

Annual
Report
2024



SOS Children's Villages *in South Africa*



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES



Contents

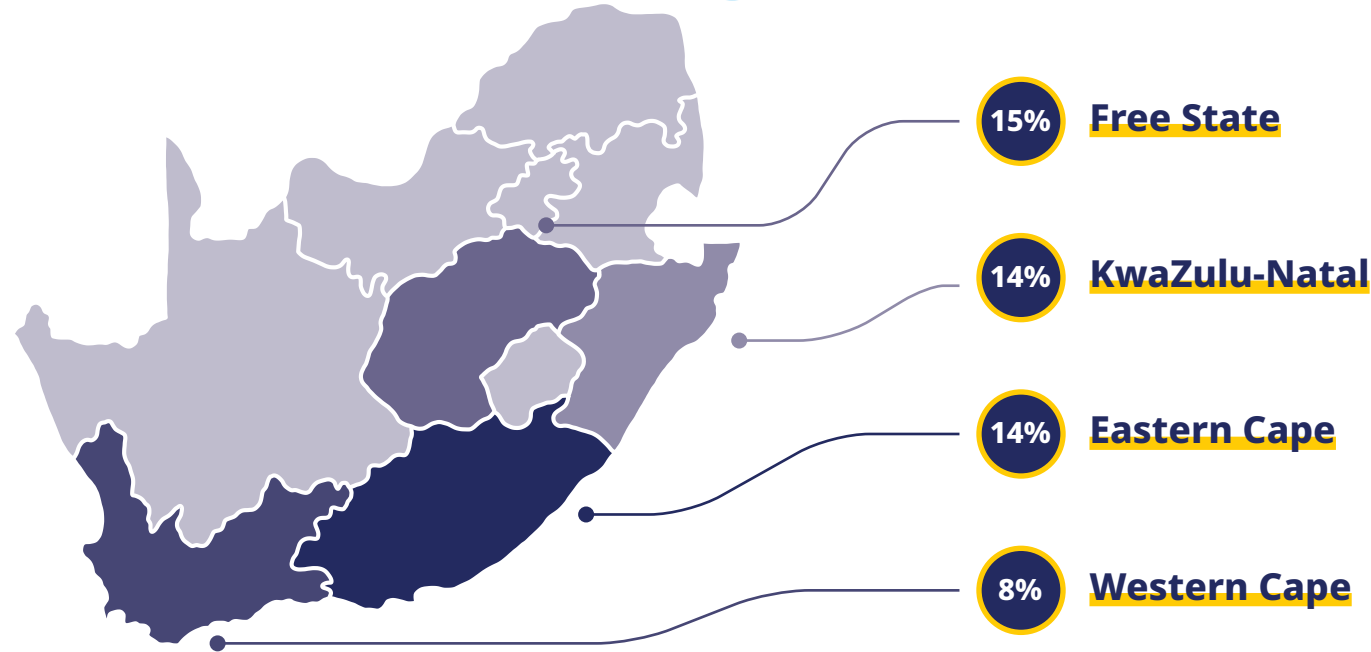
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National Director Review 2024

One cannot reflect on SOS Children's Villages in South Africa's (SOS) performance without considering the broader child-care ecosystem in the country. South Africa is home to 21 million children (ages 0-18), many of whom face complex, intersecting vulnerabilities.

According to UNICEF's 2024 Situational Report for Children and Adolescents in South Africa, the country continues to carry a significant burden of orphanhood, with the highest rate being in the Free State (15%), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (14%), and Eastern Cape (14%), and the lowest in the Western Cape (8%).

● Orphaned children per province



With so many children and young people in need of care, protection, and developmental support, our interventions extend far beyond the walls of our children's villages. SOS remains deeply committed to addressing the systemic factors that create and compound vulnerability. Central to this is the recognition that a lack of parental care often intensifies the hardships encountered by these young people in rural areas.

Our **Strategy 2030** emphasises preventing family separation wherever possible by strengthening parents and caregivers' capacity to provide stable, nurturing care. Community-based programmes are key to building resilience, creating enabling environments and ensuring that families remain intact.

Food insecurity remains one of the most pressing child-rights issues. UNICEF further highlights that as many as **21% of young children** in South Africa receive adequate nutrition. Malnutrition has lifelong consequences, impacting child mortality, stunting, cognitive development and future employability. These realities shape much of our community work and technical support to families and caregivers.

The **Department of Social Development (DSD)** announced significant budget cuts for the 2024/25 financial year, leading to the closure of numerous non-profit organisations (NPOs). Despite this challenging environment, all SOS Children's Villages in South Africa passed stringent assessments and were approved for continued funding. At the same time, we underwent



All Villages >80% Child Safeguarding Compliance

a comprehensive **Child Safeguarding Audit for Level 1 Certification**, funded by AkzoNobel through the SOS Children's Villages International Office. This global audit benchmarked our operations against international standards, and we are proud to report an **81% compliance score**, with all our villages scoring above 80%.

"Our operations and systems were benchmarked against global standards."

Our next priority is extending safeguarding mechanisms into communities by supporting the establishment of **Child Protection Committees**, linked to DSD for monitoring, reporting and incident management. This forms part of a broader shift toward strengthening protection systems where children find themselves: homes, early childhood development (ECD) centres, drop-in centres, schools, etc.

Throughout the year, **our partnerships with the private sector added significant value to programme delivery.** University volunteers provided academic support, companies donated solar panels and furniture, and partners funded developmental activities. The Port Elizabeth (Gqeberha) village also received increased admissions following the closure of a local Child and Youth Care Centre.



In 2024, we expanded partnerships to **equip children and young people with skills, nurture talent, improve educational performance, and prepare youth for independent adulthood**. More than 16,000 young people participated in skills development, mentorship and entrepreneurship programmes. Two hundred and thirty five (235) youth were enrolled in TVET Colleges and over 3,000 young people accessed the National Career Advice Portal (NCAP), which was driven by the Department of Higher Education and Training.

Despite these gains, the year was marked by the difficult closure of the SOS Children's Village Nelspruit at kwaMagugu due to severe structural damage caused by shifting rocks underneath the foundations. Working closely with DSD from March to December 2024, we ensured all children were safely placed in new homes – some were reunified with their biological families,

others were placed in foster care or Child and Youth Care Centres. Psychosocial support was provided to both children and staff throughout the transition.

Toward the end of the year, the organisation undertook an intensive internal review of operations, impact goals and programme delivery. These reflections deepened our understanding of how interrelated social issues, such as poverty, violence, unemployment and inadequate access to essential services, impact the lives of children and young people.

