some regions, poverty and armed conflict play a role; in others, substance abuse and parental incarceration are contributing factors. In one case, a family may be in poverty and even struggling with an illness, but they have extended family and a support network to help them manage. In another, a family may have financial resources, but mental health issues combined with being socially isolated leads to abuse or neglect.

The reasons listed here are certainly not exhaustive and illustrate how more often than not, there are multiple factors that cause a child to be separated from their parents – either temporarily or permanently. For example, today climate change is affecting families' ability to sustain themselves financially, leading to migration. This in turn may lead to children being separated along the way, or to the family experiencing trauma or not being able to support themselves financially when they arrive in their host country.

Reasons for family breakdown



Violence,
abuse
and neglect



Death of a
caregiver



Poverty



Forced
migration



Poor physical
or mental health
of caregiver



Lack of
access to
social services



Child marriage
and teen
pregnancy

Key data

- 80% of children in alternative care have at least one living parent.¹
- 75% of children and young people in care have had an experience of trauma.²
- Nearly 37 million children have been forcibly displaced from their homes.³

¹ Csáky, C., (2009) Save the Children.

² Jaritz, C., Wiesinger, D., & Schmid, M. (2008), Trauma & Gewalt 2(4).

³ <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>

Our response

If possible and in their best interests, the best place for a child to grow up is in their own family, or extended family. We work to prevent family breakdown and to ensure that families have the support they need so that children and young people are better cared for, protected and able to transition confidently into adulthood. We work at the community, national and international level, and adapt our response to the local context.

We work directly with families who are at risk of breaking down and with their communities. We work with local municipalities and national governments to implement measures that prevent children from losing parental care and that strengthen and stabilize families so that children are better cared for and protected, including during emergencies. We develop trainings and resources that are available to the wider public beyond those we reach directly, and we conduct research to further inform our own work as well as policymaking and practice.

In our direct work with families and extended families, we offer a range of services, such as livelihood support, parenting workshops, support in accessing social services, and counselling. The aim is always to foster the family's own resilience. Livelihood support may include entrepreneurship and vocational training to help them become financially stable; seed funding or equipment to start their own business; and direct financial, food or housing support. Parenting workshops are tailored to local needs and include topics such as preventing violence in the family, improving communication with children, and positive discipline. Some parents also take advantage of mental health support – as there may be traumas from their own past that they need support in healing from.

In situations where temporary child-family separation is unavoidable, we work with a view to ultimately reintegrating the child into their family of origin wherever possible and in the child's best interests. This might involve supporting extended family to provide short-term care while working with parents to improve their parenting capacities.

Beyond this, we work with communities to strengthen existing social networks and structures. Our response is always locally led and also aims to tackle gender norms and stigmas surrounding struggling or single-parent families wherever necessary. Our overarching goal is to raise awareness about the need for family support services in every country, and we partner with local and national governments to achieve this – for example, by advocating for the legal recognition of prevention services.

In 2021, the pandemic once again increased pressures on struggling families. In our efforts to adapt, we continued to make many of our services available online, uploading resources and conducting virtual training sessions for parents. For the millions of children who were stuck learning remotely – and the parents who became their teachers – we provided equipment to help them follow or carry out lessons from home. Through our humanitarian action, we supported those affected by natural disasters, food insecurity and displacement, in countries such as Haiti, Ethiopia and Greece.

88,800

families supported to stay together

14%

increase in number of families reached directly

116



countries with family strengthening programmes

192,400

people reached through emergency response



Bolivia

973 tablets, 366 smartphones and 736 free internet connections were delivered to families, and 100% of primary caregivers developed basic digital skills to continue accessing support from social workers and to help children with their schoolwork.



Bangladesh

1,200 people received entrepreneurship training and 900 families received support to increase income in the form of materials such as rickshaws and sewing machines.



Togo

Parliament of Women Leaders: this group achieved improved representation of women in community decision-making as well as progressive change in men's attitudes, resulting in an 80% reduction in family violence from 2018 to 2021.



Well-being of parents

SOSVirtual developed an online course, Self-care to be able to care for others, to support parents' mental well-being during the pandemic. [\[Available here\]](#)



Evidence to inform policymaking

A policy brief entitled Strengthening Family Environments to Realize Children's Rights was developed together with the Joining Forces Alliance. [\[Available here\]](#)

Prevention

Personal Story

© Alejandra Kaiser | Mexico



Accessing social services

Estrada family, Mexico

Carlos and Marcela migrated from Guatemala to Mexico over 20 years ago. Despite all seven of their children being born in Mexico, they have been unable to register them there, which means they do not have access to education, healthcare or government social programmes. Carlos has been working in construction, in restaurants and in the fields, but being undocumented means poor employment conditions with long working hours and low day rates. He sees one of his best options as returning alone to Guatemala for his identity documents, which would give him better job prospects – but this would mean being separated from his wife and children.

"I have lived like this for 40 years," says Carlos. "I was born in a poor family and have always lived in poverty. But my hope are my children, that they receive a proper education and thrive."

For a while, the children attended the only school in the area – a 45-minute walk – but could join only as passive listeners. They did not receive uniforms or school supplies, nor were they

beneficiaries of the government's projects for students, such as the distribution of food baskets. "This made my children feel bad," says Carlos. "After all the effort to get to school – the risks on the road and the time – when the year ended, the children were not recognized to go up to the next grade, so they stopped going." Similarly, the family has not been part of the local government's social projects, like the provision of construction material to enhance their homes. Financial worry and isolation from the community are both external pressures which can feed into increased tension at home.

SOS Children's Villages has been working with families in the Chiapas region of Mexico for more than 16 years. 82% of the population there does not have access to social services and 80% lives in poverty. Our team focuses on strengthening parenting skills and helping families to register with the authorities. Last July, the Estrada children had a doctor's appointment to verify their ages, which means they will finally be able to get birth certificates and enrol in the upcoming school year with their peers.

The ability to access services is an important part of keeping families together, especially for those on the move.

24%

of children entering our family strengthening programmes do not have a legal identity document available

Prevention

Personal Story

© Federico Varasso | Democratic Republic of the Congo

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the number of children without or at risk of losing parental care is distressingly high, we work with families at risk of breaking apart to help them stay together and integrate into the community. This can include livelihood support, vocational training and education on child rights.

1,000

families supported in
DR Congo

*"I feel that
we are
finally seen
as human
beings."*

Strengthening families

Ziraji and Ishara, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Ziraji

"I am Ishara's mother. My name is Ziraji. I am a widow and mother of five. Four of my children are still in school, one already has a diploma. When I lost my husband, life was really difficult. If you become a widow here, you become a beggar."

"But SOS Children's Villages has helped to cover the costs [of education] of two children. And I continue to take over the costs of the other three children. We have a group now with whom we run a dye house. That works very well. Ishara has already learned the dyeing technique. I bring the clothes here and she helps me iron them. This is how we have grown."

Ishara

"In the family we are five children: three boys and two girls. I am the oldest daughter, I am twenty years old. In 2019, the family strengthening programme included us in one of its children's rights committees. We were able to participate in an exchange of experiences in Burundi, Cibitoke. It made me get so far. I didn't know if I would ever be able to study. But thanks to this support, I did. I didn't know if I would count in society. Whether I would find my role. But now I feel I count, I am able to study. We also got some goats that we can sell when they are grown. And with the money Mama can buy clothes. I feel that we are finally seen as human beings. And I am very grateful for that."

Protection

Alternative Care

Highlights 2021

All children have the right to care and protection, even when their own family cannot care for them. Our concern is to make sure this care is of the highest possible quality, and to ensure that all children and young people grow up with supportive relationships, a sense of security and belonging, and the same access to opportunities as their peers.

High quality care means services that are tailored to the needs of each individual person, context and situation. It means keeping siblings together as long as it is in their best interests. Quality care encompasses everything from children having a say in the decisions that affect their lives, to caregivers being trained in how to deal with particular needs and backgrounds, such as children who have experienced trauma. It includes the rights of children and young people in care being championed, and extends to the legal protections and support that are in place for young people after they officially “age out” of care.

Our work involves caring for children directly as well as developing materials and trainings to help others improve their care services. We also conduct research to inform policymakers, and collaborate with governments to implement quality care standards.

In our care programmes, we offer a range of care options. This might be for a short time while we work with parents to strengthen their capacities, or it might be longer term, for example if a child has no living relatives. The goal is always to create an environment where children can experience the value of strong relationships, with a reliable caregiver as well as a home and the social networks provided by a community. We encourage and facilitate contact between children and their family of origin wherever possible, and work towards reunification as long as this is in the child’s best interests. This also applies during humanitarian crisis, when we provide temporary shelter to unaccompanied children and strive to reconnect them with parents or caregivers. Whatever the timeframe and circumstances, we endeavour to build trust with each child and support them on their path to independence.

This year, we placed a lot of emphasis on supporting caregivers to care for children who were stuck inside due to pandemic lockdowns. Again, this involved leaning into digitalization: we provided laptops for children who were learning from home, and continued to roll out our digital care assistant, “Rafiki,” an artificial intelligence-based virtual assistant who helps caregivers find solutions to questions about parenting, mental health, education and more.

68,000

children and young people cared for in a range of care options

44%

have regular contact with their families

85%

are doing well in education



31

emergencies responded to with child protection activities: tackling abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children



Online course

A course on working with young people who have experienced trauma was developed as part of the EU co-funded project “Safe Places, Thriving Children: Embedding Trauma-Informed Practices into Alternative Care Settings.” [\[Available here\]](#)



Kenya/Ethiopia/Uganda/Rwanda

A multi-country project was initiated to end the plight of children abandoned and living on the street. The five-year project, which includes prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration components, will reach 190,000 children.



Conference on care

The Biennial Conference on Alternative Care for Children in Asia (BICON) took place virtually. Practitioners, policymakers, academics and young people with care experience came together to exchange on issues related to care reform in the region.



Safeguarding Action Plan (see more on page 44)

As part of the action plan, children and youth in our programmes participate in training and in shaping our child safeguarding measures. By year’s end, this was being done in 89 member associations, with 106 associations targeted by 2024.



Benin: Training foster parents

Foster care was introduced in 2018 to expand the range of available care options. We are now working with the government to develop materials and train foster parents so that children receive high-quality care.

Alternative Care

Personal Story

© Johfráh Lefebvre | Belgium

The best way to improve the quality of care for children is to ask for their input. Roberto was 10 when he was placed in youth care and separated from his brother. As an adult, he was connected with SOS Children's Villages Belgium through Cachet, a care leaver-run organization working to ensure children in care are better protected. This year, his testimony was presented during a hearing on a law giving siblings in care the right not to be separated. The law was passed in May 2021.

72

member associations work with advocacy partners to improve quality of care

"I sometimes felt more like a number rather than a human being."

Keeping siblings together

Roberto, Belgium

"When I was separated from my brother, I felt powerless and alone. I especially missed the little things: knowing my brother slept in the room next to me, playing together... I often thought: who am I going to get into trouble with now? Who am I going to argue with now? You can argue with your siblings. But at the end of the day, when they will not be there anymore, you have lost a piece of yourself. I can understand that it is legally and practically difficult to keep children together. But I sometimes felt more like a number rather than a human being."

"I want to speak out for the next generation. I hope things can be different for other children in care. So that there would be less damage added to a situation where there is already a lot of damage. Some children never go looking for that connection again, when they leave care. It is a closed chapter for them. Fortunately, I still have a good relationship with my brother and we are still learning so much from each other. We are very grateful that we found each other back."

Protection

Self-reliance

Highlights 2021

The transition to adulthood can be a daunting process for all young people, regardless of their home or family situation. Becoming self-reliant means adapting to the loss of support networks, routines and structures; learning how to cope alone with everyday challenges; making your way into the world of work and supporting yourself financially. This can be particularly challenging for young people in alternative care, for whom there are often no structures in place when they leave care at age 18 or even earlier; and for those in families at risk of breaking down, who lack adequate support at home. In both scenarios, the chances that they have experienced trauma during childhood are high.

We work directly with youth to prepare them for the transition, offering psychosocial support and vocational and social skills training; with partners to set up employability initiatives – for example, YouthCan! (see page 34); and with governments to improve aftercare provisions worldwide. We also run education programmes in early childhood care and development as well as primary and secondary learning, so that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are well-prepared for the future from an early age.

As the experts in their own lives, young people themselves are best placed to decide what their needs are as they enter adulthood. We dedicate a lot of resources to supporting youth-led projects, initiatives, committees and parliaments. Within the organization, our International Youth Coalition ensures that the perspectives of young people are considered in the development of our programmes. We also facilitate networks of care leavers, who come together to support one another and lobby for improvements in care.

This year, many of those who had recently left care found themselves in need of more assistance than usual. Job opportunities were harder to come by and people were separated from family and friends. The pandemic increased anxieties about what would come next and left many feeling overwhelmed. As part of our response, we made housing available for care leavers who needed to come back temporarily, and increased our focus on mental health. We also invested in digital platforms and projects to reach more people than ever.

In terms of employability, we continued to measure the effects of our work by comparing the number of young people in our programmes who are not in employment, education and training (NEET rate) with the same number worldwide. We look at how this number develops among young people at entry to and exit from our family strengthening programmes. A recent analysis showed that at the beginning of support, the NEET rate of programme participants was almost twice as high (40%) as the global benchmark (22%), but at the end it was significantly lower (19% versus 25%). For more information on how we collect this data, see page 40.

64



associations
implement
YouthCan! or other
employability
initiative

108,500

young people in our care
and family strengthening
programmes

26,700

young people &
adults in YouthCan! or
other employment &
entrepreneurship training



22

member associations support care
leaver networks



Global Forum for Children and Youth

YouthLinks, the digital platform of our YouthCan! employability initiative, was featured at this inaugural event organized by UNICEF to mobilize efforts to advance children's rights.



Youth Power

Launched in 2020, this training programme for young changemakers continues to grow. It strengthens youth-led initiatives that are contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals.



Zimbabwe Care Leaver Network

The network successfully lobbied Parliament for the need for further support for young people leaving care. Lawmakers have tasked the network with providing technical guidance that will inform the country's first Aftercare Act.



Peru: After-care support

After consulting with young people, youth programmes extended their support for care leavers who age out of care. There is now a variety of living options available after reaching the age of 18 as well as financial assistance.



Austria: "Rat auf Draht"

This 24-hour helpline continued to see an increase in children and young people reaching out for advice and mental health support. Chats rose by more than 5% and the length of calls rose by 20%.

Self-reliance

Personal Story

© Jakob Fuhr | Kenya

Wairegi was six years old when his father began physically abusing him. The experience led to feelings of isolation and depression which he kept bottled up for years. Through our family strengthening programme, he was connected with a counsellor who has helped him talk about his childhood and work through his trauma.

35

member associations
strengthened
their mental health
measures in 2021

*"The burden I
was carrying
was something
to be carried
by someone
who was older
than the age I
was in."*

Addressing childhood trauma

Wairegi, Kenya

"My dad, at times he was a good guy, but let's say most of the times he could not tell me to do something, like, telling me to do something. It was all the shouting. All the shouting. All the harshness that comes with it. And the beating was terrible. When you compare it to the things I had done, I don't think I deserved that. The burden I was carrying was something to be carried by someone who was older than the age I was in. When someone is harsh to you from the age of 10 to 15, to 16 you'll start feeling it. And you'll feel like you are rejected. I didn't have the sense of belonging in my family. And I felt like my family was kind of different than the others. It was hard to express to my mom what I felt. I'll just give the bits. Here and there, I give a bit here. A bit here. A bit here. But she knew, something was not ok. I don't know how it happened but mom told me, maybe there is something that could change. Maybe I could talk to a person who would understand me. That's when we came to SOS Children's Villages."

"They showed me that, with all that I had gone through, life was not all about harshness. I had a smile. They have understood me. And they have changed my life because they have impacted how I do my things now. You know, when I have that load off my back, I can now be free. And freedom is what I'm going for."

Self-reliance

Employability initiative

© Jakob Fuhr | Vietnam

Bridging the gap between school and work

YouthCan! employability partnership

YouthCan! is our global partnership for youth employability, aimed at tackling the specific problems young people without or at risk of losing parental care face when preparing to enter the labour market. We work with corporate partners to provide mentoring, practice opportunities and individualized training, all of it locally-led.

Employees of our private sector partners share their time, skills and expertise, both online and in person, and are there to support young people as they take their first steps into the world of work. For example, Sneha learned how to cope with disappointment during the job-hunt: "I used to overthink it and often felt ashamed to talk about it. My mentor then said: "Rejection means you still have something to learn." The corporate volunteers also report feeling enriched by the partnership. Roger, who came on board two years ago, says: "I learned many new skills, to be more empathetic and understanding and to always convey optimism."



YouthCan! reach 2021¹

14,500
young people

1,800
volunteers

42
countries

2021: Going digital

Since the beginning of 2020, the disruptions to education caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have forced many schools and organizations to take their activities online.

YouthCan! has done the same, not only managing to keep training and practice activities for young people running, but also scaling up digital efforts via the YouthLinks Community: an online platform providing virtual mentoring and networking opportunities.

What initially grew as a crisis response has become an integral part of the programme. In 2021, 44% of activities were conducted entirely online and 10% had at least some virtual element.

This allowed us to drastically increase our reach. Compared to the previous year, more than double the number of young people received practical support, training, or mentorship through YouthCan!, including those living in rural areas beyond the cities where corporate volunteers are often based.

¹ For more information, see the [YouthCan! Facts and Figures report](#).

Advocacy

Introduction

All children have equal rights to care and protection, including the right to grow up in a supportive family environment that fosters their well-being and full development. Along with partners, we defend and promote these rights on a global, regional, national and community level. Our work is designed to change policy and practice to improve national child and social protection systems.

One of our main objectives is to help decision makers understand that investing in strengthening families can prevent unnecessary separation of children from their parents, other forms of harm and additional alternative care placements. When it is not possible or in a child's best interest to stay in their family, we advocate for a range of high-quality alternative care options. At a minimum, "high-quality" means employing highly trained care practitioners, maintaining appropriate staffing levels, keeping siblings together, and giving sufficient support to young people after they age out of care.

To achieve this, we work to raise awareness about children and young people without parental care or at risk of losing it and to ensure their needs are reflected in high-level conversations. We speak up at national and international political forums and events; contribute to research and reports; generate and share knowledge, and provide technical guidance and recommendations to governments and policymakers to promote child-centred and rights-based approaches.

Children and young people are key voices in our advocacy work. Their meaningful participation brings to light for policymakers the real issues they are facing and that need to be prioritized. When children and young people are involved in advocacy, the result is programmes, practices and policies that are more accurately tailored to their needs and the local context.

This year, we were extra conscious of listening to children and young people about the challenges they were facing and ensuring that pandemic response measures considered them. We commissioned a toolkit for young people's participation in advocacy, which was informed by 300 care-experienced young people. On the policy front, we are extremely pleased that Colombia became the 63rd country to enact full prohibition of corporal punishment of children in all settings, including in the home.



61

countries where we contributed to positive change in policy and practice



Continental Study on Children without Parental Care

SOS Children's Villages technically assisted in the completion of the first draft report, supported by the African Union. The report aims to learn more about the situation of children without parental care on the continent of Africa.



Child and youth participation

The Make our Voices Count Report, collecting the voices of almost 1,200 children and young people with care experience, was shared at the UN Day of General Discussion on Children's Rights and Alternative Care.



3rd African Girls Summit

13 girls and young women from our programmes spoke up at this summit, hosted by the Government of Niger; the topic was on eliminating harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation.



European Child Rights Guarantee

SOS Children's Villages ensured the inclusion of the specific needs of children without parental care and families at risk of separation in this major policy initiative from the European Union.



Toolkit

A toolkit for children and young people's participation in advocacy was developed with over 300 children and youth with care experience in over 20 member associations. [\[Available here\]](#)

Examples of policy change achievements

Colombia

Corporal punishment abolished. SOS Children's Villages provided technical guidance on Law 2089 of 2021: Law against physical, humiliating or degrading punishment of children and adolescents.

Belgium

Keeping siblings together. Along with partners, we successfully campaigned for passage of the "Siblings Law," which enshrines in law the right of children not to be separated from their siblings when they are placed in alternative care, as long as it is in their best interests.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Recognition of prevention services. As part of a state working group, we successfully influenced that family support work is recognized as a social service in a new draft law. Formal approval is expected soon and the development of quality standards is on next year's agenda.

Advocacy

Personal Story

© Lama Qattush | Palestine

18-year-old Maya is a member of the Palestinian Children's Council. Her advocacy journey started at SOS Children's Villages, where she attended information sessions on child protection and safeguarding. She dreams of becoming a lawyer and is a fierce campaigner for child rights, especially improving girls' opportunities in education and employment.

1,900

young people engaged in advocacy in 2021

"When decision makers hear our concerns directly from us, they value it more."

Raising young people's voices

Maya, Palestine

"Every day, girls and women still experience discrimination, disadvantages and gender-based violence. No country has achieved gender equality. Girls in Palestine face many challenges, like deprivation of their right to participation and to express their opinions. I could get my high school degree and study at a university, but others do not have this opportunity."

"Access to education, health services, and the right to participation must be equal for all. We should reach children equally, regardless of their gender, otherwise we will harm them psychologically and affect their future. As a member of the Palestine Children's Council, I participated in the "Safe Schools Declaration" that calls for ending violence, bullying and encourages girls' and children's education. I would like to see all girls in my society enjoying their right to education and having access to the opportunities that will help them develop themselves and achieve what they wish. Also, I think it's good that we, as children, meet and talk to decision makers because I feel that when they hear our concerns directly from us, they value it more."

Advancing the use of data

High-quality data is a prerequisite for effective, evidence-based policymaking. For us, it is crucial to ensuring that the programmes we run and the policies we are advocating to change accurately reflect the needs of our target group, as well as monitoring progress towards global agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

Children who have lost or are at risk of losing parental care are consistently left out of statistics at the global level. Their lives can by nature be difficult to track: many live in countries where the systems in place for children are generally lacking; those living in institutional settings are not included in the household surveys which are the basis of many global monitoring frameworks; and it is rare that collected data is analyzed or disaggregated, meaning that we must often rely on estimations.¹

In 2011, SOS Children's Villages set out to fill the gaps in data with the Programme Database (PDB2). PDB2 is a user-friendly IT system that stores the data of over 1 million people in more than 100 countries and territories. It is the single federation-wide source for statistics on our programme participants, and conceivably holds the world's most comprehensive data set on children in alternative care. In recent years, the system has garnered interest among governments, programme experts and universities, as well as from funding partners and donors, who rely on high-quality data in their decision-making.

It is primarily a case management system, set up for use by social workers in the field. At the moment a child or family enters our programmes, well-being is measured across eight dimensions: care, protection and social inclusion, education and skills, accommodation, food security, physical health, livelihood, and social and emotional well-being. This assessment is stored securely in the database and, where possible, annually updated. This allows us to track progress over time and ensure that we are achieving the results we aim for for individuals and their families. For example, by measuring NEET rate (see page 30) in the PDB2, we can see the effects of our youth employability activities.

Before the introduction of PDB2, data gathering in the field was done on paper and the information was not centrally available. Now, the system allows for data collection and entry on tablets, even in remote rural areas where there is no stable internet connection. A highlight of 2021 was an agreement made with our new corporate partner, Heimstaden, who have committed to supporting our data usage efforts as well as funding the provision of tablets and digital skills trainings.

At present, the data in the PDB2 comes mostly from our alternative care and family strengthening programmes. As we expand it, we plan to begin including those we support through humanitarian action in emergency situations, and people we reach indirectly.



2021

in detail

This section gives further insight into how we work in practice, including an overview of financial results and programme statistics, as well as the partnerships that make our work possible.

In the second year of the pandemic, we were able to return to a growth in the number of people we reached, and start a new chapter with regards to our safeguarding approach.

138

countries and
territories where
we worked





Safeguarding —

Everything we do is guided by our commitment to provide a safe, secure and empowering environment for all. Our concept of safeguarding extends not only to the children and young people in our programmes but to everyone who engages with us – including our staff, community members and partners.

In June 2021, we published the Independent Child Safeguarding Review (ICSR) report, which was a major turning point for our organization. We commissioned the review to learn from past child safeguarding cases and improve our practices. The resulting report underscored the importance of taking a holistic approach to safeguarding, by strengthening the organization's culture and addressing the root causes of past failures.

It takes a single person to commit abuse, but an entire community to prevent it. Through our commitment to holistic safeguarding, we ensure that everyone understands safeguarding, reduce opportunities for harm to occur, report promptly and respond when concerns are raised, take accountability for our failures and support anyone who has been harmed. Holistic safeguarding also means addressing other interconnected elements, such as programme quality, asset safeguarding and creating an overall safe environment for everyone.

In response to the ICSR report, we developed our Safeguarding Action Plan, which is comprised of 24 actions to be implemented over a four-year period (2021–2024). Our first progress report, covering eight prioritized actions, was published in October 2021 and the second one followed in April 2022.

Our immediate focus has been on providing individual support to those affected by historical safeguarding failures. Our ombudsperson system, which was informed by contributions from our youth advisory body, continues to make progress. The Independent Special Commission, which was set up to address historic cases and strengthen governance and accountability, will share its final report at the end of 2022. We are also working hard at transforming norms, values and attitudes that have contributed to past safeguarding failures at all levels of leadership.

For more details, please see the Safeguarding Action Plan Progress Report available on our [international website](#). We will continue to report transparently on progress against the plan, in addition to our yearly Child Safeguarding Report and our Annual Corruption Case Report.

Financial report

Our federation's financial information, detailed on page 48, is based on the global, combined total of reports provided by our member associations and by our umbrella organization SOS Children's Villages International. These reports are audited annually by independent and reputable auditors according to internationally accepted and/or legally required national accounting standards.

Federation income

In 2021, our federation was focused on mitigating the effects of the pandemic for the people in our programmes and on implementing at rapid pace our Safeguarding Action Plan (see page 44). We are grateful to our incredibly loyal supporters for the high levels of trust they placed in us.

Overall revenue increased by 6%, with growth reported in every continent. Donor support rose by 7% and government subsidies by 6%. This was possible thanks to a diversified supporter base and strong member performance. Growth areas were across the board, and included a return to pre-pandemic levels of new donor acquisitions; continued digital expansion and performance; a significant increase in legacy incomes in Europe; and strong growth in major donor, corporate and institutional revenue. This, combined with strong partnerships and support from governments around the world, allowed us to increase the number of children, young people and families we were able to reach.

Federation expenditures

After an overall decline in expenditures during the first year of COVID-19, 2021 saw a total spending increase of 4% – largely due to targeted spending on COVID-19 response and community outreach activities. The biggest increase was in Africa, where total expenditures rose by 7%, followed by an increase of 4% in both Europe and Asia & Oceania.

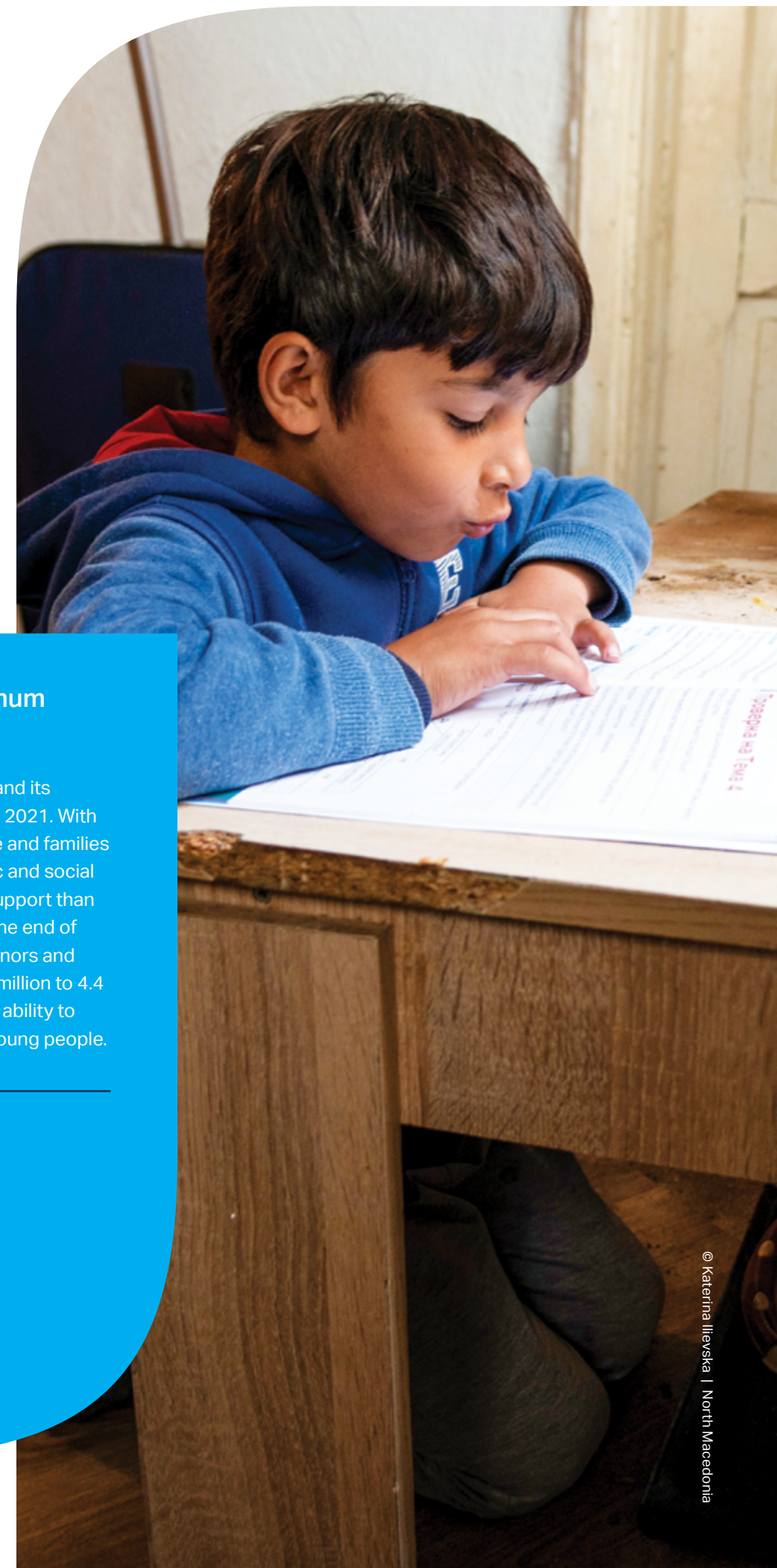
Spending on family strengthening programmes rose by 8%, on emergency relief by 18%, and community outreach by 15%. Correspondingly, expenditures for national and international programme support also increased – by 9%. Only construction costs continued to decline in 2021, with delays in projects and investments resulting in 6% less spending.

Together for maximum impact

The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects continued well into 2021. With children still stuck at home and families under increased economic and social stress, we needed more support than ever from our donors. By the end of the year, our number of donors and supporters grew from 4.2 million to 4.4 million, contributing to our ability to reach more children and young people.

8%

increase in number
of people reached
worldwide in 2021



Financial information

Revenue				
All amounts in EUR 1,000 ¹				
	2019	2020	2021 preliminary ²	% change 2020-2021
Sporadic donors	337,976	347,278	373,676	8%
Sponsorship/committed giving	314,302	312,288	329,377	5%
Major donors	28,821	28,373	34,232	21%
Foundations & lotteries	42,106	38,543	38,572	0%
Corporate donors	55,988	49,748	56,992	15%
Governmental subsidies for domestic programmes	452,332	463,544	491,867	6%
Institutional funding	38,996	33,108	33,217 ³	0%
Emergency appeals	2,287	6,542	7,399	13%
Other income ⁴	117,967	111,467	104,299	-6%
TOTAL REVENUE	1,390,774	1,390,890	1,469,631	6%

Expenditures				
	2019	2020	2021 preliminary ²	% change 2020-2021
Alternative care	579,640	573,361	591,776	3%
Family strengthening	116,354	121,222	130,906	8%
Education	143,160	139,547	140,135	0%
Other activities ⁵	35,646	32,588	37,622	15%
Health services	13,467	14,191	14,943	5%
Emergency response	11,220	10,624	12,534	18%
Construction & investments	44,263	40,153	37,785	-6%
Programme support in implementing associations	114,744	93,945	102,713	9%
International coordination & programme support	48,775	44,287	48,200	9%
Information & fundraising work and administration in promoting & supporting associations ⁶	205,576	207,369	217,611	5%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,312,845	1,277,287	1,334,225 ⁷	4%

1 Due to rounding, total numbers may not add up exactly.
2 These figures, captured on 12 May 2022, are considered preliminary, as final, audited figures from our member associations are available only as of 30 September 2022.
3 This figure represents the grant amount effectively transferred and earmarked for operations; in 2021, members of SOS Children's Villages International managed a total IPD project volume of €108 million.
4 Refers to operational income from schools, kindergartens, health and other facilities, events or merchandising, as well as interest and other financial income.
5 Includes community outreach and education on children's rights, integration support, holiday camps and play buses.
6 Promoting & supporting associations are associations that raise funds for international programmes; some of them also operate domestic programmes.
7 The financial information presented here represents reported revenue and expenditures from all associations. The surplus in 2020 and 2021 is higher than in previous years, mainly due to cautious spending in many member associations during the pandemic.

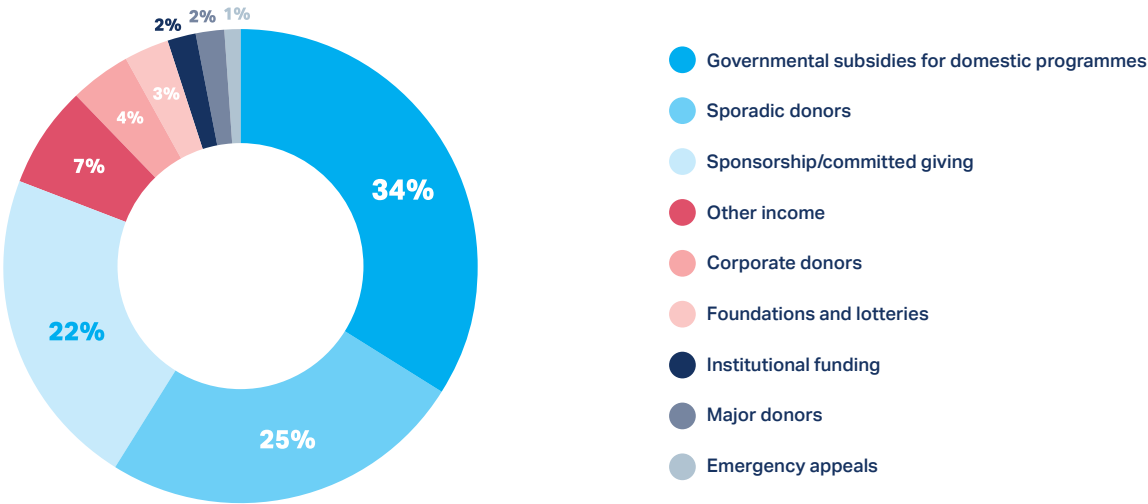
Accountability

As a member of Accountable Now and of the International Civil Society Centre, we take our obligations around management transparency and accountability very seriously. The foundation of our approach is our policy document Good Management and Accountability Quality Standards. Our activities and progress in this regard are reflected in our regular reports to Accountable Now, which are publicly available.

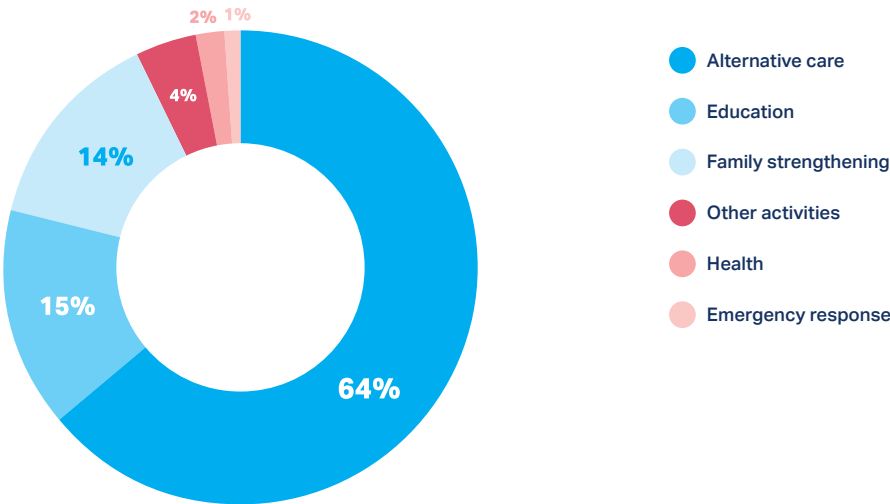


SOS Children's Villages follows a zero tolerance approach to fraud and corruption. Our Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Guideline aims to support all associations, board members and employees in preventing and managing potential issues of corruption. The detailed financial audit report of SOS Children's Villages International is available on our international website, along with links to the websites of all our member associations.

Total revenue by type¹



Programme expenditures by type¹



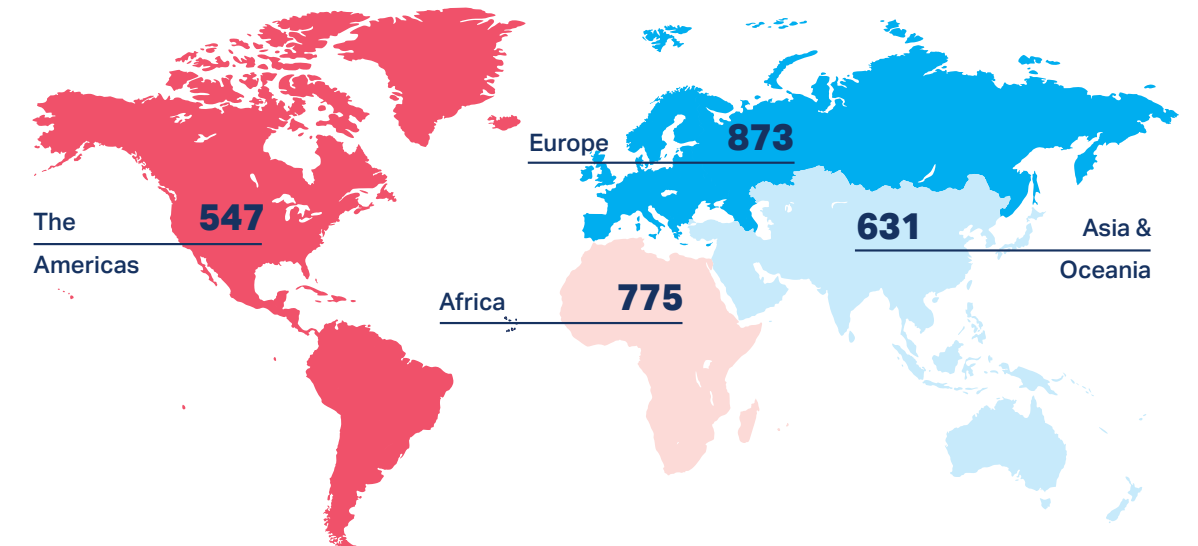
Programme statistics

SOS Children's Villages is a global federation of locally rooted member associations. Our programmatic services, tailored to the unique needs of a community, are designed to support children and young people without parental care or at risk of losing it. These statistics are based on reporting by our associations and represent our services for the calendar year 2021.

People we reached					
	AFRICA	THE AMERICAS	ASIA & OCEANIA	EUROPE	TOTAL
ALTERNATIVE CARE					
Children & young people					
Family-like care	13,700*	5,100	15,700	3,800	38,300
Youth care	8,400	2,500	8,200	2,900	22,000
Foster family care	800	900	0	3,300	5,000
Small group homes	300	100	100	1,100	1,600
Other alternative care ¹	300	600	100	100	1,100
TOTAL	23,500	9,200	24,100	11,200	68,000
PREVENTION					
Children, young people & adults					
Family strengthening	214,100	33,400	124,400 ²	83,500	455,400
EDUCATION					
Children, young people & adults					
Early childhood care & development	8,900	10,600	5,200	3,500	28,200
Primary & secondary education	54,600	6,400	44,300	57,300	162,600
Employment & entrepreneurship training	3,800	1,700	2,500	4,200	12,200
TOTAL	67,300	18,700	52,000	65,000	203,000
OTHER ACTIVITIES³					
Children, young people & adults	51,800	3,300	–	2,300	57,400
HEALTH					
Children, young people & adults					
Health promotion & prevention	43,700	0	0	1,100	44,800
Mother & Child Hospital, Somalia	256,000	–	–	–	256,000
TOTAL	299,700	0	0	1,100	300,800
EMERGENCY RESPONSE					
Children, young people & adults	138,300	12,700	3,800	37,600	192,400
GRAND TOTAL	794,700	77,300	204,300	200,700	1,277,000

¹ Includes care in transitional settings for unaccompanied minor refugees awaiting legal decision and support to other service providers to improve the quality of their care.
² Includes 1,000 people reached through SOS CV (HGFD) funded family strengthening project in Iraq, run by partner (Better World Organization).
³ Includes community outreach and education on children's rights, integration support, holiday camps and play buses.

Programmes by continent



Programmes we operate					
	AFRICA	THE AMERICAS	ASIA & OCEANIA	EUROPE	TOTAL
ALTERNATIVE CARE					
Family-like care	151	124	165	99	539
Small group homes	13	12	8	64	97
Foster family care	19	20	1	43	83
Youth care	118	103	206	276	703
Other alternative care	4	38	4	11	57
TOTAL	305	297	384	493	1,479
PREVENTION					
Family strengthening	202	147	136	234	719
EDUCATION					
Early childhood care & development	74	45	10	41	170
Primary & secondary education	85	9	58	27	179
Employment & entrepreneurship	35	17	28	37	117
TOTAL	194	71	96	105	466
OTHER ACTIVITIES					
	11	25	4	29	69
HEALTH					
Health promotion & prevention	14	1	1	3	19
Medical care	33	0	8	2	43
TOTAL	47	1	9	5	62
EMERGENCY RESPONSE					
	16	6	2	7	31
GRAND TOTAL	775	547	631	873	2,826



Thank you all

We are grateful to have so many supporters and partners around the world who are committed to genuine social change for children and young people. We say thank you to those listed on the next page as well as to the many thousands of others who make our work possible.



4.4 million donors and supporters worldwide

In a year once again defined by COVID-19, people relied on one another to get through. This applied also to our work, much of which would not have been possible without our partnerships with governments, corporations and institutions worldwide. Through initiatives and networks, we continued to collaborate across sectors to find innovative solutions to broaden our impact, and saw a 5% increase in donors and supporters.

These partnerships take shape in a variety of forms and ways. Much of our financial support comes from individuals who make donations large and small, and who also donate their time. As well as this, we partner with universities to conduct research and with other child-focused organizations on advocacy efforts, such as effecting change in child protection systems or improving quality alternative care. Whether we are co-creating a new project with a corporate partner, cooperating with other organizations to inform policy briefs, or working with municipalities to improve the situation for children at the local level, we value the expertise, energy and new perspectives our partners bring.

Most importantly, we partner with the children, young people and families we work with – not only on the programmatic level, but also through advocacy and by supporting their ideas for change. This year, we continued to expand our role in facilitating youth-led initiatives and in ensuring that young voices are heard by policymakers.

Together, we will build a world where every child can become their strongest self.

Heimstaden

NEW! International corporate partnership

Heimstaden is a leading residential real estate company whose mission is to simplify and enrich customers' lives by offering Friendly Homes. Through the "A Home for a Home" partnership, they donate 100 euros annually for every home they own. "Nothing is more important than giving children a safe and happy childhood," says Patrik Hall, Heimstaden CEO. The partnership funds existing SOS Children's Villages programmes as well as new co-created projects, and aims to support as many young people as possible through long-term commitment and the sharing of common goals, knowledge and expertise. For example, in the Czech Republic, Heimstaden provides inexperienced parents with housing for the first six months of their child's life, during which time the families also receive support from our social workers. In 2021, activities from the partnership reached more than 35,000 children in 20 countries.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL & GOVERNMENTAL PARTNERS

European Commission

Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations
Directorate-General for International Partnerships
Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers
Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs

European Investment Bank Institute
Government of Austria

Austrian Development Agency (ADA)
Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs
Federal Ministry for Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection
State Government of Tyrol
State Government of Vorarlberg
City of Brussels
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (DGD)
Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI)

Government of Canada

Canada Feminist Fund

Government of Denmark

Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA)

Government of Finland

Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations
Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Ministry for Social Affairs & Health

Government of France

Embassy of France
French Development Agency (AFD)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Government of Germany

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
German Embassy

Government of Honduras

Secretary of Development and Social Security

Government of Iceland

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Government of Italy

Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
Ministry of the Interior
Ministry of Welfare
Region of Calabria

Government of Luxembourg

Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs

Government of Monaco

Department of International Cooperation (DIC)

Government of Morocco

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Government of Norway

Ministry of Health and Care Services
Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)
Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (BUFDIR)
Norwegian Directorate for Integration and Diversity (IMDI)

Government of Spain

Province of Canary Islands
Province of Madrid

Government of Sweden

Botkyrka Municipality
Gothenburg Municipality
Stockholm Municipality
Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society

Government of Switzerland

State Secretariat for Migration

United Nations

Funds and Programmes
International Labour Organization (ILO)

International Organisation for Migration (IOM)
UN Development Programme (UNDP)
UN Global Compact
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
UNWomen
World Food Programme (WFP)

FOUNDATION PARTNERS

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SWISS Children's Foundation
The Erling-Persson Family Foundation
The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust
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Western Union Foundation
Xellia Pharmaceuticals

OTHER PARTNERSHIPS

Accountable Now
Better Care Network
Central European Initiative
Children's Rights Action Group
Child Rights Connect
Civil Society in Development (CISU)
Comic Relief
CONCORD
Decent Jobs for Youth Initiative
EU Alliance for Investing in Children
Eurochild

European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)
Forum CIV
Fundamental Rights Platform
Generation Unlimited
Global Coalition to End Child Poverty
Global Responsibility: Platform for Development and Humanitarian Aid
International Civil Society Centre
International NGO Cooperation for Children (EDUCO)
International Organization of Francophonie (OIF)
IsraAID
Joining Forces
Kinderrechten in Ontwikkelingorganisaties NL (KROS)
NetHope
Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees
PATROS (including its Leaving No One Behind Platform)
Social Platform
The Civil Society Forum to End Violence Against Children (CSO Forum)
The Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children
The NGO Committee on UNICEF
The NGO Major Group
Valdese Church
Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies (VOICE)



Learn more about our national corporate partnerships.

SOS Children's Villages worked for children and young people in 138 countries and territories in 2021.

Countries and territories in which we operated an emergency response programme in 2021 are shown in **bold**.

Join us!



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Zanzibar
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Syria
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Thailand
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