



Annual Report 2023 – Short Version

SOS Children's Villages
Ukraine

March 2024



**SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES**

Content

Project overview	3
General description	3
Project Locations	8
Safety and security overview	9
Stakeholders	10
Child Safeguarding	10
Operational status:	11
– Family Strengthening Centers	11
– Emergency Support	12
– Foster Family Care	14
– Alternative Care	14
– Children with Injuries	15
– MHPSS	15
– CVA	15
– Self-Employment	16
– Implementing Partners	16
IPD Funded Projects	17
Projects Funded by Corporate Donors	20
Human Resources	21
Project Analysis	21
– Key challenges & corrective actions	21
– Monitoring and Evaluation	22
– Accountability to affected population (AAP)	25
– Fundraising and Communication	25
– Advocacy	26
– External coordination	28
Outlook	29
– Need of regional and international support	29

Project Overview

Project name: Ukraine 2023	
Starting date:	01/01/2023
Planned ending date:	31/12/2023
Target Country:	Ukraine
Project funded by:	PSA, Donor, etc.
Submitted by:	Serhii Lukashov
Date of submission:	16/02/2023
Reporting period:	2023
Total budget spent in 2023:	19.414.609 EUR*
2023 budget (total amount spent) HFP+other projects:	*FX rate 1 EUR=39,55824 UAH used for calculation –weighted average rate set by State Bank of Ukraine in 2023 (https://bank.gov.ua/files/Exchange_r.xls), which may differ from FX rate set in Partnerships agreements (Agreements with donors), as well as from FX rate used for budgeting and reporting.

General Description

In 2023 lives and wellbeing of children in Ukraine remained under threat due to the ongoing Russia's military aggression, which is causing losses of tens of thousands of lives, livelihoods, millions of refugees and internally displaced persons, deportation and transfer of Ukrainian citizens, including children, to Russia and Belarus, massive destruction of physical infrastructure and further occupation of Ukrainian territory by Russia.

The situation in the regions differs depending on the proximity to the front-line, being relatively stable in the western part with lower need in direct humanitarian assistance, but still remaining emergency throughout the country.

SOS CV UA entered 2023 with a well-developed network of SOS Family strengthening centers and implementing partner NGOs, thus covering 15 regions of Ukraine in order to meet the needs of the target group, which remained unchanged compared to 2022 – IDP families with children, families with children, affected by war, families of injured children, foster families. Massive blackouts throughout the country, caused by bombardments, revealed a lack of sustainable and safe

locations for children to learn and play; SOS UA responded to this challenge by establishing and equipping a network of child-friendly spaces in the regions of its presence or implementing partners' operation.

Due to the uncertain funding prospects, in the middle of the year the budget for ERP activities was revised, leading to revision and reduction of some activities, including cash and material assistance. Funding of implementing partners was also reduced with only 2 implementing partners left by the end of the year.

At the same time SOS UA focused on deeper and more diverse support of the participants and realization of its strategic goal, having launched new programs, such as Self-employment and Alternative family-based care development.

Apart from the emergency humanitarian response in the frame of the Humanitarian Funding Pool (HFP), SOS Ukraine has implemented other public-funded projects, aimed at emergency support as well as at the realization of the strategic De-I (de-institutionalization) goal.

In 2023 SOS CV UA has successfully completed several cases of reunification of families of deported children in close cooperation with governmental and NGO partners.

SOS UA 2023 activities were split between two main directions:

- ✓ Strategic - which included De-I advocacy at different levels, communities' capacity building, Alternative family-based care development and support, Fundraising&communications to raise awareness of SOS UA needs and deeds;
- ✓ Existing - which included multi-dimensional support of participants from target group, having integrated previously regular activities into emergency response actions.

The table below lists major projects implemented by SOS Ukraine in 2023:

Name of the project	Period	Locations/ Directions	Status	Budget/ EUR*	N° of unique participants	Funded by
Emergency Response Project (funded through HFP)	Total ERP (HFP) Ukraine			16.222.841**	246.251	
	2023	<i>Consortium of implementing partner NGOs</i>	Completed		102.762	Various PSAs & donors
		<i>Cash Assistance (CVA)</i>	<i>Continuation in 2024 with different</i>		5.298	

		MHPSS	<i>project plans</i>		46.759	through HFP
		<i>Injured children</i>			538	
		<i>Family placement for children</i>			1.045	
		<i>Economic empowerment (self-employment)</i>			394	
		<i>Family Strengthening Centers</i>			89.438	
		<i>Regular programs</i>			17	
Ukraine Crisis – Regional Humanitarian Response (Chernivtsi Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk and Lviv regions)	July 2022- March 2023	Chernivtsy, Ivano-Frankivsk, Uzhgorod, Lviv	Completed	977.722	3.086	Global Affairs Canada, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark - DANIDA, RTL Foundation
Supporting Ukrainian families affected by the conflict	December 2022- May 2023	Chernivtsy region	Completed	106.605	370	Canada-Ukraine Foundation
Streaming Towards Equal Possibilities – STEP	2021-2023	Brovary Kyiv region	Completed	144.461	1.454	Federal Ministry for Social Affairs,

(Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine)							Health, Care and Consumer Protection Austria (BMSGPK)
Addressing systemic gaps – Support to child welfare system reforms in Albania, Armenia, Belarus, North Macedonia and Ukraine	2021-2025	Kyiv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Zakarpattia and Lviv region	Ongoing	231.523	311		Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development Germany (BMZ)
Rebuilding hope in Ukraine. Assistance to war-affected families with children of the Bucha district project	2022-2024	Bucha district Kyiv region	Ongoing	1.046.048	8.325		Corporate donor via HGFD
Spilno	September 2022-February 2024	Vinnytsia, Zhmerynka, Pohrebyshe, Khmilnyk	Ongoing	150.142	5.712		UNICEF
Winterisation Ukraine (WINTER MEASURES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN UKRAINE) RTL AID FOR AND IN	March-July 2023	Izium	Completed	112.553	2.018		RTL
Psychosocial care intervention for war-affected girls and boys in Žytomyr, Volodymyr and Kherson oblasts, Ukraine	July-December 2023	Kherson region	Ongoing	55.828	2.297		Regione Lombardia