Research further reminds us that child poverty restricts access to essential resources: nutrition, healthcare, education, skills development, social services, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH). Without these building blocks, children cannot reach their full potential.



A primary organisational focus for early 2025 was the review and refinement of the Community Empowerment Programme (CFE). **The redesigned model will include dedicated streams for:**



FAMILY EMPOWERMENT

Parenting, mental health, gender-based violence (GBV) prevention, literacy and early learning, family cohesion, conflict management, socio-economic interventions.



YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Access to services, training, support for in-school and out-of-school youth.



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Child safeguarding systems, community-based organisations (CBOs) registration and compliance, capacity building, etc.



This redesigned model aims to multiply our reach tenfold when compared to our reach in the previous financial years. These programmes will be delivered through our villages, across seven provinces and in our three Social Centres (Sekhukhune, Qwaqwa, and Mathanjane).

The year also saw significant transformations at global and regional levels within the SOS International Federation, prompting deep reflection on governance, democracy and operational coherence across the federation.

As with all NGOs, financial sustainability remains a consistent risk. Donor priorities are shifting, the funding pool is shrinking and competition for resources is intensifying. These pressures reinforce the importance of organisational resilience, robust partnerships and innovation in programme design and fundraising.

Continued Roadmap to Strategy 2030

The refreshed transitional strategy, shaped through a comprehensive bottom-up process involving Twenty-five (25) Member Associations (MA), is guiding the federation through organisational change and preparing the framework for a **new global strategy beyond 2030**.

Insights gathered from national associations, which are closest to children and families, **strengthened strategic alignment and ensured that local realities inform global priorities**. The transitional strategy functions as a compass, providing clear direction through regional and global turbulence, while also acting as a bridge to maintain continuity as new boards define the post-2030 strategy.

By responding to emerging challenges and leveraging existing strengths, the strategy **positions SOS Children's Villages in South Africa to deliver meaningful impact**, both now and in the future.

The refreshed transitional strategy, developed through a bottom-up process, will guide the federation through a period of change and prepare the organisation for a new global strategy beyond 2030.



Bottom-Up Process

The strategy refresh spurred innovation and brought forward new insights from national associations working closest to children and families.



Compass

The transitional strategy acts as a compass through global and local turbulence, focusing the federation on collective strengths and aligned priorities.



Bridge

It serves as a bridge to the future, ensuring strategic continuity while the new International and Executive Boards define the post-2030 direction.



Stronger Position

The transitional strategy responds to emerging global and local challenges, ensuring the federation is better positioned to generate impact.



Programme Overview

The DSD accelerated the **National Institutional Realignment Project (IRP) 2022–2027**, aimed at increasing government capacity and reducing resource allocation to NPOs. This led to stricter auditing, monitoring and reporting standards. Despite these pressures and funding reductions, all SOS programmes received **clean audits** and **renewed three-year service-level agreements (SLAs)** for alternative care.

The national conversation around **de-institutionalisation**, led by Hope and Homes for Children and other organisations which aims to eliminate 'orphanages' intensified throughout 2024. While some stakeholders argue that communities can better protect children, others highlight the vital role of Child and Youth Care Centres, especially in areas where community safety networks are weak. Neither government nor civil society has yet developed robust community-based protection systems to support this large-scale transition.



Alternative Care

In 2024, the Alternative Care Programme supported **706 children**, an increase of six from 2023. Admission depends solely on DSD, which identifies, assesses and places children through court orders and monitoring visits.

Family Strengthening

The Family Strengthening Programme (FSP) reached **4,000 beneficiaries**, fewer than in previous years (2022 and 2023) due to the closure of some villages. During strategic planning sessions in November 2024, teams agreed that the FSP model requires a complete redesign in 2025, as its current activities are misaligned with the programme's core purpose: **building family self-reliance**.

Programme Challenges



Limited financial support for youth entrepreneurship



Barriers, such as application fees and transport costs



Inconsistent commitment and follow-through among some youth participants



Difficulty aligning programme activities with available funding opportunities

Key Programme Insights

1. Alternative care remains a critical national need and will continue to attract support.
2. The FSP cannot continue without registration and sustainable funding; intensified fundraising is essential.
3. The Youth Programme makes a significant contribution to family stability and youth wellbeing; however, young people require additional training in trade-related skills to enhance their employability.
4. Staff wellbeing has a direct impact on child safeguarding; partnerships to support staff mental health have become a priority.



Outstanding/Retired Housemothers and Long-Serving Staff



Nicholene Williams – A Decade of Motherhood and Care at SOS

After ten remarkable years with SOS Children's Villages in South Africa, Nicholene retired in 2024, leaving behind a legacy of care, dedication and transformative impact. From her first day in 2014, drawn by SOS's family-oriented model, Nicholene embraced the role of nurturing children who had been separated from their families, offering them the stability and love of a home she helped create.

Starting as an assistant "aunt," Nicholene quickly grew into the role of a mother, taking full responsibility for the holistic care of her house. This encompassed everything from daily routines, meals, and school support to emotional guidance and healthcare.

She also acted as a bridge between children and their biological families, guiding parents toward rebuilding bonds where possible.

Her approach went beyond mere supervision: she modelled patience, empathy, and encouragement, often coaching parents in re-engaging meaningfully with their children.

Nicholene's impact was profound. She witnessed countless milestones in the lives of the children under her care: teaching a one-year-old to eat, helping children overcome fears, and nurturing their growth into confident young people.

The lessons she's shared with her colleagues and the wider SOS community have included the importance of balance. She wholeheartedly shared the insight, "You can't pour from an empty cup." While a mother gives herself fully to the children in her care, she also needs to look after her own well-being. Nicholene highlighted that self-care is essential to sustaining the energy, focus, and dedication required for long-term service.

Reflecting on her career, Nicholene emphasises the value of connecting children with their families whenever possible, helping young people understand that love, support, and guidance can be found both at SOS and in their families of origin.

Her story is a testament to the power of long-term commitment, holistic care, and the transformative role of mothers within the SOS model.

Nicholene's legacy continues in the children she nurtured, the families she helped rebuild, and the colleagues inspired by her example.

Nokuthula Mkhize – Nurturing with Heart and Dedication

Nokuthula Mkhize has been an integral part of SOS Children's Villages in South Africa since April 2012, serving as a Child and Youth Care Worker. Known affectionately as "Tannie" by the children and youth, Nokuthula moves between houses to ensure that every child receives the care and attention they need, stepping in whenever a gap arises. Her role requires flexibility, resilience, and unwavering commitment, and she approaches it as a calling, wholeheartedly dedicating herself to the children's well-being.

Nokuthula's connection with the children goes beyond routine care. She emphasises the importance of non-verbal communication, noticing when a child may be struggling even if they cannot speak about it directly. She creates an environment that is welcoming and comfortable, engaging with the children at their level and joining in their games; not for herself, but to give the children a sense of belonging and trust. This approach has fostered deep bonds, enabling children to feel safe and open up about their challenges.

Her support extends across spiritual, emotional, and educational needs. Nokuthula ensures that children complete their schoolwork, follows up with teachers when necessary, and coordinates with social workers to secure any additional resources a child may need. She also facilitates sports and recreational activities, providing a holistic approach to child development.

One notable instance illustrating her dedication occurred in August 2024, when two girls approached

her with concerns about bullying and mistreatment in the village. The children were initially too afraid to speak openly, so Nokuthula devised a safe, structured meeting that allowed them to share their experiences anonymously. She carefully documented the concerns and coordinated with supervisors and social workers to ensure the matter was addressed. Through her initiative, the children received the support they needed, and the household environment improved.

Nokuthula balances her nurturing approach with clear boundaries, consistently reinforcing rules and expectations during programmes and daily routines. She believes that setting boundaries provides children with a sense of security and helps them understand acceptable behaviours, while maintaining a supportive environment.

Reflecting on her work, Nokuthula says that while she teaches and supports the children, she also learns from them. Each child brings unique behaviours, creativity, and perspectives that inspire her daily and enrich her professional and personal growth.

Through her dedication, Nokuthula exemplifies the values of SOS Children's Villages: compassion, commitment, and the belief that every child deserves care, love, and opportunities to thrive. Her story demonstrates the profound impact a single devoted caregiver can have on a child's life, shaping not only the present but also the future.

Sarah Manana Mokoena – Leading with Humility and Commitment

Sarah has been an exceptional house mother at SOS Children's Village Ennerdale, caring for children across a wide age range: from seven to twenty years old. Her role is demanding, often requiring round-the-clock attention, but she approaches it with humility, patience, and a genuine passion for the children in her care.

In 2024, Sarah celebrated a particular milestone when one of the young people she mentored completed a teaching programme and began a learnership through SOS, focusing on community work. This achievement reflects not only the success of the youth she supports but also her ability to guide, encourage, and create opportunities for them.

Sarah's approach to challenges is equally inspiring. Whether addressing behavioural issues, ensuring children attend school, or supporting those in vulnerable situations, she remains steadfast, drawing strength from her colleagues and the social workers on site. She emphasises teamwork, humility, and self-reflection as essential tools for sustaining commitment in such a demanding role.

From her experience, Sarah shares a guiding lesson for other mothers at SOS and the wider community: commit fully to yourself and to those you care for. By thoughtfully investing time, energy, and dedication, you can support children effectively while remaining grounded and resilient in the long term.

Fund Development Unit

With Heartfelt Gratitude to Our Donors

To all our incredible donors and partners – thank you. Your generosity has enabled us to keep our promise to children in need of care, safety, and love. In a year marked by challenges, including financial strain and uncertainty, your commitment ensured that children received stability, education, and hope to dream again.

The June 2025 floods in Mthatha highlighted the vulnerability of children and families during crises. Communities were displaced, homes were destroyed and lives tragically disrupted. In response, SOS Children's Village SA launched the **Mthatha Floods Emergency Appeal**, mobilising relief for families through food, shelter, psychosocial support, and recovery efforts. The campaign demonstrated the power of solidarity, with corporate partners, individual donors, and community champions rallying to restore dignity and hope that had almost been lost.

As demand for services continues to rise, we look forward to deepening these partnerships. Together, we can ensure that every child grows up in a caring family and supportive community.

South African Donor Landscape

The national donor environment remains constrained due to slow economic growth, inflation, and shifting corporate priorities. Corporate Social Investment (CSI) remains significant, contributing over **R10 billion annually**, but budgets are tightening. Competition for international funding is high, especially in education, climate resilience, and child protection.

Achievements of the Fund Development Unit in 2024

This year, SOS Children's Villages South Africa navigated one of the most challenging fundraising environments in recent memory. Against the backdrop of a cost-of-living crisis, inflationary pressures, and heightened competition for donor support, our FDU remained steadfast in its mission to secure sustainable resources for children and families in need.

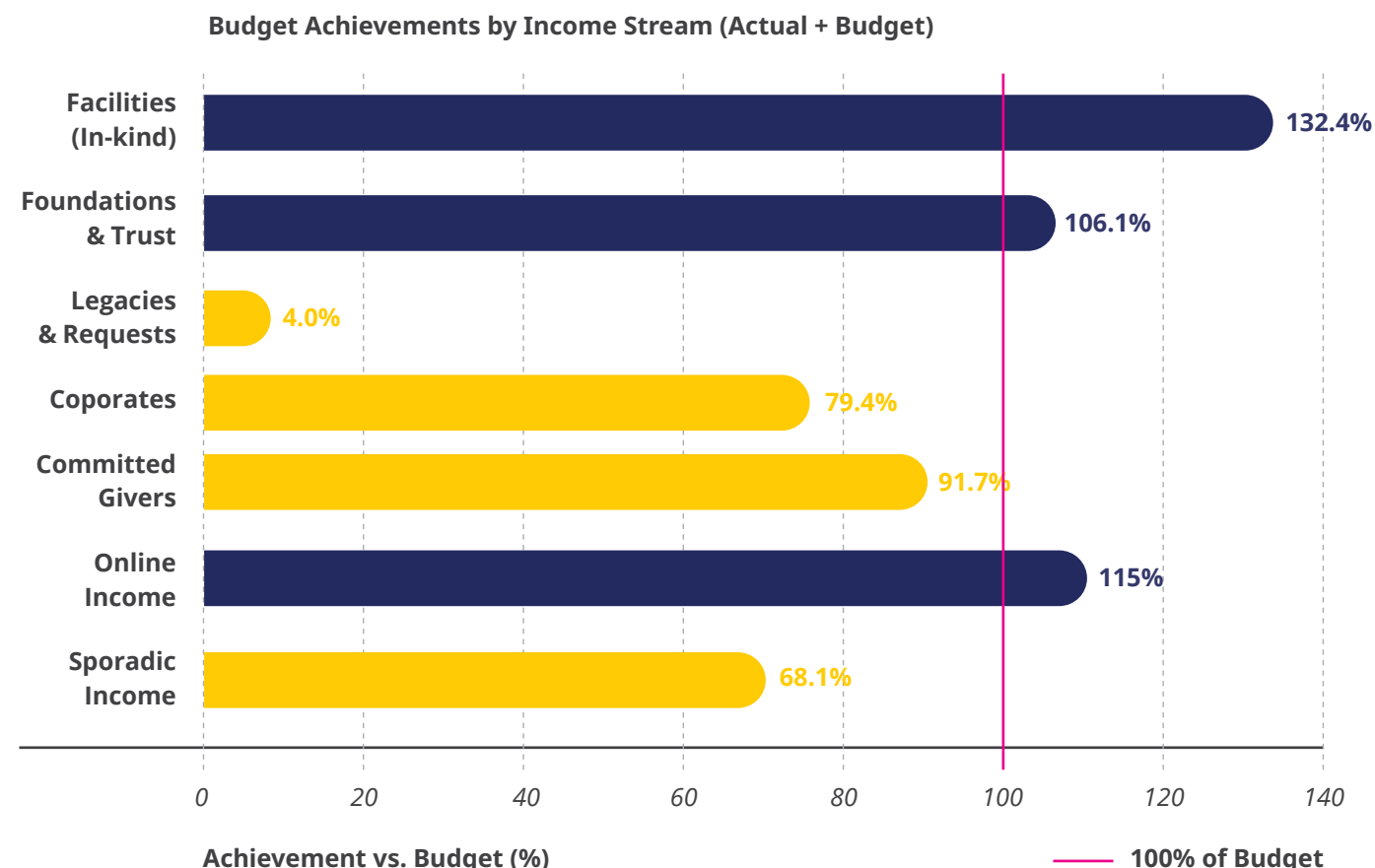
Through strategic innovation, strengthened partnerships, and a deep commitment to donor engagement, we achieved significant milestones despite economic headwinds. These successes were made possible by the dedication and resilience of the FDU team, who worked tirelessly to adapt strategies, build relationships, and deliver results under immense pressure. We also celebrate the efforts of every individual across the organization who contributed to our shared goal: ensuring that every child in our care receives the best possible support, love, and opportunities for a brighter future.



"Your generosity has been the lifeline that helps us keep our promise to children who need care, safety, and love."

Overall Income Performance

In the 2024 financial year, a total of R51.6 million was achieved against a target of R57 million, resulting in a shortfall of R5.4 million (90% achievement).



Key Income Streams and Highlights

Corporate Partnerships: A Cornerstone of Stability

Long-standing partners continued to sustain core programmes despite economic challenges.

Cause-Related Marketing

Dr Oetker and South Africa's leading producer of handcrafted, premium cakes and desserts, Château Gâteaux, activated retail promotions where a portion of sales supported youth development initiatives at SOS Children's Village Ennerdale.

15 Years of KFC ADD Hope

A critical pillar of our nutrition programme is ensuring children receive balanced meals that support cognitive development and academic progress. Good nutrition is crucial for physical growth, cognitive development, and academic performance, and this partnership continues to make it possible.



Family Home Sponsors

These partners provide sustained funding for the daily care of children in SOS family homes across the country:

- **SOS Children's Village Gqeberha:** Adient, Faurecia Emissions Control Technologies, Schaeffler - supporting family homes and contributing to the holistic development of children.
- **SOS Children's Village Cape Town:** Frank Robb Charitable Trust, Voestalpine High Performance Metals Africa - ensuring stability and resources for children in our Cape Town village.
- **SOS Children's Village Mamelodi:** Ford Motor Company, The George Ramalu Memorial Trust (Azelis) - enabling us to maintain safe, nurturing homes for vulnerable children.
- **SOS Children's Village Ennerdale:** FNZ, VSC Solutions - providing consistent support for family homes.



Programme-Specific Support

- **RB Hagart Trust:** Supported our Family Strengthening Programme (FSP), helping prevent family breakdown and keeping children with their biological families where possible.
- **Continental Tyre SA:** Invested in youth employability initiatives, equipping young people with skills and opportunities to transition successfully into independent adulthood.



New Partnerships

We proudly welcomed new corporate partners who share our vision of creating a safe and nurturing environment for every child. These partnerships were built on shared values, measurable social impact, and a commitment to long-term collaboration.

- **Stellantis:** One of the world's leading automakers, partnered with us to launch a transformative "I CAN" initiative aimed at tackling South Africa's alarming youth unemployment rate of over 50%. This programme will empower 800 young people supported by SOS Children's Villages across the country by providing them with the skills and resources necessary to obtain their driver's licenses - a critical gateway to employment and entrepreneurship.



Success Story Lesedi

Driving Change: Empowering Young People Through Mobility

Youth unemployment in South Africa remains among the highest in the world, and for many young people, a driver's licence is the key to accessing job opportunities. For **Lesedi**, a 20-year-old participant in the Family Strengthening Programme in Sekhukhune, from rural Limpopo, that key has already begun unlocking her future.

Through our partnership with global automotive manufacturer, **Stellantis**, 800 young people like Lesedi are gaining access to driving lessons and licence support. All participants are also enrolled on the YouthLinks platform for mentorship and job-search guidance.

"Having a driver's licence is life-changing, especially in rural areas like mine where public transport is limited," says Lesedi. "Being able to drive allows me a sense of independence and opens up job opportunities in sectors that were once male-dominated."



Lesedi is completing a community development learnership at the Sekhukhune Social Centre while upgrading her matric results to pursue studies in transport and logistics. In rural regions with limited public transport, a licence increases employability, mobility, and independence.

"This skill will stay with me for life," Lesedi says. "It empowers young women like me. It's not only changing lives – it's building futures."

This programme is especially impactful for young women. Nearly half of young women (48.1%) in South Africa are neither employed, educated, nor trained – a rate higher than that of young men (42.2%). Access to mobility can shift that trajectory.

"I feel empowered to dream bigger for myself and for my future," explains Lesedi."





Success Story Patrick

Patrick's Journey: Finding Family, Stability, and Hope

Patrick was placed at SOS Children's Village Rustenburg in November 2006 after his biological mother made the difficult decision to give him up for adoption. He was cared for by SOS mother Bitsang, who passed away in 2022. Although attempts were later made to locate his family, they were unsuccessful.

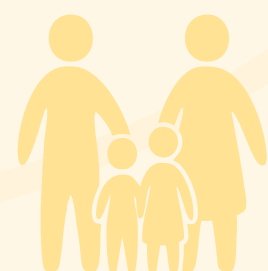
Patrick chose to focus on his education. He excelled in school, never repeated a grade, and became a leader in several village activities, many of which he initiated himself.

A local family volunteered to host a child during school holidays, and Patrick was recommended. Over the course of ten years, this relationship deepened into a genuine bond. The family eventually asked him to stay with them permanently.

Patrick is now reintegrated with the family while attending an FET College.

"I am most grateful for SOS," he says. "I know what family is, and I know what love is. The warmth I found from my mother, not once did I go to bed on an empty stomach or worry about where my next meal would come from. My stay at SOS provided me with a larger family"

Patrick admits that there are moments when he misses his family in the village, but the knowledge that he can always visit comforts him.



Child Protection A Core Focus for SOS

Child protection remained at the heart of SOS Children's Village South Africa's work throughout 2024. Across all programmes, the organisation focused on strengthening safeguarding systems, deepening staff capacity, and ensuring that **every child and young person in its care is protected through consistent, high-quality practice**.

During the year, compliance efforts were intensified. One programme location underwent a full safeguarding audit, which resulted in a detailed action plan to address identified gaps and reinforce good practice. Training continued to play a central role in ensuring that safeguarding remains a lived reality in every village and programme site. **Child safeguarding sessions were delivered nationwide during Child Protection Week**, ensuring that staff at all levels stayed aligned with the organisation's standards and responsibilities.



Compliance, Accountability and Incident Trends

Incident Management Teams received dedicated training on holistic safeguarding. At the same time, social workers, child and youth care workers, community development workers, and youth coordinators participated in trauma-informed care training – a critical component in environments where children often arrive having experienced significant adversity.

Organisational capacity building remained a priority. Programme Development Coordinators completed Code of Conduct training, staff received training in positive discipline, and children's participation was strengthened through their direct involvement in safeguarding risk assessments. Local Management Boards were also equipped through targeted training sessions.

Trainings conducted:



Programme Development Coordinators
Code of Conduct Regulation



Location Social workers
Child Participation in Safeguarding Risk Assessments



Cape Town Child and Youth Care Practitioners
Positive Discipline Training



Local Management Board
Pietermaritzburg location

Two Programme Directors (Ennerdale and Mamelodi) attended the DSD Child Safeguarding Workshop.

The online safeguarding curriculum achieved **an impressive 98% completion rate**, signalling strong internal commitment to accountability and learning. There were also high enrolment rates for the sexual misconduct regulation.

Preventative work continued to advance. The year saw the rollout of a child-friendly safeguarding policy designed to help children better understand their rights and how to report concerns. Event-risk mitigation guidelines were developed to ensure that all programme activities – whether on-site or in the community – are managed with a clear awareness of potential safeguarding risks.

Importantly, SOS Children's Village South Africa initiated the independent verification process with Keeping Children Safe, marking a significant step towards external benchmarking and global compliance.

The organisation also examined incident trends to ensure transparent learning and improvement. In 2024, four cases of abusive adult-to-child behaviour and one case of neglect were reported. Two of these cases were confirmed and led to **immediate disciplinary action**. The neglect case underscored the need for renewed emphasis on professional boundaries and resulted in plans for refresher training in 2025. One case remained under investigation at year-end. These incidents, though few, reaffirmed **the importance of strong supervision systems, ongoing capacity development, and clear channels for reporting and response**.



"The online safeguarding curriculum achieved an impressive 98% completion rate"

Prioritising Staff Wellbeing and Future Focus

A key theme emerging from the year was **the well-being of frontline care staff**. The emotional and psychological demands placed on social workers, child and youth care workers, and youth coordinators are immense, and their ability to provide stable, nurturing care is directly linked to organisational safeguarding outcomes. As such, staff mental health and support systems have been prioritised as a strategic focus for the coming year. Alongside this, the organisation remains committed to expanding child participation, ensuring that children and young people play an increasingly active role in shaping the environments designed to protect them.

Child protection is not a static achievement; it requires constant vigilance, learning, and adaptation. In 2024, SOS Children's Village South Africa continued to advance this work with determination, ensuring that every child entrusted to its care is safer, more supported, and more empowered than before.



Youth Empowerment Activities

During the first quarter of the year, SOS Children's Village South Africa conducted comprehensive youth needs assessments using tools developed by the Department of Higher Education and Training for "YouthCan!" and the National Career Advisory Portal (NCAP). These tools enabled young people to reflect on their interests, identify possible career pathways, and make informed subject choices. A total of 3,000 young people used the NCAP platform for this purpose.

At the same time, a further 7,650 high school students from Sekhukhune, QwaQwa, Gqeberha, and Mathanjana benefited from targeted outreach and career guidance activities.

Entrepreneurship and Employability

Entrepreneurship development remained a central focus. In partnership with SEDA and HWSITA, the organisation facilitated **entrepreneurship training for 156 young people**. The training covered essential skills, including **networking, digital marketing, and practical business development**, helping participants strengthen their capacity to launch and sustain income-generating initiatives.

In parallel, 378 young people participated in a job-readiness programme led by Save the Children and Start-up Picnic. This initiative extended its reach to a further 13,263 students in surrounding schools across Mathanjana and Mamelodi, with programme staff visiting five high schools and two secondary schools. **Save the Children contributed significantly to the success of these sessions by providing refreshments, training materials, and stationery.**

The year also saw substantial progress in tertiary and vocational engagement. A total of **235 young people enrolled in Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions, vocational programmes, universities, and digital literacy courses**. Among this group, forty-one (41) young people accessed specialised training in painting, security, and driving through a partnership with AkzoNobel.

Between April and June 2024, an additional cohort of "forty" (40) young people commenced a CISCO programming course facilitated by RCC, while sixteen (16) took part in robotics training.

The Go-Teach initiative also continued to grow. In March 2024, **134 young people participated in a virtual Go-Teach programme**. This was followed in July 2024 by an in-person Go-Teach Career Week held across coastal and inland regions, where **eighty (80) young people engaged directly with professionals** from DHL, Pinsent & Masons Law Firm, Stellantis Automotive Company, Start-up Picnic, SANBI, the National Youth Development Agency, Radisson Hotels Group, and the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries.

Further opportunities emerged between April and June, when **forty (40) young people registered for the Presidential Award**, and thirty-nine (39) participated in robotics training facilitated by Invest Hud and E-Launch.

In addition, 100 young people completed digital literacy training delivered by Broadway Inc. The year's achievements were further reflected in employment outcomes, with **five (5) graduates from the DHL Supply Chain learnerships securing permanent employment**.

156

Young people **received entrepreneurship training** through partnerships with SEDA and HWSITA

80

Young people **took part in the July 2024 Go-Teach Career Week**, engaging with industry professionals

235

Young people **enrolled** in TVET institutions, vocational programmes, universities, and digital literacy courses

40

Young people **registered** for the Presidential Award

134

Young people **participated** in a virtual Go-Teach programme

5

Graduates from the DHL Supply Chain learnerships securing permanent employment



Youth Mentorship and Life Skills Development

Mentorship continued to be a stabilising force for young people seeking guidance toward adulthood. By December 2024, **229 youth were registered on YouthLinks, SOS Children's Villages South Africa's mentorship platform, with 140 actively participating in ongoing mentorship activities.** Access to Sexual Reproductive Health Services expanded, reaching 400 young people, while **a series of school-based workshops reached 3,990 learners** through partnerships with IHPS, Broadway Legacy, Think, and Childline Thuthuzela.

Mental health emerged as an increasingly urgent priority. **A total of 242 young people took part in mental health awareness programmes** delivered by IHPS, Nature Psychological and Analytics, and GRIP. These initiatives strengthened emotional resilience, encouraged help-seeking behaviour, and helped break stigma around mental health challenges.

Life skills programmes continued to play a central role in preparing young people for personal responsibility and independence. In 2024, **330 youth participated in various life skills sessions, with a further 225 engaged** between April and July through support from Power of Minds, Community Development Workers, and ChildLine.

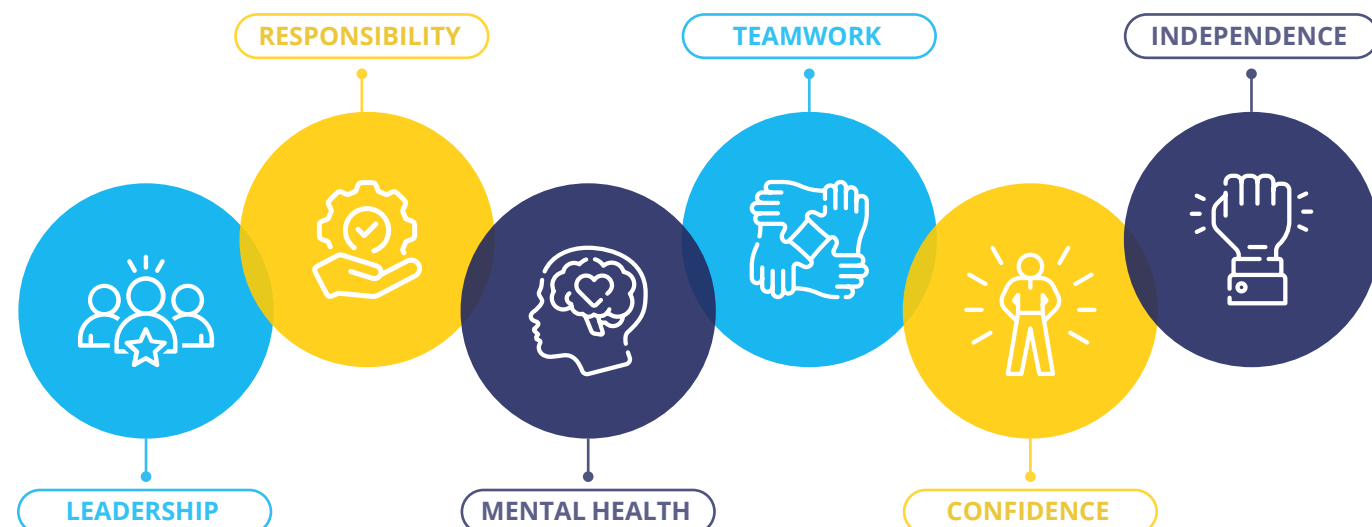
Social and recreational activities provided additional opportunities for personal growth, teamwork, and confidence building. From January to March, 180 young people took part in activities such as soccer, musical instrument training, rugby, and circus skills, while 135 continued participating in different sporting activities throughout the year.

Leadership exposure also grew. **Two young people represented South Africa in the Regional DHL Mentorship session led by Fadzlun Sapandi, EVP of Global Human Resources at DHL Express.** Her story of rising from customer service to executive leadership deeply resonated with the participants, who later shared their learnings with peers. Three (3) young people also joined a roundtable dialogue organised by SOS Children's Villages International, sharing their lived experiences, the challenges they face in South Africa, and their aspirations for future generations.

A further sixty-three (63) youth attended mentorship programmes hosted by the University of Mpumalanga and Tshwane University of Technology, focusing on self-confidence and personal development.

The Youth Power Project, funded by the Regional Office, continued to expand its impact. Designed to strengthen emotional intelligence, digital access, and leadership, the project includes developing a computer hub and establishing an alumni network in which programme graduates support younger participants through mentorship and networking. These initiatives build long-term continuity, ensuring that knowledge, skills, and opportunities are shared across generations of youth.

In November, the organisation launched "I Decide My Future", a youth empowerment initiative funded by the SOS International Office. Targeting forty (40) young people across Sekhukhune, Mthatha, Pietermaritzburg, and Mathanjane, the programme covers self-esteem, positive thinking, conflict resolution, future planning, and self-leadership. It will continue into 2025.





Enhancing Youth Participation

Youth participation remained an essential component of programme design and decision-making. Through active youth forums at the local level, **SOS Children's Villages South Africa strengthened structures that enable young people to influence programme direction and advocate for issues affecting them.**

These efforts culminated in the formation of a National Youth Council, creating a coherent platform for youth voices at the organisational level. Five (5) young people also served on the Save the Children Youth Council, contributing to decision-making and representing their peers' perspectives.

Participation extended to global platforms as well. In 2024, 160 young people attended a webinar titled 'Raise Your Voice', organised by the SOS International Office. This platform allowed participants to influence future programme strategies and engage with global peers committed to youth rights and empowerment.

Partnerships for Youth Development and Employability

Collaboration remained a defining feature of SOS Children's Villages South Africa's approach to youth development.

The organisation continued to work with an extensive network of partners, including SEDA, NYDA, Pinsent & Masons, Stellantis, E-Launch, Power of Minds, Nature Psychological and Analytics, the Department of Higher Education and Training, Save the Children, DHL, Radisson Hotels Group, AkzoNobel, Repssi, SAYes, Capita, Heart FM, Invest Hud, LoveLife, Start-up Picnic, the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Google, Broadway Legacy, Think, Tshwane University of Technology, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, and WUSU.

Each partnership played a vital role in expanding access to training, mentorship, psychosocial support, and employment opportunities.



Employment Success

Employment outcomes for the year reflect the combined efforts of these partnerships and programmes:

- "One (1)" young person secured employment at DHL.
- A total of 216 young people were placed in short-term employment contracts, including roles in retail, the Expanded Public Works Programme, and corporate placements.
- A further 125 young people secured permanent employment as teachers, engineers, lawyers, IT specialists, and in other fields, supported through "YouthCan!".

Youth programmes continued to focus on holistic development, employability, and entrepreneurship.

The programme achievements include:

- Entrepreneurship and skills development reached 3,000 youth via NCAP and engaged 7,650 students through school outreach initiatives.
- 156 youth received entrepreneurship training, and 378 participated in job-readiness programmes, extending outreach to over 13,000 learners.
- 235 youth enrolled in TVET and tertiary programmes, of whom Forty-one (41) received specialised vocational training.

In summary, skills development included:



Digital, trade, and technical skills: Programmes included Cisco courses, robotics, Go-Teach digital literacy, and emotional intelligence training. Five (5) youth graduated into permanent positions through DHL learnerships.



Mentorship and life skills: 229 youth registered on YouthLinks, 400 accessed sexual and reproductive health services, and 3,990 participated in health workshops. Life skills programmes engaged 330 participants, of whom 180 participated in sports and social activities.



Youth participation: The National Youth Council was established, with five (5) youth representing SOS on the Save the Children Youth Council and 160 participants in the global "Raise Your Voice" webinar.



Partnerships: Collaborations with SEDA, NYDA, DHL, Google, AkzoNobel, TUT, SANBI, and Start-up Picnic strengthened pathways to employment.



Employment outcomes: One (1) youth was employed at DHL; 216 were in short-term contracts; and 125 secured permanent positions as teachers, engineers, lawyers, or IT specialists.



Youth self-reliance – AkzoNobel Painting Programme: In Cape Town, Eighteen (18) participants received specialised painting training. Standout youth Xoli and Faku launched Sisonke, a painting business that secured a municipal contract, generating jobs and contributing to local community upliftment.

Mamelodi Resource Centre

Empowering Youth Through Digital Skills

The Mamelodi Resource Centre, launched in 2024, represents a significant step in **SOS Children's Villages South Africa's commitment to youth empowerment and digital inclusion**. Victor Mbinga, who served as Program Director during the launch, oversaw the establishment of the centre, ensuring that it became a hub for learning, skills development, and employability.

The centre was equipped with ten desktop computers, supported by a corporate partner, and repurposed a space previously used for literacy and reading groups. This strategic expansion enabled the centre to host robotics and digital skills programs, providing young people in the community with access to computers and the internet for career development, school assignments, and online courses.

Victor highlights that the Mamelodi Resource Centre is designed not just as a library or computer lab, but as a space for opportunity. Youth can schedule access via WhatsApp, ensuring equitable use of resources while engaging in activities that enhance their employability and digital literacy.

This initiative builds on earlier programmes with the Department of Education and Training. It aims to integrate IT-based skills that will directly support young people in pursuing careers and entrepreneurial ventures.

Although the initial uptake was slower than anticipated, the centre's potential remains clear. Victor shared an inspiring anecdote: the initiative mirrors previous SOS digital training programmes, in which a young woman who received computer training years ago now works as an administrator at TFG Head Office. Her journey demonstrates the **long-term impact of providing digital skills and access**, highlighting how these resources can transform employment and personal development opportunities.

Looking ahead, the Mamelodi Resource Centre aims to continue bridging the digital skills gap, guiding young people in using technology, and empowering them to navigate a competitive job market. Through this initiative, SOS Children's Villages is not only providing access to resources but also fostering the knowledge and confidence needed to create brighter futures for youth in the community.



"The Mamelodi Resource Centre is designed not just as a library or computer lab, but as a space for opportunity."

Painting Success

AkzoNobel Partnership Program

The partnership between AkzoNobel and SOS Children's Villages South Africa continued to demonstrate the transformative power of skills development. As part of the YouthCan! Programme, AkzoNobel expanded opportunities for young people without parental care or at risk of losing it, helping them gain skills that would support their independence and entry into the job market.

In 2024, **Eighteen (18) young people from SOS Children's Village Cape Town participated in a specialised painting training programme funded by AkzoNobel**. The course created a space for learners to build technical skills, gain confidence, and explore new income-generating opportunities. Among the group, two young participants—Xoli and Faku—stood out for their dedication, work ethic, and talent.

Their exceptional performance caught the attention of the local ward councillor in Khayelitsha, who offered them their first major project: painting the local municipal offices. This opportunity became a turning point. Embracing their potential, **Xoli and Faku registered their own painting business, Sisonke, meaning "We Are Together" in isiZulu**. Starting with painting services, they soon expanded their offerings to include yard cleaning, bin washing, and car washing. They established an active social media presence to market their work and connect with the community.

As their business grew, so did their impact. Xoli and Faku created jobs, contributed to their families' income, and became role models for their peers, **proving that skills development, when combined with mentorship and opportunity, can alter life trajectories**. Their story is a powerful reminder of the potential held by young people when they are empowered with practical skills and supported by committed partners.



18 young people

From SOS Cape Town completed painting training funded by AkzoNobel



Xoli and Faku

Registered their own painting business



Skills development

Paired with mentorship and opportunity, can transform lives.



Feeding Success World Food Day and Nutrition Support

On 16 October 2024, SOS Children's Villages South Africa joined the global community in commemorating World Food Day, advocating for every child's right to nutritious food and the dignity that comes with a full stomach. **Food insecurity remains one of the most persistent challenges facing children who arrive at SOS programme sites.** Many have known chronic hunger for most of their lives.

Across the country, SOS Drop-in Centres and Social Centres continued to serve as lifelines for children facing food insecurity. Located in some of South Africa's most vulnerable communities, these centres provide safe, reliable access to nutritious meals. Children who would have gone to school hungry receive breakfast and lunch, and often take food home to share with their families, relieving the burden on caregivers struggling with limited income.

More than **700,000 meals** are served annually at Drop-in Centres alone, and, together with SOS Children's Villages, which provides alternative care, the organisation serves over **one million meals** each year.

Programme Director **Peter Kotlolo** from the Sekhukhune Social Centre reflects on the scale of need

"Currently, over 700 children and young people in this location benefit from our feeding and nutrition programme. Many come from families relying solely on government grants. These grants are not enough to meet their daily needs, and ensuring consistent access to nutritious food is essential for their development and success."



Over
700,000 meals are
served at Drop-in Centres each
year, contributing to more than
one million meals
provided overall.

Behind the statistics are deeply human stories. One such story comes from SOS Children's Village Gqeberha, where two young siblings—Tammy (two) and Sammy (seven)*—were recently welcomed into care. The children arrived after enduring severe neglect, food deprivation, and unsafe living conditions. Tammy's early experiences left her anxious around food, often insisting on feeding herself even though she lacked the skills to do so. With patience and trauma-informed care, her SOS house mother now supports her through gentle feeding routines, offering small, frequent meals and ensuring she always feels secure. Sammy, who had taken on the role of caregiver for his sister, continues to receive emotional support as he learns to trust adults again.

These are just two (2) of hundreds of stories that illustrate the profound impact of a single meal shared. Each plate of food represents the generosity of community members, donors, volunteers, and long-standing partners such as **KFC Add Hope**, whose support makes the nationwide nutrition programme possible. Their contributions transform hunger into hope, allowing children to grow, learn, and thrive.

Peter Kotlolo concludes

"I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all stakeholders, partners, and staff who contribute to this programme. Together, we are creating a nurturing environment for vulnerable children, one that strengthens their wellbeing, education, and opportunities."

*Names changed for child protection.



The Future of SOS



Navigating a Changing Fundraising Landscape

Looking ahead, SOS Children's Villages South Africa recognises that the fundraising environment will remain challenging. Economic pressures, tightening corporate social investment (CSI) budgets, and heightened competition across the nonprofit sector are likely to continue in the coming years. **These conditions necessitate greater innovation, agility, and strategic focus to ensure sustainable resources for children and families in need.**

The Fund Development Unit (FDU) will maintain its commitment to securing long-term, reliable funding through strengthened partnerships and strategic donor engagement. This includes expanding digital and telemarketing channels, leveraging cause-related marketing, and designing campaigns that speak to both the heart and the tangible impact of each contribution.

By refining these approaches, SOS Children's Villages South Africa aims to continue meeting its funding goals, even in a highly competitive landscape.

Strengthening Partnerships for Greater Impact

Partnership development will remain a central pillar of the organisation's future strategy. Long-standing corporate partnerships, including KFC ADD Hope, have ensured continuity for core programmes such as nutrition, education, and youth empowerment. Emerging collaborations, such as the Stellantis "I CAN" initiative, demonstrate the potential of innovative, youth-focused programmes. This initiative will empower 800 young people across SOS Children's Villages to obtain their driver's licenses, directly supporting their employability and independence.

New partnerships with companies and organisations sharing SOS Children's Villages' mission will be prioritised, with an emphasis on measurable social impact and long-term collaboration. Programme-specific partners, such as RB Hagart Trust and Continental Tyre SA, illustrate the effectiveness of aligning corporate contributions with targeted social outcomes: **strengthening families, preventing separation, and building pathways to employment for young people.**



Building Resilience in Crisis Response

The Mthatha Floods Emergency Appeal in June 2025 highlighted the vulnerability of children and families to sudden, devastating events. SOS Children's Villages South Africa's response, providing immediate relief through food, shelter, psychosocial care, and support for family rebuilding, demonstrated the organisation's capacity for rapid, coordinated action.

Looking ahead, the organisation will strengthen preparedness and response mechanisms for future emergencies, ensuring that children, caregivers, and communities receive timely, practical support. SOS Children's Villages South Africa will continue to harness this collective action in its ongoing commitment to protect children and support vulnerable families.

Sustaining Innovation and Donor Engagement

Innovation and fundraising agility will remain key focuses. As donor attention becomes increasingly fragmented, **SOS Children's Villages South Africa will develop creative, personalised engagement strategies that clearly communicate impact and inspire ongoing support.** This includes leveraging storytelling, data-driven insights, and digital tools to engage new supporters while retaining and nurturing existing donors.

Regular giving, face-to-face fundraising, digital appeals, and social media campaigns will continue to play a crucial role in sustaining the organisation's financial health. Strategic campaigns, such as targeted special appeals, will focus on reactivating lapsed donors and inspiring additional giving, ensuring that funding is directed to areas of greatest need.



A Commitment to Every Child's Future

At the heart of SOS Children's Villages South Africa's future strategy is an unwavering commitment to every child. The organisation remains dedicated to ensuring that children grow up in safe, loving families and supportive communities. By combining strategic fundraising, strong partnerships, responsive crisis management, and innovative programme delivery, SOS Children's Villages South Africa is positioning itself to meet the evolving needs of children, youth, and families in South Africa.

With continued donor and partner support, a focus on resilience and innovation, and an enduring commitment to child protection and empowerment, **SOS Children's Villages South Africa is confident in its ability to create lasting impact and offer every child the opportunity to thrive.**

We invite all stakeholders, partners, and supporters to join us in continuing this journey. Together, we can ensure that every child grows up in a safe, nurturing family and a supportive community. The belief and commitment of our donors and partners form the foundation of our work, enabling SOS Children's Villages South Africa to provide children with the care, opportunities, and stability they need. With continued collaboration and support, we can build a brighter and more secure future for every child in our care.



Statement of Financial Position

SOS Children's Village Association of the Republic of South Africa

Formerly PBO 130001880
(Registration number: 001-255 NPO)
Trading as PBO 130001880

Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2024

Figures in Rand	Note(s)	2024	2023 Restated*
Assets			
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment *	2	18,764,133	22,975,786
Intangible assets	3	664	3,321
Other financial assets	4	159,378	136,097
		18,924,175	23,115,204
Current Assets			
Trade and other receivables	5	23,048,219	18,290,177
Cash and cash equivalents	6	19,617,288	16,865,988
		42,665,507	35,156,165
Total Assets		61,589,682	58,271,369
Equity and Liabilities			
Equity			
Reserves	7	8,976,892	8,976,892
Retained income *		26,308,339	26,321,292
		35,285,231	35,298,184
Liabilities			
Non-Current Liabilities			
Retirement benefit liability	8	543,112	436,145
Deferred income	10	-	350,900
		543,112	787,045
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	9	15,706,807	10,078,703
Retirement benefit liability	8	629	74,411
Deferred income	10	3,780,107	5,139,091
Provisions	11	2,468,143	2,600,580
Funds held on behalf of children	12	3,805,653	4,293,355
		25,761,339	22,186,140
Total Liabilities		26,304,451	22,973,185
Total Equity and Liabilities		61,589,682	58,271,369

*This is a clean audit verified by SNG Grant Thornton.

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

SOS Children's Village Association of the Republic of South Africa

Formerly PBO 130001880
(Registration number: 001-255 NPO)
Trading as PBO 130001880

Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

Statement of Comprehensive Income

Figures in Rand	Note(s)	2024	2023 Restated*
Revenue	13	101,206,716	96,451,043
Other income	14	3,282,422	3,046,279
Operating expenses *	15	(106,835,729)	(105,338,980)
Other gains	14	3,047,590	450
Loss allowance movement		(848,370)	(164,459)
Operating deficit		(147,371)	(6,005,667)
Investment revenue	16	267,955	481,650
Finance costs	17	(133,537)	(100,101)
Deficit for the year		(12,953)	(5,624,118)
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive deficit for the year		(12,953)	(5,624,118)

*This is a clean audit verified by SNG Grant Thornton.



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**SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES**