WORD FROM THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR

2019 is a great year for SOS Children’s Villages globally. It is the year SOS Children’s Villages International (SOS CVI) reflects on its 70 years of impact as it marks 70 years of its global presence. Here at SOS Children’s Villages Kenya, 2019 marks 46 years since we established our operations in Kenya with the first ever children’s village in Nairobi’s Buruburu area.

SOS Children’s Villages Kenya (SOS CV Kenya) was in the quarter greatly honored to be the second country within the Eastern & Southern Africa (ESAF) region to host the in-coming SOS Children’s Villages International Director Region for the ESAF region, Madam Senait Gebregziabher Bayessa. Madam Senait used this opportunity to share her vision and priorities for the region with the Kenyan team.

SOS CV Kenya also hosted representatives of over 70 host governments and member associations from the 135 countries in which SOS CVI has active country operations at the inaugural workshop on strengthening public private partnerships for the social sector. The workshop aimed to create better understanding of opportunities that exist for the social sector through public private partnership arrangements with governments and non-state actors to expand social services and products. Lessons learnt from the workshop will help the association to strengthen its partnership with the Kenyan government as well as help drive increased contribution and support from government towards childcare programmes.

SOS CV Kenya believes in partnerships to achieve wholesome development of children in Kenya, and the association is a central member of a coalition of leading international child-focused agencies operating in Kenya, dubbed the Joining forces for children coalition (ChildRightsNow!). The coalition, made up of SOS Children’s Villages, World Vision, Save the Children, Plan, Child Fund and Terres Des Hommes scaled up its child rights advocacy right to the Cabinet and Principal Secretaries in the Ministry of Labour & Social Protection both of whom were very supportive of the aims of the coalition.
SOS CV Kenya takes child safeguarding very seriously. In this regard, it has incorporated child safeguarding in all its programmes and operations to keep children from harm. Reconstituting, orientating and training national and local child safeguarding committees has strengthened national and locational child safeguarding structures and systems. The MA has also ensured that every employee and co-worker at SOS CV Kenya has undergone an online child-safeguarding course and received certification on the same.

Lastly, the African proverb that says “it takes a village to raise a child” has been widely used to remind us that the responsibility of raising a child does not lie with the parents alone, but also with the extended family and by extension the whole community. It is the reason we at SOS CV Kenya strongly believe in strong partnerships in providing a loving home to all children more so those children who have lost parental care or are at great risk of losing the same. And for that, we most sincerely thank our partners who continue to enable us do what we do; these are Safaricom Limited, Commercial Bank of Africa, Radisson Hotel Group, Deloitte East Africa, Elizabeth Glazer Pediatric Foundation, University of Maryland, Tsavo Power, SOS CV Kenya Trustees, Department of Children Services, Davis & Shirtliff, DHL, Start Times Digital Media, Kaplan & Stratton Advocates, and the German Ministry of Commerce and Trade in Kenya.

Walter S. Odhiambo | National Director
SOS Children’s Villages Kenya
SOS Children’s Villages Kenya medical Centres in Nairobi and Eldoret are members of the Stop Cervical Cancer Initiative and they participated in the National Cervical Cancer Awareness week by offering free Cervical Cancer Screening from 21st to 25th January 2019.

The SOS CV medical programme also participated in a walk on the 27th to crown the week. This is in line with the Cervical Cancer Month which is January of every year. This was the first time for Kenya to hold such an event.

**CERVICAL CANCER FACTS**

Cervical cancer is caused by infection with Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). Cervical cancer screening is the testing for pre-cancer and cancer of women at risk, most of who will be without symptoms. Screening is recommended for every woman at least once in a life time. Early detection and treatment of precancerous lesions can prevent the majority of cervical cancers. Survival rates for cervical cancer are improved by timely treatment and patient follow up. In Kenya Cervical cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths among women, yet it is one of the most preventable types of cancer because it develops over time. More than 5,200 women in Kenya are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year, with more than 3,500 dying annually, leaving their children without adequate parental care.

The National Cervical Cancer Awareness Week (NCCAW) will be held annually in Kenya with the aim of increasing public awareness on primary and secondary prevention of cervical cancer and catalyze actions for all stakeholders to create an enabling environment for cervical cancer prevention in Kenya.

The NCCAW seeks to establish effective partnerships for a coordinated initiative with various activities for cervical cancer control to reduce incidence, morbidity and mortality. Other members of the Stop Cervical Cancer Initiative member organizations include: National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP); Ministry of Health; National Cancer Institute – Kenya (NCI-Kenya); Ministry of Health, National Vaccines & Immunization Program (MVIP); Ministry of Health, Women 4 Cancer Early Detection and Treatment (Women 4 Cancer); the Aga Khan Hospital; Pathologists Lancet Kenya (Lancet Kenya); Oasis of Life; Kenya Network of Cancer Organizations (KENCO); National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK); Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI); Kenya Cancer Association (KENCANSA); Health Promotion Unit; County First Ladies’ Association (CFLA); Cancer Awareness Centre of Kenya (CACK); Africa Cancer Foundation (ACF); Amref Health Africa and the American Cancer Society.
Ms. Senait Gebregziabher Bayessa joined SOS Children’s Villages on 14 January 2019 as the International Director Region (IDR) ESAF. Senait – a native of Ethiopia – brings 26 years of experience in the humanitarian and development sector to the organisation. She has held leadership and senior management roles with large and complex programmes in Africa and Asia, most recently as the Regional Director (Asia) for PLAN International. Senait’s breadth of experience also extends to the spheres of policy, advocacy and rights-based programming, and she has field experience in emergency preparedness and humanitarian response. In addition, she played a significant role in planning and coordinating the Joining Forces activities with the leading child focused agencies as a PLAN International team member.

Ms. Shubha Murthi in her role as interim IDR ESAF accompanied Senait in the onboarding process and final handover of the IDR ESAF responsibility will happen after the introduction period ends on 31 March. SOS CV Kenya wishes to thank Deputy COO Shubha for successfully taking this dual responsibility for the Asia and ESAF regions during the transition period.

Safaricom PLC entered into a partnership with SOS Children’s Villages Kenya that will see them sponsor a family house in SOS Children’s Village Kisumu.

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Safaricom Product Manager Digital Enterprise Solutions, Mr. Collins Ogutu emphasized the need for partnerships to impact the lives of the children and youth.

He further urged SOS Children’s Villages Kenya to take advantage of technology opportunities and make use of social platforms adding that Safaricom would be willing to offer employment to SOS Youth and it will explore other partnership opportunities in support of SOS Children’s Villages Kenya’s work.

He applauded the role that SOS Children’s Villages Kenya is playing in shaping the future of the children under their care. Later he presented a one year sponsorship cheque to Mr. Walter Odhiambo the National director SOS Children’s Villages Kenya.

The National Director thanked Safaricom for the partnership initiative and encouraged them to visit their newly adopted family house to interact with the children as well as offer mentorship to the youth.
DANISH PRODUCER VISIT TO 
SOS CV NAIROBI, BURUBURU

SOS Children’s Villages Kenya Buruburu was pleased to host celebrity Danish producer, composer and songwriter Remee and his wife Danish fashion model Mathilde Gøhler when they visited in the month of February. It is their second visit to Kenya and to the Children’s Village in Buruburu.

They officially opened a library whose renovation they supported, donated laptops and a drum set for the music school.

During their stay they visited other programmes run by SOS Children’s Villages for possible avenues of support. SOS CV Kenya thanks Remee for his kind gesture and continued support.
INGREDION SUPPORT

Ingredion is a leading global ingredients solutions company with operations in Kenya that specializes in making sweeteners, starches, nutrition ingredients and biomaterials. These raw materials are used by customers in everyday products from foods and beverages to paper and pharmaceuticals. The company made a donation towards supporting the children at SOS Children’s Villages Kenya during the quarter.

Further to the donation, Ingredion discussed possible partnership avenues with SOS Children’s Villages Kenya’s Technical Training Institute in Nairobi, which offers courses in Food and Beverage to enrich the courses in a bid to make them more marketable. SOS CV Kenya wishes to thank Ingredion for spreading the cheer to and for the kind donation towards supporting the children under its care.
This year SOS Children’s Villages across the globe marked the International Women’s day by sharing quotes from inspiring women from across SOS Children’s Villages. Gitta Trauernicht—Vice President of SOS Children’s Villages International’s key message on the day was “We must keep striving to ensure all women in the organisation are empowered to be the leaders we need.

We have a duty to empower the girls in SOS children’s Villages programmes to show them they can be anything they want.

We empower caregivers through ensuring they have a positive working experience and access to further development opportunities.”

Locally SOS Children’s Villages Kenya in partnership with its corporate partner Startimes media, marked the day by having young women from SOS attend the StarTimes Women Forum, a mentorship programme for women in partnership with Akili Dada, a leadership incubator nurturing the next generation of African women leaders. The daylong event exposed the young women to insights on mentorship and its benefits.
SOS Children’s Villages Kenya attended the pre session of the 33rd Ordinary Session of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the child in Addis Ababa. Previously SOS Children’s Villages Kenya participated in the 14th Civil Society Organizations Forum on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the child on 15th-18th March. The CSO Forum’s aim was to contribute to the proper implementation and monitoring of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the child (ACERWC) and to foster collaboration among CSOs, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and other stakeholders in the promotion and protection of children’s rights in Africa.

Following a study that was conducted by various child focused organisations including SOS Children’s Villages International in conjunction with the African Union highlighting on the impact of corruption on children in Africa with focus areas such as education, health, social services, child participation among others, a report: Stolen Futures-The impact of corruption on children in Africa, was launched at the conference.
Yet again learners at SOS HGPS Mombasa were given an opportunity to exercise their democratic right by electing their leaders in an open and transparent electoral process. The children were very happy and excited as they filled the school corridors chanting their preferred candidates’ names as the campaign picked a crescendo pace throughout the month of January.

The children were taken through various election processes and nominees for the various positions were given time to campaign and convince their electorate why they were fit for the respective posts. More than 300 upper primary and 60 lower primary pupils from grade three elected their cabinet, supervised by teachers. Among the posts that attracted stiff competition included: the President, deputy president, speaker,
cabinet secretaries and the class senators. At the class level, leaders confidently campaigned for chances to be part of the students’ council, which has become a huge attraction in the recent years. This is the fourth time that the activity has been held, and it is a replica of what happens in Kenya’s election process nationally.

Watching the campaigns and election process take place, one would be amazed at how eager the learners have become to take part in school governance. Even those in lower primary were not left out since they were involved in electing their class prefects and the president; in fact the grade three pupils who were seen as a swing vote catapulted the presidential winner.

This is what the school Principal said after the exercise “We have adopted a free approach allowing students to exercise their democratic rights at a young age and this has contributed to the establishment of a child-friendly environment and as a team we always empower our learners to take part in the decision making process for a more cohesive and conducive environment.” The Patron of the school prefects’ body, Mr. Mbaluka and his team conducted a survey, which indicated that student participation in the elections tends to improve learning and instill positive values in the child. The SOS Mombasa teachers have also noticed a positive change in the school ever since they adopted the student council four years ago as attested to by Mr. Mbaluka.