Integrated multisectoral child protection response to the destructive effects of war and flooding in Southeast Ukraine	August, 2023 – July, 2024	Mykolaiv region	Ongoing	189.462	1.901	MFA Denmark
Akelius SC 2	2018-2043	Kyiv	Ongoing	177.425	419	Akelius
TOTAL				19.414.609 * EUR	272.144	

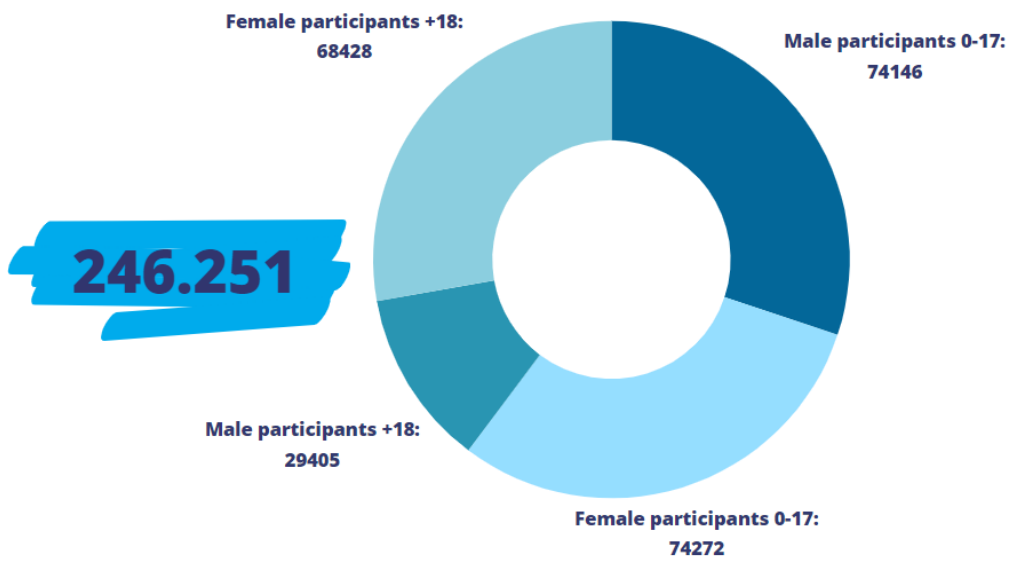
*FX rate 1 EUR=39,55824 UAH used for calculation – weighted average rate set by State Bank of Ukraine in 2023 (https://bank.gov.ua/files/Exchange_r.xls), which may differ from FX rate set in Partnerships agreements (Agreements with donors), as well as from FX rate used for budgeting and reporting.

**The ERP HA Pool funded program that is shown here at 16,222,841 euros does not capture Mykolaiv, Kerson and Akelius projects that are detailed separately below. The total amount including these and as per Navision reporting; is 19,008,919 euros: 19,008,919EUR at the budget exchange rate 1 EUR=34.54 UAH //16,645,557EUR at the average exchange rate from January to December 23 1EUR=39.55824 UAH (National Bank of Ukraine).

Project Locations



Total number of direct cumulative program participants covered by the Humanitarian Funding Pool (HFP) in 2023:



Safety and Security Overview 2023

The year 2023 has been devastating for the people of Ukraine. The war in the country has continued to escalate causing daily destructions of civilian infrastructure, death and suffering, and generating humanitarian needs along the entire frontline.

Achieving no significant progress in the offensive, Russian forces have continued missile and kamikaze drones' attacks across the county focusing on critical infrastructure. Along the frontline the Russian army continues the tactics of chaotic shelling at places where civilians are concentrated – market squares, places where humanitarian aid is distributed, shopping centers, etc. An NGO warehouse in Lviv, far away from the front line, was burned to the ground in an attack in September 2023, destroying 300 tons of humanitarian aid. Since the escalation of war till now, the World Health Organization verified over 1,300 attacks on health care in Ukraine, accounting for more than 60 per cent of all attacks against health care in the world over this period.

In December 2023 the UN human rights office (OHCHR) has verified 10,065 civilians killed and a further 18,679 injured since February 2022.

No accidents involving SOS UA personnel have been reported since the beginning of 2023. SOS CV UA continues round-the-clock monitoring of the country's security environment, focusing on the organization's operational areas. SOS CV UA provides services and assistance to the organization's participants in strict accordance with safety and security rules and procedures and takes care about safety of its personnel and participants.

SOS UA continues conducting security assessment of existing and potentially new locations. MHPSS teams operating in Kharkiv Oblast and SOS CV UA personnel in Mykolaiv have been provided with additional safety equipment (lightweight body armors and helmets especially developed for humanitarian missions and NGO operating in hazardous environment, first aid kits). SOS CV UA personnel continued to undergo First Aid Training and Mine and Unexploded Ordnance Risk Awareness Training. The trainings were organized in collaboration with the Ukrainian Red Cross Society and the HALO Trust organization.

All SOS UA personnel are aware of the established safety and security procedures in case of missile attacks. The missile strike warning system is well established and practically functioning. All SOS CV UA vehicles are equipped with appropriate safety and security stuff (first aid kits, fire extinguishers, light-reflecting vests, etc.). Taking all necessary precautions, SOS Children's Villages Ukraine is going to continue services of local SOS Family Strengthening Centers, whenever the security situation allows, and if necessary, will evacuate colleagues out of the most endangered locations.

Stakeholders

Providing big scale humanitarian assistance, SOS keeps its expertise and maintains partnership in core and newly established activities. The constant work is taking place on the highest level on issues of child's rights and protection: Office of President, Vice Prime Minister, through the weekly working group. SOS Ukraine is coordinating with both Human rights and Child's rights ombudsmen. On the Ministry level SOS Ukraine cooperates with Ministry of Social Policy and newly-established inter-Ministerial body The Coordination Center for Family Upbringing and Child Care Development. SOS Ukraine is involved to work of a highest advisory body, chaired by the Vice-President, named National Coordination Headquarters on Child Right, that is meeting regularly on coordinating measures to protect the rights, freedoms and legal interests of children affected by military aggression.

