

# SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT: COUNTRY SNAPSHOT



SOS CHILDREN'S  
VILLAGES  
INTERNATIONAL

## NEPAL



### Location: Surkhet

#### BACKGROUND

600km to the west of the capital Kathmandu  
Operating since 1987

#### Core services

368 children have been cared for in family-like alternative care since start of operation  
2784 children have been supported through family strengthening services since start of operation

#### Supporting services

1 day care centre (children below the age of 5)  
1 skills development centre  
1 school  
2 youth care programmes (76 children)  
1 health centre and 2 day care centres in the neighbouring district  
76 communities are supported

## Methodology

In October 2015, a social impact assessment was carried out at SOS Children's Village Surkhet in Nepal. It involved interviewing 64 former participants of the programme, as well as carrying out stakeholder interviews and focus group discussions with programme staff, community-based organizations and local authorities. This assessment was led by a Nepal-based external consultant, i.e. the Institute for Legal Research and Consultancy, together with three local researchers.

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

### 1 Individual level

Eight key dimensions of wellbeing 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)

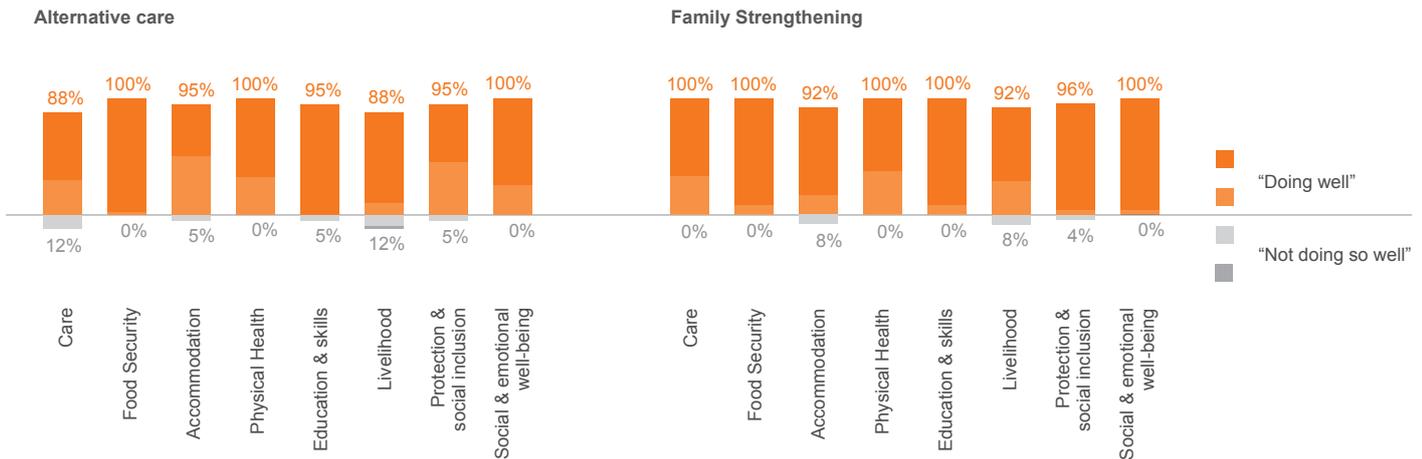
This quantified the social impact of the programme in financial terms. It was calculated by comparing the cost of inputs to the realized financial benefits of the programme for individuals, the community as well as society.<sup>1</sup>

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

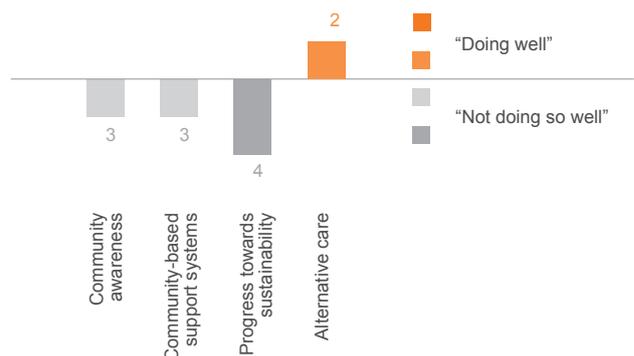


The findings show that former programme participants are generally doing well in most of the eight dimensions of well-being. In particular, 98% of former participants of family-like alternative care are performing well in at least 6-of-the-8 dimensions. They are doing especially “well” in terms of food security, physical health, and social and emotional wellbeing. Findings highlighted areas for improvement, which include a need to enhance young people’s social inclusion, inter-personal and professional skills to be better equipped for the labour market and independence.

In the case of family strengthening, all former participants are doing well in 6-of-the-8 dimensions. It is interesting to note the overtly positive results across all dimensions vis-à-vis the narrow scope of services of the programme which were limited to a few dimensions. The impact on the programme participants can therefore only be accounted for in those dimensions in which services were provided. The positive result across all dimensions, even those in which no services were received, raises questions on whether the former participants represented the most vulnerable in the target group in the first place.

## 2 Community level

The SOS Children’s Village programme in Surkhet is considered to be a pioneer organization working in the children’s sector in Surkhet, and many individuals and organizations commented that they have become more aware of the situation of vulnerable children and families and are starting to engage in supporting activities, though there is still room for improvement in this regard.

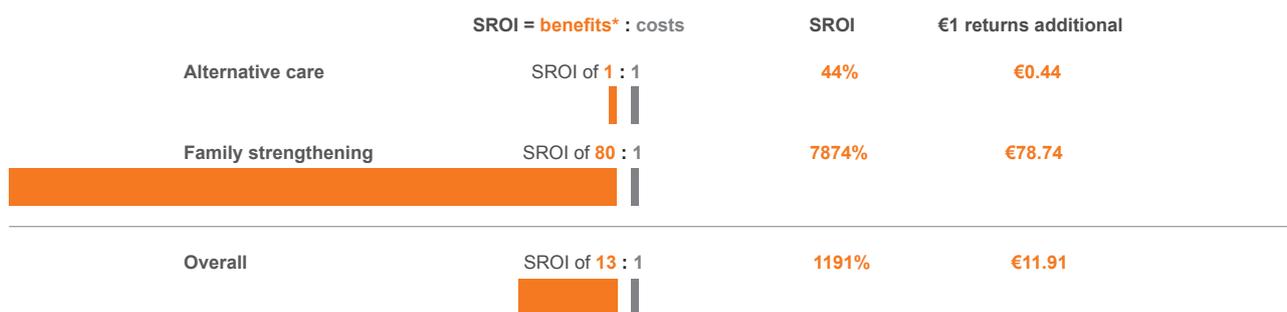


Coordinated efforts among partners and community-based organisations should still improve in order to enhance the programme's sustainability.

A community-based approach through key-implementation partners is currently not in place and is something for the programme staff to explore in the future, in order to make the programme more sustainable and rooted in the community.

The number of children being placed into alternative care has stabilized, however, there are still five large residential child care facilities in the region and thus there is a need to further advocate for more family-like alternative care and more diversified services for vulnerable children according to their needs, rights and best interests. 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)



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

In **alternative care**, there is a benefit-cost ratio of 1.44:1 which means that an investment of €1 yields benefits worth €1.44. The programme has an SROI of 44% which means that an investment of €1 returns an additional €0.44 on top of the initial cost. In **family strengthening**, there is a benefit-cost ratio of 79.74:1 which means that an investment of €1 yields benefits worth €79.74. The programme has an SROI of 7874% which means that an investment of €1 returns an additional €78.74 on top of the initial cost.

The **overall** benefit-cost ratio is 12.91:1, which means that an investment of €1 yields benefits to society of €12.91. The programme has an overall SROI of 1191%, which means that an investment of €1 returns an additional €11.91 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 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 6 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:

- Intensifying efforts to establish and maintain the relationship of children with their families or origin from the beginning, if in the best interest of the child
- Strengthening the family environment within family-like alternative care, including the improvement of opportunities for family members to interact with the wider community, to help children to effectively come to terms with the realities of life in their community and build social networks which can support their transition to independence
- Empowering young people by providing sufficient career guidance and social skills development opportunities, and provide appropriate alternative care options to young people according to their needs and best interest
- Strengthening caregivers and psycho-social staff to better attend to the needs of children
- Designing family strengthening interventions more strategically, to ensure that those children who are most at risk of losing parental care participate in the programme
- Focusing family strengthening on the prevention of family separation and the promotion of quality care by taking a more holistic approach to child and family development
- Strengthening economic empowerment of families and young people with partners
- Strengthening the community-based approach, partnerships and coordinated action for child safeguarding, child rights and more sustainability

SOS Children's Village Surkhet and SOS Children's Villages Nepal 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.



Surkhet,  
Nepal

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