While the needs in assistance are immense and there are different humanitarian actors, coordination is happening through OCHA Clusters and Ukrainian Child's Rights Network, through agreements with local authorities and contacts with communities. Collective accommodation centres for IDPs, child-friendly spaces support is done by implementing partner NGOs through collaboration with communities' volunteers and with contribution of other local and international NGOs. Main stakeholders continue to be Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, local authorities, local children's services and newly-established inter-Ministerial body The Coordination Center for Family Upbringing and Child Care Development.. SOS Ukraine is collaborating with national and local media on advocating child's rights, De-I reform etc. and on public outreach.

Child Safeguarding

The most important achievement in Child Safeguarding (CS) area was that we fully adapted our CS system to the emergency response context.

The National CS Adviser was hired in 2023.

The structure and composition of the CS teams at the national and local levels was updated: today we have 11 local CS teams and the National CS team.

New procedures, instructions and rules have been developed and implemented:

- Procedure for responding to complaints and concerns about child abuse or other inappropriate behavior for the child safeguarding team, 2023;
- Instructions on use complaints boxes, 2023;
- Rules for visiting the locations of the SOS Children's Villages Ukraine, 2023;
- MEMO "Responding to reports of child abuse", 2023.

Onboarding training and orientation regarding CS policy and the child safeguarding approach are provided to all those working for or on behalf of SOS Children's Villages Ukraine, including partners organizations.

A new channel for CS complaints and concerns has been created - "The phone number of the National Child Safeguarding focal point". For today a separate phone number, email, complaints boxes, face-to-face reporting to the members of the child safeguarding team both at local and national level are in place. Posters with CS channels are placed in each location next to the complaint's boxes. A child and youth - appropriate reporting mechanism is in place in every location. Anonymous reporting is also possible using a special phone number and email.

National and local CS risks assessments have been successfully carried out in 2023 by all our CS teams. During this process we provide involvement of children and young people in the process of local (program) CS risk assessment.

As of today our staff successfully identifies and responds to CS incidents as well as incidents of child abuse committed outside the organization (e.g., domestic violence incidents).

CS monitoring commissioned by IOR CEE/CIS/ME PD Department, 07 August - 11 August 2023, Ukraine confirmed that SOS CV UA CS system corresponds to SOS CS standards.

Operational Status:

Emergency Response Project: Status of implementation of activities

Family Strengthening Centers (HFP-funded)

The network of FSCs is an organizational basis of SOS operations. FSC is a multi-disciplinary team, working in well equipped premises, where complex services were provided to the SOS' target group. SOS CV UA introduced **case-management approach** into all its locations, thus providing deep and customized 360° support to the most vulnerable families with children.

89,438 unique participants were supported by SOS CV UA team of professionals in **7 regions of Ukraine**. Like in 2022, in 2023 the assistance was focused on families with children, affected by the war, though taking into account danger of learned helplessness spreading among supported families. SOS CV UA intended to remain the provider of high-quality services with a strong belief that it's **not money or things that help, but people**. Thus, material and financial assistance was revised and reduced with focus moved onto provision of customized services.

It is worth mentioning, that for those families who could not take advantages of visiting our centers **mobile teams** were operating, delivering our support and expertise to those who needed those.

Our team had a clear understanding that one of the main problems IDP families faced in their new places to live was lack of socialization opportunities. Thus, for quick and effective adaptation of internally displaced persons in a new community, their socio-cultural integration, organization of information services, training, development and joint family leisure, a network of **child-friendly spaces** was launched, in cooperation with local governmental and NGO partners with SOS CV UA team providing services for children and their parents.

In 2023 the following assistance was provided via SOS CV UA Family Strengthening Centers:

- Psychosocial services (individual and group sessions)
- Financial support
- Food and non-food support
- Medical support
- Educational support
- Professional trainings and courses for parents
- Trainings for service-providers in local communities

Psychosocial support provided by SOS UA team deserves additional attention because of its range. Depending on the needs, our specialists introduced different approaches, techniques and tools, helping to cope with trauma and stress caused by the war. Some children could even take advantage of customized and individualized therapy.

Highlights for 2024:

- Professional and competent specialists with a sufficient level of experience, knowledge, skills and abilities are of prior importance; improvement of the level of their knowledge through trainings, seminars, workshops, as well as self-education is essential
- Clearly defined procedures, responsible and deadlines are the key to a high-quality service provided;
- Exchange of experience with other locations, governmental and NGO partners;
- To increase recognition and sustainability in the social services market, it is necessary to work closely with territorial communities, as well as representatives of public authorities at the local level.
- Project activities are unstable and unpredictable, there is a continuous need to be ready for anything and, most importantly, for changes.

Emergency support

Besides the defined areas of activities, the project also applied cross-approaches in providing the necessary assistance to the participants. Such areas were providing medical assistance; providing food assistance both in kind and in the form of certificates for the purchase of products in widespread supermarket chains; providing humanitarian assistance, mostly in kind; assistance with housing rent; educational support for children; legal support of families.

Health

Considering health support, approaches were used both for the provision of medical units (medicines) and small medical equipment on one hand, and support for receiving medical services - consultations, research and other small manipulations on the other hand. During the project implementation, it was possible to provide **6,434 participants** with medicines and other medicinal products through the efforts of SOS CV and implementing partners, and **864 participants** were able to receive support in undergoing medical examinations and receiving consultations.

Food

During the history of conducted research in Ukraine it was defined that most of the citizens' income was directed to the purchase of food. The last study of 2023 showed that on average Ukrainians spend about 42% of their income on products. Support of vulnerable categories, especially at the first critical stages for stabilizing the situation, was a priority in the work of the organization in 2023. Therefore, a large support resource was directed specifically to providing these participants with the necessary food items or certificates for them to purchase the necessary goods. **87,865 participants** were able to receive support from the SOS CV and the organization's partners (IP) in 2023.

Accommodation and NFIs

The case with affordable housing is one of those problems that only got worse after the full-scale invasion. The organization directly assisted **193 participants** in 2023 and helped foster families to close this need for a safe living environment.

Non-food items aid, as well as food aid, was supposed to help to cover basic needs in the first stages of stabilizing the situation in families. To provide such assistance, both SOS CV's resources and implementing partner organizations' resources were involved. **88,107 people** were able to meet their essential needs for clothing, hygiene products, household goods, dishes, bed linen, etc.

Education

During the pandemic and full-scale invasion existing gaps in children's knowledge became even more noticeable. The organization's task was to support families with children by providing educational services. Those services were aimed both at supporting younger children who were preparing to study in schools and older children who were preparing to enter higher education institutions, as well as supporting children who had lost their potential because of hostilities. Therefore, the services were aimed at preparing for enrolling to educational institutions, renewing lost knowledge and strengthening children's abilities in the current academic period, mastering the necessary knowledge in language, mathematics etc. In addition to learning activities there was also provided the services of a speech therapist, and the equipment necessary for children to study. Thanks to educational support from SOS CV and implementing partners, it was possible to support **14,906 children**.

Legal support

Mostly families who were forced to leave their place of residence, which often happens in a hurry, or without the opportunity to pick up their documents, need legal support. Such families benefit from legal support services, where a specialist helps with the procedure of restoring lost documents, establishing the status of an IDP etc. In 2023, such support was provided through partner organizations (IP) and **923 participants** were able to receive the necessary legal assistance.

CFS

During 2023 the SOS CV actively supported the establishing of child-friendly spaces by NGO and institutional partners. Such spaces were intended to cover the existing gaps in the socialization of children, the absence of places for learning, development and quality time spending, the absence

of communication with peers. In 2023, **60,976 participants** were able to enjoy a safe and comfortable environment for children and young people, total number of established spaces being 73 by the end of 2023.

Foster Family Care

In 2023, Foster family care (foster families, family-type children's homes) was provided to 144 children, including young people, from the Kyiv and Luhansk programs (foster families relocated abroad to SOS Poland and other countries, and safer regions of Ukraine).

Support was provided to 23 foster families, in which 114 children are being raised, and supervised independent living services were also provided to 30 young people who left foster families, including 7 young people in a small group home.

All children and young people receive support according to individual needs through case management, including educational, psychological services, medical support, purchase of basic necessities, etc.

- 4 foster mothers from SOS Ukraine received a gold ring from HGFD for successful work for 10 years.
- Support provided included but was not limited to:
 - Educational services
 - Correctional and speech therapy
 - Psychological support for foster children
 - Supervision for foster parents
 - Classes with a social pedagogue
 - Financial aid, etc.

Alternative Care capacity building

Another program launched in 2023 to assist in realization of SOS CV UA strategic goals; **1045 participants** covered in 2023. Tasks set:

- information campaign at the national level, which would contribute to increasing the number of candidates for Alternative family-based care;
- development of the capacity of the Organization's specialists of six locations of presence to provide social support services to Alternative family-based care;
 - strengthening the capacity of local partners of the six locations of the Organization's presence to create Alternative family-based care and support for existing ones;
 - improving the availability of up-to-date information on the creation of Alternative family-based care for potential candidates for Alternative family-based care;
 - responding to direct appeals from Alternative family-based care and appeals from state partners to provide support to Alternative family-based care that do not live in the locations of the Organization's presence;
 - Activities held:
 - information campaign launched
 - trainings for groups of candidates for Alternative family-based care, existing Alternative family-based care
 - trainings for the local service-providing specialists

- family camp "Restart" for Alternative family-based care from among family-type children's homes and foster families from the locations where the Organization represented.

Children with Injuries

Comprehensive assistance to children who suffered injuries (damage to health) due to hostilities in Ukraine in 2022-2023 and their families in order to restore functioning, promote full and efficient participation in society, and prevent, overcome, mitigate the repercussions of difficult life circumstances.

538 children and their family members received various types of assistance, including: educational services medical and psychological rehabilitation; medical support; speech therapist support; legal support; financial & material support; educational support for children who have gaps in knowledge for health reasons.

In 2023, two children's friendly spaces (CFS) were opened in the largest multidisciplinary children's hospital „Okhmatdyt“, which treated children who have been injured from all over Ukraine.

MHPSS – Mental Health Psycho Social Support

During 2023, 44,570 participants were covered by the services of psychologists from the mobile teams.

1,133 children took part in the psychological support camp. 1,056 parents with children took part in the family camp.

Psychological assistance was provided through the implementation of such activities:

- Psychological resilience lessons by mobile teams of psychologists in schools for IDP children and local communities affected by Russian military aggression.
- Trainings with specialists (teachers, specialists of social services) who work with children and families on the prevention of professional burnout, recognition of injuries in children and primary PSS care, referral, as well as training in coping strategies of specialists.
- Events for cohesion and communication for children and their parents
- Psychosocial support camps in safe regions for children from vulnerable categories from different regions.
- Mutual support groups for parents of children who have been physically injured.
- Individual consultations for children and their parents.

CVA - Cash and Voucher Assistance

In 2023, CVA team provided cash assistance to 18,061 participants some of them received cash assistance only, others – under complex support of SOS CV UA Family strengthening centers.

Multi-purpose cash assistance was provided to 16,584 participants among foster families, families of guardians, as well as internally displaced persons with children.

Conditional cash assistance was provided to 1,477 participants from the following categories: adoptive parents to meet the needs of adopted children; children placed in Alternative family-

based care in 2023; families of internally displaced persons with children who have medical needs; families with children injured as a result of the military aggression against Ukraine; families with children affected by the military aggression against Ukraine to ensure the basic needs of families.

In 2023, the CVA team continued to be a member of the Cash Working Group by OCHA, participating in meetings and regularly providing Activity reports and post distribution monitoring reports.

Self-employment

In 2023, the "Self-employment" project was launched, aimed at contributing to increasing incomes, self-sufficiency of families and, accordingly, improving the level of well-being of children in vulnerable families.

There were two phases arranged within the project for parents or people who replaced them: a phase of training from various specialists and a phase of business plans development. The further competitive selection of the participants' business plans was aimed at choosing among all the proposed options those being of priority and realistic for implementation during the project implementation period.

The geography of the project covered the regions to which the intensive movement of internally displaced persons primarily took place. Among 441 people (394 of them unique) who took part in the project, 51 participants (10 of them unique) were able to receive a grant to restore or start their own business. The following directions of small forms of entrepreneurship were of interest for the participants: provision of services in beauty industry (cosmetology, hairdressing etc.), confectionery production, small gardening and farming, food production, educational services for adults, etc. The amount of grants awarded to grantees varied from UAH 50,000 to UAH 150,000 (approximately from EUR 1,256 to EUR 3,769).

Implementing Partners

The strategy of working in a consortium with partners was chosen to use the strengths of other NGOs, build synergies, learn from experience sharing and coordination, and to reach more participants, both geographically and in terms of target groups.

Total amount of **unique participants** supported by SOS CV UA via implementing partners being **102,762**. In 2023 SOS CV UA engaged the following implementing partners:

- 1. Charitable Foundation "Pomagayem" (We help);**
- 2. Charitable organization "Ukrainian Educational Platform";**
- 3. All-Ukrainian charitable organization "Convictus Ukraine";**
- 4. Charitable Foundation "Slavic Heart";**
- 5. Charitable foundation "Vitryla dytynstva";**
- 6. CSO "Resource center of public initiatives";**

7. Non-governmental organization "Ukrainian Womanity";
8. CSO "Fishing Club of Ukraine" (FCUUC);
9. CSO "Green-Landia";
10. NGO "Public Movement "Faith, Hope, Love"
11. Public Organization "Fund Professional Development of Kharkiv".
12. Non-governmental organization „Volonter“
13. Charitable organization "Charitable Foundation "SOS Headquarters of Civil Defense"

The following services were provided to vulnerable families with children:

- Humanitarian support
- Psychosocial support
- Legal support
- Educational support
- Child-friendly spaces

The monitoring and reporting were an essential part of cooperation within the consortium, with Child Protection policy properly implemented.

Due to budget reduction SOS CV UA had to abandon this modality of work and to keep only two implementing partners by 2024

IPD-funded Projects

SPIILNO (funding donor – UNICEF)

The project was being implemented in cooperation with the national coalition "Ukrainian Child Rights Network" since September 2022, aimed at improvement of social services at the community level with its main goal – to provide psychological assistance to children in a network of child-friendly spaces, as well as through mobile teams, to increase the competencies of social workers, to develop the capacity of communities in the provision of social services. **5,712 participants** were covered in 2023.

Integrated Cross-Sectoral Child Protection Response to the Devastating Consequences of War and Floods in Southeastern Ukraine (funding donor – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark)

In July 2023, the project was launched with the financial support of the Danish International Development Agency-Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark.

One more SOS CV UA Family Strengthening Center was opened in Mykolaiv to provide services and support to the affected families with children in Mykolaiv region. The problem of recruiting qualified personnel for the location was a great challenge, but the team successfully launched and operated the project.

This Center differed from the others by higher share of humanitarian component in its activities due to the proximity to the frontline and high number of families with children (local and internally displaced from Kherson region) severely affected by the war. The Center and its mobile team provided a range of services, such as:

- Individual psychological consultations;
- Individual speech therapy consultations;
- Organization of self-help groups;
- Organization of recreational activities for children and parents;
- Organization of master classes; art therapy activities;
- Organization of groups for the provision of educational services;
- Distribution of NFI

In the period from October 2023 to the year end, the project team covered **1,901 unique participants**.

Psychosocial care intervention for war-affected girls and boys in Zhytomyr, Volodymyr and Kherson oblasts, Ukraine (funding donor - Regione Lombardia, Italy)

The project aimed at providing psychosocial assistance to children in Kherson region, with the mobile team based in Mykolaiv Family Strengthening Center, launched in July 2023. By the end of 2023, it covered 2,297 participants from war-affected territories, having demonstrated a great synergy with the project "Integrated Cross-Sectoral Child Protection Response to the Devastating Consequences of War and Floods in Southeastern Ukraine".

Ukraine Crisis – Regional Humanitarian Response (funding donor - Global Affairs Canada, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark; DANIDA, RTL Foundation)

The project funded by started in 2022 with the main center in Chernivtsi, aimed at providing essential support to the most vulnerable internally displaced families with children. It included distribution of multi-purpose cash assistance to affected families with children, distribution of newborn kits and running of a Mother-and-Child friendly space. In 2023 it covered 3,086 participants.

Supporting Ukrainian families affected by the conflict (funding donor - Canada-Ukraine Foundation)

The project was launched in late 2022, it contributed to operations of Chernivtsi Family Strengthening Center with extra funding for Child-Friendly spaces in Chernivtsi, psychosocial and multi-purpose cash assistance to the internally displaced families with children. In 2023 it covered 370 participants.

STEP - A step towards equal opportunities (funding donor - Federal Ministry for Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection Austria (BMSGPK))

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the improvement of the well-being, mental and physical health and reintegration into society of women, children and adolescents, with a special focus on girls, from socially and economically disadvantaged families. It was launched in December 2021, revised and rearranged in 2022 when the war started, and completed in May 2023, having provided complex services and financial assistance to families with children as well as promoting gender equality culture in the society. The project covered 1,454 participants in 2023.

Addressing systemic gaps – Support to child welfare system reforms in Albania, Armenia, Belarus, North Macedonia and Ukraine (funding donor - Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development Germany (BMZ))

The project was launched in 2021 with the main goal being to achieve macro level changes in the legislation, policy objectives, regulatory and financing mechanisms enabling effective development of family and community-based care & support services on municipal (Hromada) levels. 6 communities were selected to participate in the project.

The project's current achievements:

- During 2023, in cooperation with the Coordination Center for Family Development and Childcare, SOS CV Ukraine participated in working groups on a new De-I strategy's development.
- Two studies were conducted:
 - research to identify the reasons for the decrease of the number of foster families;
 - sociological research on child abandonment.
- Case management, parental capacity strengthening, cross sectoral coordination, domestic violence prevention, budget planning trainings were provided for the local authorities and social work professionals

The project covered 311 participants in 2023, being a strong support to SOS CV UA advocacy efforts.

Based on the achievements of this project, further work is needed to build on the DI Strategy after its endorsement, to help implement DI at the local level, but also addressing important issues on the macro and meso level: capacity building, awareness raising, solving the deficit of social work professionals.

Projects Funded by Corporate Donors

Rebuilding hope in Ukraine. Assistance to war-affected families with children of the Buchansky district (funded by corporate donor via HGFD)

Another project to meet emergency needs of war-affected families with children, being implemented in Kyiv region (Bucha district) since November 2022. The project comprises the following components:

- Investment, aimed at assisting families whose residential property was damaged, in repairing and equipping their homes, as well as procurement of a modular house for a Family Strengthening Center, providing psychosocial assistance to the affected families
- Educational, including providing children and teachers with necessary gadgets, equipping sensory rooms for children, providing supervisions for teachers and school psychologists as well as providing additional needed classes in required disciplines for children
- Socio-pedagogical
- Psychological
- Supporting

The services were provided on the basis of the Family Strengthening Center, equipped child-friendly spaces as well as by mobile teams to 8,325 participants in 2023.

Winterisation Ukraine RTL (WINTER AID MEASURES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN UKRAINE) (funding donor – RTL foundation)

The projects was launched in March 2023, aimed at providing state social partners with equipment to overcome possible blackouts as well as creation of the «Hub of Resilience» space in the educational establishment of Izium (Kharkiv oblast), all repairs were completed during May-July 2023. The space was created as part of the shelter for security reasons to be the place where children and their families could access basic services such as electricity, clean water, internet, communications. In addition, visitors could communicate and interact with each other in a comfortable environment, so the arrangement of such a space contributed to the provision of educational and leisure needs. The space was launched in August. 2,018 participants benefited from this project.

Akelius SC 2 (funding donor – Akelius)

A long-lasting support for the Youth Center in Kyiv started in 2018, in 2023 allowed SOS CV UA to cover 419 participants with psychosocial services. On top of skills and information, obtained by the young participants during various trainings, the opportunity for socialization, cooperation and interaction for the teenagers is of the highest importance.

Human Resources

In the first half of 2023 SOS Ukraine has expanded its work within the framework of emergency response by launching new activities and hiring new employees. The number of SOS Ukraine staff was growing according to the planned activities based on the growing response.

At the end of 2022, 208 employees worked in SOS Ukraine team in HFP and 12 more in IPD projects. For 2023, 441 employees were budgeted, including potential new locations (or 360 employees without new locations).

During 2023, due to the reduced funding and in accordance with the recommendations of the Regional office, the organization reduced the number of budgeted positions to 302. This meant decreasing by 32% from the preliminary budgeted number of positions (or 16% of the number excluding new locations). Additionally, it was decided to reduce the staff number by 23% for the next year (compared to the last approved headcount of 302). So, SOS UA ended 2023 with 265 staff members in HFP. And 2024 was going to be started with 234 positions in HFP.

The biggest challenges during the year were to find the right qualified staff in a highly competitive labor market. English-speaking persons are very difficult to find for managerial or advisory positions. There is also a large shortage of qualified specialists among social workers and psychologists who are in big demand in Ukraine as well as other staff in social area.

Nevertheless, SOS CV UA has managed to find the right people for key positions, such as Head of ERP Program, M&E Specialists, as well as staff the teams with field workers.

The HR needs were quite high as we needed to implement all the activities planned for 2023 with a high quality. To provide good quality of work, the organization should provide good quality of staff and prevent their burnout. A lot of resources were spent to ensure proper onboarding, trainings, staff care such as health insurance and regular supervisions. As well, the channels of complaints and whistleblowing were functioning: three signals from employees were received and resolved.

Emergency response work is difficult, exhausting and requires flexibility, quick response and inclusion. So, the human resources should be evenly distributed depending on the tasks and workload, as this affects the quality of work and the level of support provided to participants.

Project Analysis

Key Challenges and Corrective Actions

Challenges	Corrective actions taken
Expansion of SOS Ukraine geographic area of operation. Opening of new SOS Ukraine offices required safety and security assessment.	SOS Ukraine offices across the country were subjected to comprehensive safety and security assessment.

Long-lasting blackouts during the winter period, with no schedule, impacted the work of SOS Ukraine and the lives of vulnerable families we support.	Winterization purchases for program participants are supplemented with equipment to adapt to blackouts. Adaptive equipment to ensure autonomous electricity in offices.
The provision of generators to program participants increased the risk of fire hazard and the risk of possible carbon monoxide poisoning.	SOS Ukraine developed an easy-to-read safety instruction. The program participants were given a brief on appropriate safety measures. In addition to power generators, the program participants were provided fire extinguishers and smoke detectors as well as safety instruction.
Work is interrupted often by alarms that impact all daily activities.	Establishing bomb shelters where program participants could feel safe and comfortable.
Lack of a sufficient number of personnel with a steady increase in the number of IDP clients	Increasing staff number.
To ensure safety and security of international visitors to Ukraine.	Travel safety program has been developed.
Needs are greater than SOS Ukraine can cover, too many people address new Centers of Social Services	Prioritization and eligibility/vulnerability criteria in place.
Work in uncertain conditions, constantly changing needs and risks.	Most affected regions should be reached. Risk assessment for each location. Adjustment of activities to the new needs. Security trainings.
Professional burnout of employees and an increase in the probability of Child Safeguarding incidents.	Providing the relevant trainings and supervisions for employees.
High inflation rate	Recalculation of expenses and indexation.
A significant increase in the budget, large purchases, the inability to promptly cover urgent needs.	Simplify Procurement Procedures
Escalation of hostilities in unpredicted region, time/manner	Developing of evacuation plan.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation in 2023 involved the collection of quantitative data, according to the Logframe in which indicators were established referring commitments of the Core Humanitarian Standard and the CP Minimum Standards. Quantitative data on the activities that took place in the Family Strengthening Centers, other spaces (such as CFS), the activities of the mobile teams etc.

were collected by the location coordinators and fixed monthly in the monitoring tables, and further in the dashboard. These indicators helped to record the progress of achieving the set targets and to thoroughly respond to challenges if they happened. Monthly reports were approved by ND and NPDD and provided to regional advisors to further inform PSA's.

Due to the specifics of the work of the SOS UA in 2023, the essential task of the monitoring and evaluation team was to develop a quality data collection system that corresponds to the planned Logframe. In addition to those tools that already have been used in SOS UA practices, there was a need to develop approaches that would allow the M&E team to monitor the organization's work, directly receiving feedback from either program or project participants. Therefore, the goal was not only to confirm the planned targets, yet also to carry out research on the experience of the participants when interacting with the organization. In the work of the monitoring team in 2023, such tools and activities were widely used as: monitoring visits to locations, conducting focus groups with participants who represented different groups of the target audience with whom the organization works, conducting surveys in online or telephone form, conducting in-depth interviews with key informants, etc. One of the most common indicators that was set to be researched is the indicator of the level of satisfaction with the services provided by the organization.

The level of achievement of quality results in 2023 was:

Case management

Target - % of children and caregivers who report satisfaction with direct services received and the response actions taken through the CM process (**90% of 2,747 participants**)

Result - **99%** (of **2,806 participants**)

Target - % of caseworkers trained and supervised in CPCM who demonstrate improvement in knowledge and competence in applying the CM process (**80% of 250 specialists**)

Result - **100%** (of **78 specialists**)

MHPSS

Target - % of children and their caregivers who report improvement in their mental health and psychosocial well-being following programme completion (**70% of 41,890 SOS UA + 10,950 IP**)

Result - **77%** (68% children, 63% teenagers, 100% adults) (of **63,137 SOS UA** (incl. 46,796 by mobile teams + camps) + **12,353 IP**)

Target - % of specialists trained and supervised who demonstrate improvement in knowledge and competence in MHPSS (**70% of 1,500 specialists**)

Result - **98%** (of **1,356 specialists**)

Health

Target - % of children and their caregivers who report stabilization in their physical health following programme completion (**70% of 4,060 SOS UA + 2,590 IP**)

Result - **96%** (of **4,521 SOS UA + 2,775 IP**)

Food

Target - % of families satisfied with the food support (**70%** of **24,170 SOS UA + 61,600 IP**)

Result - **98%** (of **21,832 SOS UA + 66,033 IP**)

Accommodation and NFIs

Target - % of families satisfied with the accommodation provided through the programme (**70%** of **170 families**)

Result - **96%** (of **193 families**)

Target - % of families satisfied with NFIs provided through the programme (**70%** of **43,200 SOS UA + 50,500 IP**)

Result - **94%** (of **34,613 SOS UA + 53,494 IP**)

Children with injuries

Target - % of cases under holistic support where children and/or their caregivers report satisfaction with the received services (**70%** of **1,200 participants**)

Result - **96%** (of **1,174 participants**)

Cash

Target - % of households able to cover their basic needs as a result of MPC support (**70%** of **14,048 households**)

Result - **98%** (98% MPC + 99% Conditional cash) (of **16,584 MPC** + of **1,477 Conditional cash households**)

Alternative care

Target - % of foster caregivers/specialists trained and supervised who demonstrate improvement in knowledge and competence in alternative care (**70%** of **260 foster caregivers** and **260 specialists**)

Result - **94%** (100% candidates to be foster caregivers or adoptive parents, 83% foster caregivers, 100% specialists) (of **241 foster caregivers** + **278 specialists**)

Economic empowerment

Target - % of caregivers of children living in vulnerable situations surveyed who report earning a stable income after receiving livelihoods support (**70%** of **472 SOS UA + 50 IP**)

Result - According to internal project documents in 2023, caregivers of children living in vulnerable situations could have reported to the organization they are earning a stable income after receiving livelihoods support, yet this option could only be reached within a year after receiving a grant. Therefore, there are no fully accomplished results except the one in progress implementation. 98% participants reported that they are satisfied with training program and increasing their knowledge and 85% participants reported about the effectiveness of the project for them.

Education

Target - % of children who received tutoring reported/showed increased knowledge and skills in the selected subjects (**80%** of **2,190 SOS + 4,600 IP**)

Result - **93%** (of **9,564 SOS UA + 5,342 IP**)

Legal support

Target - % of targeted families satisfied with legal support (**70%** of **800 IP**)

Result - **100%** (of **923 IP**)

CFS

Target - % of regions of SOS presence where culturally, gender-, age-sensitive group activities are accessible to children (**100%** of **8 regions**)

Result – **175%** (of **14 regions**)

Target - % of children and caregivers surveyed who report an increased sense of safety and well-being due to participation in group activities compared to the beginning of the intervention (**80%** of **22,880 SOS UA + 2,170 IP**)

Result - **80%** (of **57,956 SOS UA + 3,020 IP**)

Accountability to Affected Population - Feedback and Complaints Mechanism (FCM)

SOS CV UA Feedback and Complaints mechanism is designed to gather feedback and complaints about the different activities carried out by SOS CV or by its implementing partners, staff behavior or staff acting on SOS CVI's behalf as well as feedback and complaints related directly to the commitments made by SOS CV UA. The main purpose of the Feedback and Complaints Mechanism is to ensure transparency and effectiveness by having in place inclusive and accessible ways for children and communities who directly participate or are impacted by our programs to share feedback and complaints that they might have. By receiving feedback and complaints, we are able to understand how the program affects program participants' well-being, what aspects can be improved, and how to provide more appropriate and relevant support to the affected population. In addition, the mechanism can help to reduce the likelihood of corruption and abuse of power and helps preventing the likelihood of potential child safeguarding incidents

Fundraising & Communication

In 2023 SOS Children's Villages celebrated the 20th anniversary of work in Ukraine by organizing a series of events in different locations and a main event in Kyiv for key partners (more than 100 participants). SOS CV UA got 13th rank in top-100 rating of charitable organizations of Ukraine.

During the specified period, the leading international media made publications about the activities of SOS Children's Villages Ukraine: BBC, New York Times, Daily News, Focus, Al Jazeera, L'Espresso, Ceske Noviny. More than 1500 materials were published in Ukrainian and international media, 258 publications were made by 20 TOP Ukrainian media. The estimated reach of all publications (unique users who viewed materials) during the year is around 4,3 mln.

In October an English version of the organization's website was launched.

A new regional office in Mykolaiv and child-friendly spaces (more than 40) around the country were branded with SOS Children's Villages visuals to promote an organizational brand.

In the second half of the year SOS Children's Villages Ukraine started and enlarged communication activities with the newly created state body "Coordination Center for the Development of Family Care" responsible for De-I promotion and activation.

Fundraising activities were continued with existing and new corporate partners - in-kind donations, financial support for organization projects, which in total contributed to SOS CV UA over **750,000 EUR**. We can't but mention Vaillant, Mercedes, IKEA, L'Oreal, P&G, Porsche, FM Logistics, DHL Ukraine – and more others, who keep supporting SOS UA participants in different ways.

Advocacy

In wartime advocacy is primarily aimed at ensuring the safety of children, not separating children from their parents, providing each child with a family (parent) who can take care of and protect them.

Advocacy strengthens the programmatic efforts of SOS CV UA to ensure the protection of the rights and needs of children in Ukraine. For a long time, our target groups were not prioritized in the policy, programming and funding of national development programs.

Children deprived of parental care and children from families living in difficult life circumstances - became the most vulnerable during the war. Children deported by Russia are a consequence of the De-I reform that was not implemented in previous years. In 2023, the political will appeared at the level of the President of Ukraine, and opportunities appeared for advocating the restart of the De-I reform.

Advocacy efforts in 2023 were directed at communications at the international, national, and local government levels regarding the promotion of the De-I reform, the development of Foster family care, and direct expert participation in the development of the Project of the new De-I Strategy. Also, SOS Ukraine publicly communicated in high-ranking mass media and international public events regarding the protection of the rights and return of deported children and the importance of implementing the De-I reform in order to create conditions for their return to the family environment.

SOS CV UA representatives take part in various thematic events of local, national and international level, including Ukraine Recovery Conference, session of Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), etc.

A total of 5,865 people from among government, international stakeholders, representatives of civil society, and non-governmental organizations were covered by advocacy messages during public speeches and official meetings of SOS DM Ukraine in 2023.

SOS CV UA has expanded its engagement with the government and key stakeholders: Child care in the family environment was promoted during various events and meetings in which SOS UA NPDD participates: OCHA Working Group meeting (regular), National Child Protection Subcluster (regular), CMUASC regularly, CM/UASC Task meeting Force every two weeks and other important events. SOS CV UA actively participates in all working groups under the leadership of IOR and IO.

Inclusion of the De-I reform as a priority in the Human capital block of the government project of the Plan of Ukraine with funds from the Ukraine Facility (developed by the Ministry of Economy).

The Ukraine Plan is a comprehensive document that will become a program of recovery and economic development of the state for the next 4 years. On the initiative of the SOS, a joint statement from UMPD on the importance of including De-I reforms in the Ukraine Plan was developed and presented during the meeting. Result: Inclusion of De-I reform in the draft Plan of Ukraine in the Human capital block.

Representatives of SOS CV UA established contact with the Ministry of Community Development, Territories and Infrastructure regarding the defense of the ban on the reconstruction of residential institutions.

Representatives of SOS CV UA are invited to become the members of working groups for the development of the National Government Strategy and the De-I reform plan, which allows us to influence national politics for the benefit of our target group. This working group at the Coordinating Center for Family Based care Development is an advisory body created under the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine), which acts on the initiative of the Office of the President of Ukraine and with the support of the European Union.

All these efforts and advocacy actions at different levels - from the international to the level of the local government systematically bring SOS Ukraine closer to achieving the mission of organization and implementation overall programme policy SOS Care Promise.

External Coordination

Name and Location of Cluster /Coordination Group	Name and position of SOS team member	Date of Meeting
Ukrainian Child Right Network	Darya Kasyanova	Regularly
Zakarpattia offline Protection cluster,	Natalia Kryvoruchko	Regularly
Ivano-Frankivsk offline Protection Cluster meeting and OCHA meeting	Alla Kotliar	Regularly
Cash Working Group (CWG)	Maryna Polianska	Regularly
MHPSS	Olha Shapoval	Twice a month
MHPSS Zakarpattia regional group	Olha Shapoval	Twice a month
MHPSS Lviv regional group	Olha Shapoval	Twice a month
Protection cluster	Oksana Glazunova	Regularly

Child Protection SubCluster	Oksana Glazunova	Regularly
CP Cluster Working Group on Accompanied Children	Darya Kasyanova	Regularly
Ukraine security meeting	Mikheil Golijashvili and Volodymyr Postrybailo	As needed
Ukraine travel safety and security meeting	Mikheil Golijashvili, Augustus Wilberding, Julian Erjautz, Caroline Taylor, Sarah Alex, Volodymyr Postrybailo	As needed
Ukraine security information exchange	Mikheil Golijashvili and Volodymyr Postrybailo	Regularly
UNHCR Chernivtsi Hub Protection Cluster	Anna Babenko	Regularly
Coordinating Council on Issues of Forcedly Displaced Persons at the Chernivtsi City Council	Anna Babenko	Regularly

Outlook

Major next steps	Timeline
<p>Deepening of services provided to families with children, focus on case-management approach with emergency component (short-term services for vulnerable families with children)</p> <p>Continuation of humanitarian response in 9 regions – transition from emergency to development, exit strategy development for regions with lower needs of target group</p>	Ongoing
Revision of log-frame for ERP 2024 based on needs assessment conducted end of Q4 2023, available funding and Nexus approach	Ongoing
Preparation of permanent solution for Foster Families dwelling: construction of bomb shelter in SOS CV Brovary	Ongoing
Development of SOS CV UA 2025-2027 strategy	1Q 2024
Transition to Connect SOS funding system, preparation of applications in RBM approach	2Q 2024

Need of regional and international support

What SOS Ukraine would need from International & Regional Offices is:

- Support in transition to Connect SOS system
- Support in fundraising efforts both in private & public sector for humanitarian aid as well as for sustainable activities/Nexus through:
 - Attending & contributing to online and face to face donor´s events (briefings & debriefings)
 - Conceptualizing fundraising strategy for Ukraine
 - Capacity building in sectors operated by SOS Ukraine (needs & gaps based)
 - Support in monitoring, reporting & evaluation

Ensure prompt and lean approval processes for: projects approvals, changes to budget approvals, follow up on conditional approvals.



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES