



SOS Children's Villages - Bolivia

Supporting Family and
Community Strengthening to

PREVENT CHILD ABANDONMENT



The road travelled

Lessons learnt

Challenges and commitments



SOS Children's Villages Bolivia

Supporting Family and Community
Strengthening to

PREVENT CHILD ABANDONMENT

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Special thanks to the directors, staff and participants
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First edition:

July 2005 (700 copies)

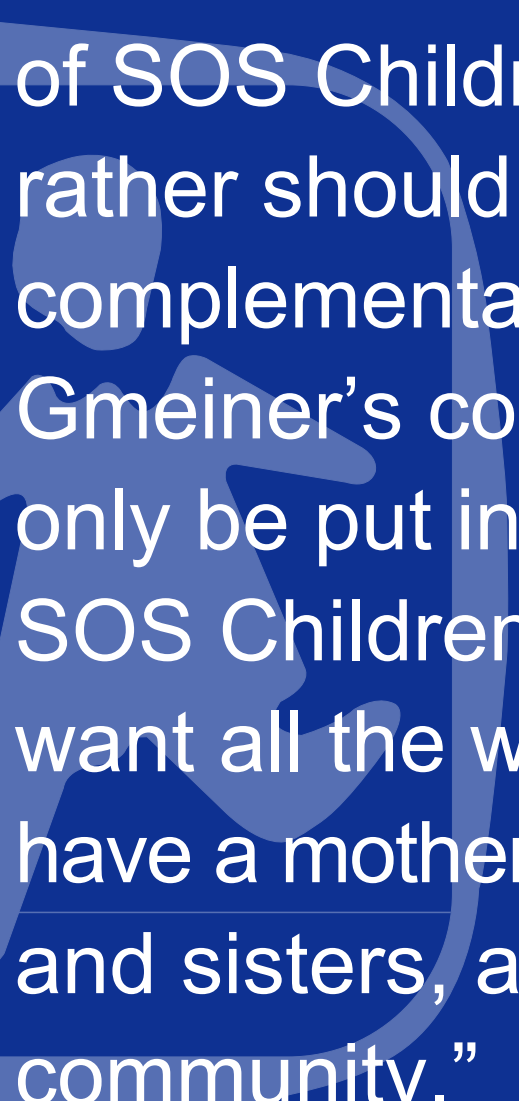
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“When millions of people begin to do more than what we expect from them, the good in the world will begin to be multiplied considerably.”

A light blue silhouette of a child running is positioned on the right side of the slide, partially overlapping the text. The child is in a dynamic, forward-leaning pose, suggesting movement and energy.

Hermann Gmeiner
SOS Children's Villages Founder

A faint, light blue illustration of a child holding a plant is visible in the background on the left side of the slide. The child is depicted in a simple, stylized manner, and the plant has several leaves and a stem. The illustration is semi-transparent and blends into the dark blue background.

“Preventive work does not contradict the traditional concept of SOS Children’s Villages, but rather should be seen as complementary. Hermann Gmeiner’s concept should not only be put into practice in the SOS Children’s Villages; we want all the world’s children to have a mother, a family, brothers and sisters, a house and a community.”

Helmut Kutin
President - SOS Kinderdorf International

PRESENTATION



“I wasn’t anybody before and I thought that only I had these problems. Now I’m the head of this Family Committee and I’ve sorted out a lot of my problems with the support of female friends who’ve gone through the same.”

When I heard this statement made by a woman who participates in the SOS Children’s Villages Family Strengthening Programme in Bolivia I was overwhelmed. This proves that the work being carried out in the SOS Social Centres and Community Homes makes sense, is successful because it is developed in an environment where the women feel welcomed, listened to and supported.

This is where women’s rights prevail, where women are empowered, where the children have a quality of life because their mothers believe in their children’s future and their own life takes on new meaning.

Our family strengthening programmes support those children in vulnerable situations, working with their families and communities to avoid these children being abandoned in the future because their mothers and fathers are unable to resolve their own problems of exclusion and marginalisation through their lack of education and work and production opportunities.

Congratulations to the SOS – Bolivia team for their commitment to all the vulnerable communities, families, girls, boys and young people!

*Heinrich Müller
General Secretariat for Latin America and the Caribbean
SOS Kinderdorf International*

Who we are



**What we
want to
achieve**

Part 1

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

The first SOS Children's Village was founded by Hermann Gmeiner in 1949 in Imst, Austria. It was committed to helping vulnerable children, those who had lost their homes, their security and their families as a result of the Second World War. Through the support of many donors and staff, our organisation has grown over the years to help children in 131 countries around the world.

We carry out actions to benefit the children, by acting as an **independent non-governmental social development organisation**. We respect **different religions and cultures and we work in countries and communities where our mission can contribute to development**. We work in the spirit of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and promote these rights around the world.

Our organisation pioneered the definition of the family focus in the long-term care of orphaned and abandoned children and child abandonment prevention. We have been working in Bolivia for over 36 years.

The SOS Children's Villages vision: What we want for all the children in the world

"FOR EACH CHILD TO BELONG TO A FAMILY and GROW UP IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF LOVE, RESPECT and SECURITY."



Each child belongs to a family.

The family is the centre of society. Within a family each child is protected and enjoys a sense of belonging. Here the children learn values, share responsibilities and set up life-long relationships. A family environment offers them a solid base on which to build their life.

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

Each child grows up with love.

Through love and being accepted, emotional damage is healed and children develop confidence. Once more they can believe and trust in themselves and others and so can go on to discover and use their talents.

Each child grows up surrounded by respect.

Each child's opinion is listened to and taken seriously. The children participate in taking decisions that affect their lives and they are guided so that they can be the protagonists of their own development. The children grow up with respect and dignity, appreciated as a member of their family and society.



Each child grows up in safety.

The children are protected from abuse, abandonment and exploitation, and are protected in cases of natural disasters and war. They receive clothing, food, medical attention and education. These are the basic requirements for the adequate development of all children.

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

The SOS Children's Villages mission: what we do

“WE CREATE FAMILIES FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN, WE SUPPORT THEM AS THEY DEVELOP THEIR OWN FUTURE AND WE PARTICIPATE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR COMMUNITIES.”

We create families for children who need them

SOS Children's Villages works for children who, for different reasons, have lost their families or whose families can not take responsibility for them. The children are given the opportunity to set up lasting relationships within a family. The SOS Children's Villages Family Model is based on four principles: Each child needs a **mother** and grows up more naturally with **brothers and sisters**, in their own **home**, within a **Village** that supports them.



We support them in forming their own future

SOS Children's Villages gives the children the possibility of living according to their own culture and religion. They are supported so that they discover and express their talents, interests and skills. They will receive the education and training that they need to become active, successful members of society.

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

We participate in the development of their communities

The SOS Children's Villages programmes participate in community life and address the social development needs of the most vulnerable members – children and young people. The programmes seek to strengthen the families and prevent child abandonment. They unite the efforts of the members of the community to offer education and healthcare and also respond to emergencies.

One of the greatest resources that SOS Children's Villages has is the staff who live the organisation's vision and mission daily. This group of people make up part of a social movement working for the children most in need.

The challenge for this movement is to broadcast the SOS Programmes' actions, gradually become part of the community and commit ourselves to working with an ever-increasing number of members of the community.

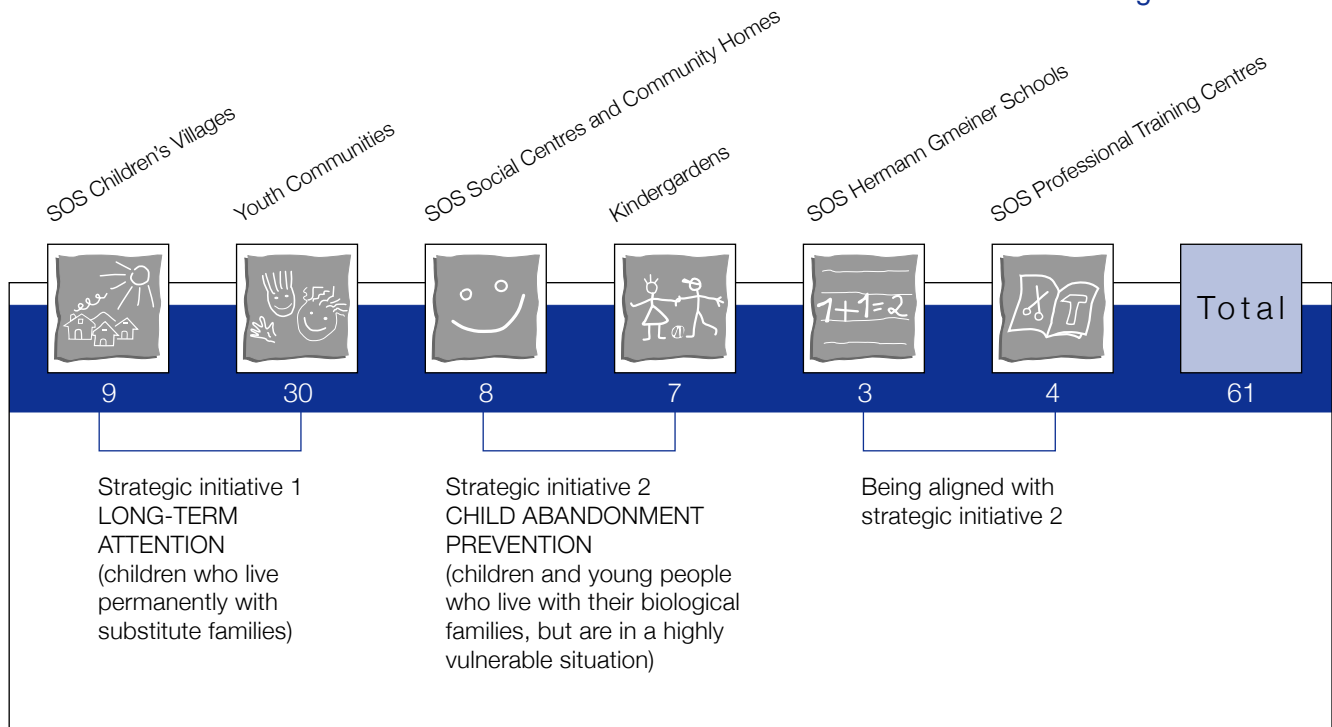
TWO SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

To achieve the SOS Children's Villages vision and mission globally, we have focussed our work on two strategic initiatives, which are implemented in **two types of programme**:

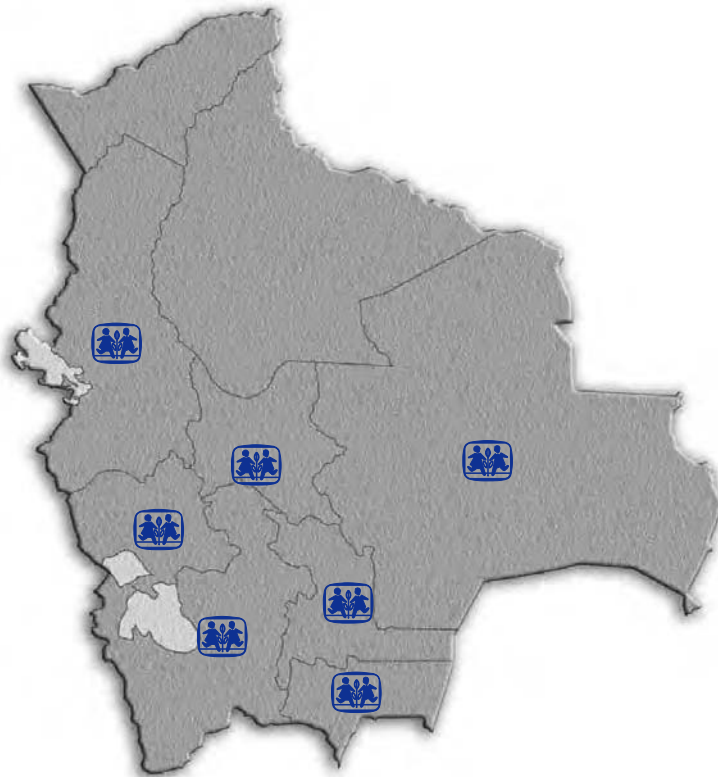
1. The **Children's Villages**, where substitute families are set up for the children who have lost their own families due to specific circumstances or because their families can not take care of them. There is a substitute mother and brothers and sisters – biological siblings are kept together- in a home and a community that protects the children and provides integral development programmes for them. The Villages are included in the **long-term childcare in permanent substitute families** strategic initiative.
2. The **Child Abandonment Prevention Programmes**, that work with the families and communities most susceptible to abandoning and not protecting their children. These programmes promote the children's natural development within their biological families with the support of the communities and SOS Children's Villages. And so the second strategic initiative is developed; **family and community strengthening for child abandonment prevention**.

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

SOS Children's Villages in Bolivia



In Bolivia, the organisation develops activities based on the two strategic initiatives in seven of the nine departments.



WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

SOS Children's Villages is known worldwide as an organisation that creates families for orphaned and abandoned children and monitors them until they acquire the social and work skills needed to become independent.

The organisation is currently striving to disseminate the child abandonment prevention model as programmes have already been developed to contribute to decreasing the rates of child abandonment in the community where we operate.



WHAT DOES CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION MEAN?

We understand **child abandonment** as any behaviour that leads to a disregard for the basic needs and rights of children and adolescents. Some basic needs that need to be satisfied for survival are: affection, food, clothing, medical care, education, housing, protection.

Child abandonment or vulnerability puts children in a weak position or at risk of running away from home, dropping out of school, living on the streets, being exposed to drugs and/or alcohol, sexual abuse and other forms of violence. Sometimes it leads to child sexual exploitation, children and adolescents at conflict with the law and child labour.

Child abandonment prevention is understood as the **families and communities that are at risk or are vulnerable acquiring skills to protect and care for their children, so that they grow up in a safe family environment.**

There are risk factors and people who are more vulnerable to such risks. When these factors are identified we can act to avoid the materialization, reappearance or worsening of the social issues or needs.

SOS Children's Villages trusts that the biological **family** is the best place for children to grow up as it is there that they will be cared for in a stable relationship with at least one adult. The children will develop their sense of belonging and grow up with a knowledge of their own social and cultural heritage.

The **community** knows its situation, is capable of identifying its needs and priorities at the same time as designing and implementing appropriate strategies according to its social and cultural values.

We work alongside the community to construct sustainable and lasting solutions to problems that face orphaned and vulnerable children. We are committed to ensuring the long-term well-being of children and young people.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN CAUSES OF CHILD ABANDONMENT?

The causes are **numerous** and are rooted in the social and family dynamics, which become **risk contexts**, not exclusively due to the behaviour of parents.

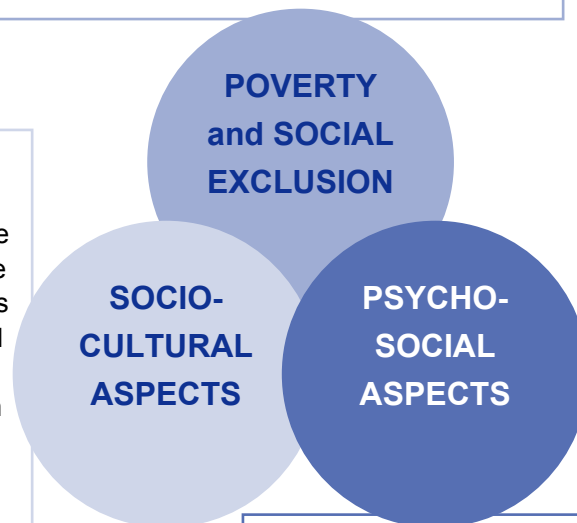
Three dimensions can be identified, which overlap and go to making up the abandonment phenomenon:

Parents who find themselves in conditions of poverty and exclusion can have difficulty dealing appropriately with the tasks of raising, educating and developing their children.

Extreme poverty is a critical factor and if it is combined with the other factors mentioned below it increases the probability of child vulnerability.

Some cultural practices or patterns that put women below men on the social scale legitimise gender violence against women and children and are manifested as domestic violence, less opportunities for well-paid work and education for women, sexual harassment in the workplace and in education, etc.

There is a large number of irresponsible fathers, evidenced by their not legally recognising their children and not paying for their upkeep; many fathers are not involved in the raising of their children. "Adultcentric" behaviour also exists that legitimises abuse as a corrective measure, common in childrearing.



Some parents do not have sufficient knowledge and skills to take care of their children or their prosocial behaviour is limited. This may be due to having been abused and/or abandoned as children themselves, emotional immaturity, irresponsibility, abusing drugs or alcohol, mental illnesses, etc.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN DEVELOPMENT FOCUSES OF THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES?

SOS Children's Villages is an organisation that has pioneered the application of innovative social and humanistic focuses in our work with populations with few opportunities. The consolidation of these focuses guarantees constant training of the SOS staff. Over the last few years the main concepts and focuses related to the child abandonment prevention strategic initiative have expanded to the participants, emphasising their becoming leaders who support the programmes' goals in their families and communities.

1
Fulfilling the United Nations millennium development goals.
Working with the most vulnerable populations.

2
Sustainable human development.
Satisfying human needs that guarantee survival in dignified conditions that do not compromise the future.

3
Human rights.
Fulfilling children's rights.

4
Gender focus.
Disseminating and fulfilling women's rights. Promoting changes in traditional male values.

5
The pedagogy of affection.
The respectful and sensitive treatment of each unique, valuable human being.

SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES AS AN ORGANISATION THAT DEFENDS HUMAN RIGHTS AND PARTICIPATES IN THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP TO ACHIEVE THE EIGHT UNITED NATIONS MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

6
Education for development and freedom.
Integral, active and significant development of the participants. Facilitating knowledge and learning experiences.

7
Resilience.
Developing the capacity to confront, overcome and become strengthened through adversities in life.

WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS OF THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES?

1 Children's protection and integral development

Children, especially those below the age of 6, need special care for their survival, health and well-being. Poverty and exclusion, as well as certain methods of raising children places the children at risk. Those children who are protected and given the development opportunities provided by the child abandonment prevention programmes in joint responsibility with their relatives will grow up strong and healthy, living and seeing themselves as active citizens with rights in our society.

SERVICES

- Daily protection and care
- Preventative child healthcare
- Diet
- Detection, treatment and follow-up of malnourished children
- Attention and treatment for children who are failing to develop
- Promotion of children's rights

2 Developing and empowering **women** to better protect their children

Throughout history women's human and citizens' rights have been relegated. Their participation in and access to goods and services have been restricted in spite of their playing an active role in different work environments and as heads of families. By being offered certain choices and training, mothers can overcome their vulnerability, acquire new strength and orientation, and take part in projects that directly influence their well-being and that of their children and families.

SERVICES

- Women's human development
- Women's health promotion
- Employment training and economic development

3 Developing and empowering vulnerable **families** to take better care of their children

The family needs to be conserved and strengthened as the main space where children's integral development takes place. Their individual development can be helped through the support of their community. Each family needs to identify their needs and take responsibility to actively satisfy them both in terms of material needs and emotional needs.

SERVICES

- Family legal support and orientation
- Support and monitoring of family life projects
- Training and counselling for parents
- Spaces where families can meet and be strengthened
- Attention in groups focussing on specific social issues

4 Developing and empowering the **community** to take better care of and protect their children

A diversified but unified community can work on resolving their problems and improving their quality of life, regaining confidence in themselves, reinforcing their strengths and developing new skills or abilities. Community organisation can activate projects aimed at guaranteeing the well-being of their members and specially that of the children and women.

SERVICES

- Support community organisation processes
- Training of leaders in children's and women's rights
- Training leaders in citizens' rights

It is necessary for programmes to work on all of the components together without taking them as separate elements, in order to be able to reach the level of success and impact hoped for.

THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA

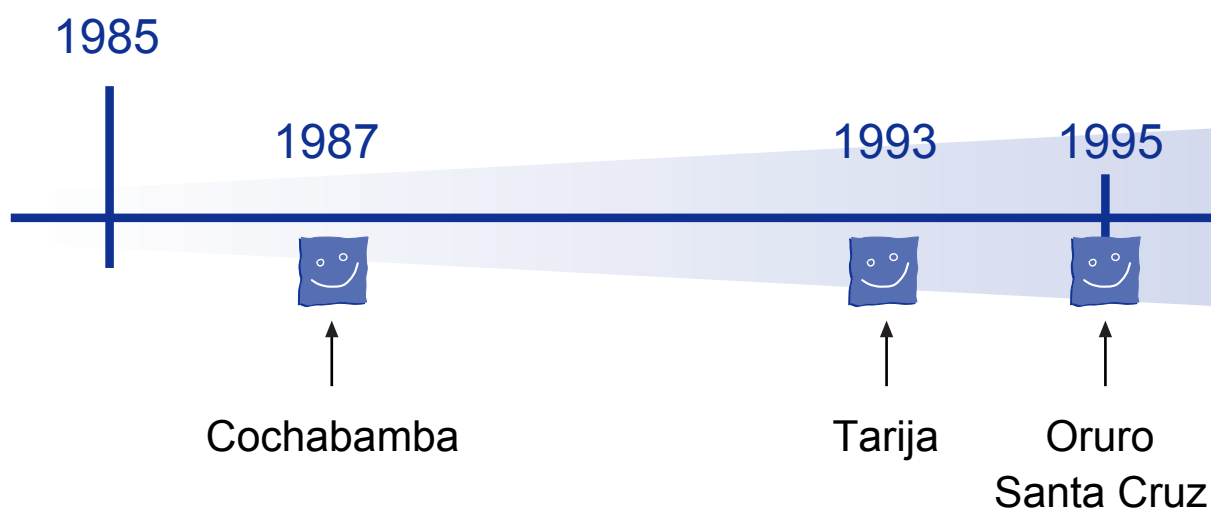
WHAT IS AN SOS SOCIAL CENTRE?

The SOS Social Centres arose from projects based on two needs:

1. The **need to prevent children being abandoned**, especially those who have a biological mother who for reasons of poverty or family disintegration wants to leave her children in some type of institution.
2. The **need to set up a project that complements the SOS Children's Villages so that they become integrated into the community** or immediate environment.

“Our raison d'être is to restore to children and women what is theirs by right, recognising them as having rights in all of their social interactions and being part of a family group. And so we value the mother's and family's role and we do not replace this labour.”

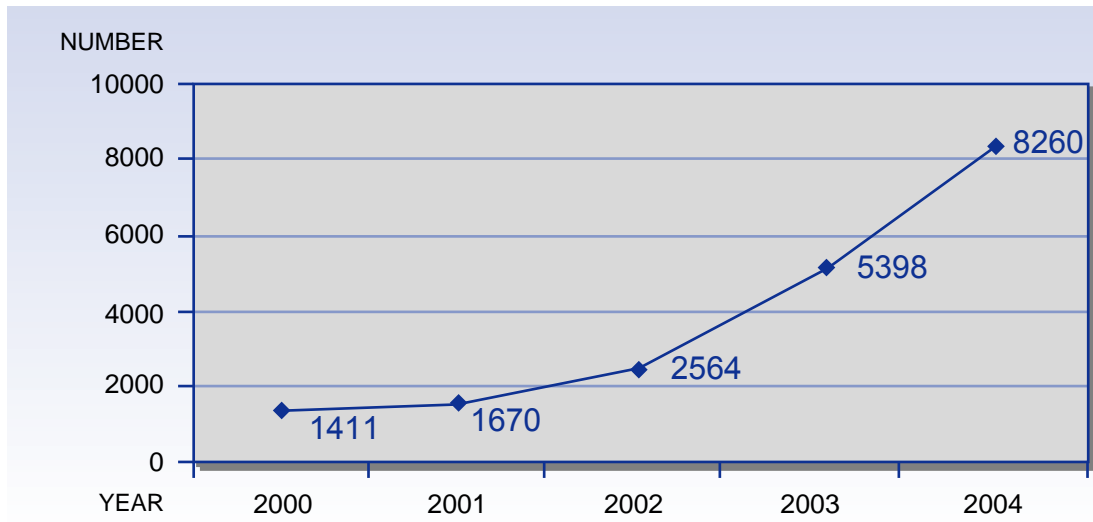
EVOLUTION OF THE SOS SOCIAL CENTRES ACCORDING TO YEAR FOUNDED



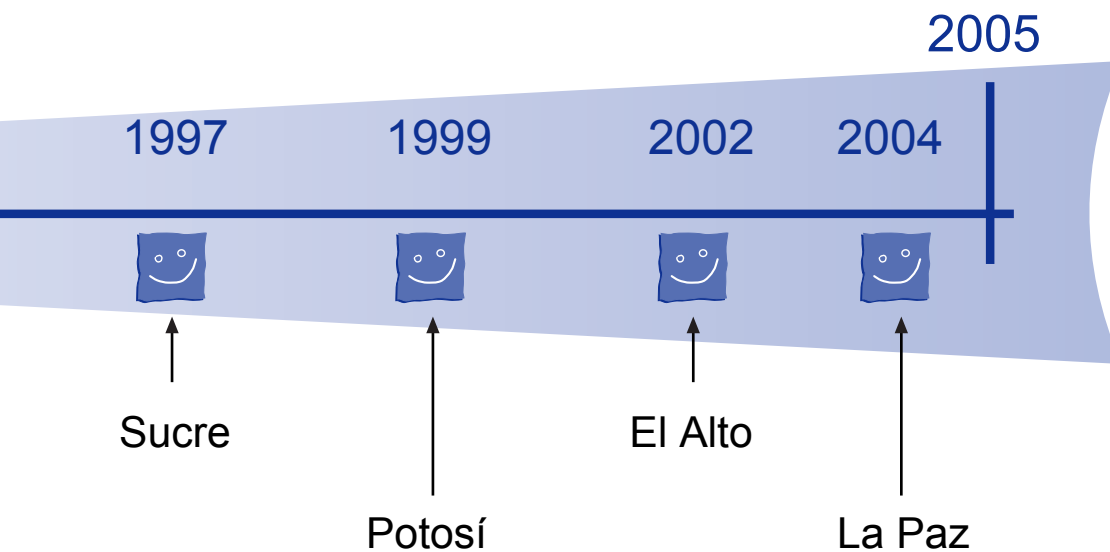
The SOS Social Centres have developed as a response to the needs of the children and women participating. Based on their experiences, we can reflect on and adjust our methodology to be able to make changes such as moving from a paternalistic focus to one that is participative, and new proposals for the childcare procedures. The evolution of the SOS Social Centres has enabled us to expand to cover a large number of populations in vulnerable situations.

THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA

Number of children attended to in the Social Centres and Community Homes in Bolivia



There has been a significant increase in scope over the last five years.



The SOS Social Centres are programmes that attend to children between the ages of 6 months and 9 years who live in the surrounding neighbourhoods. The SOS Social Centres were built in very poor zones in the main cities of Bolivia. Over the years the social makeup of these zones has changed and so the attention of the Centres has moved to outlying neighbourhoods with the Community Homes.

THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA

While the children take part in initial education, academic support, preventative health and nutritional programmes, their mothers work on personal development to improve their self-esteem and to develop their social skills and techniques so that they have a better chance of finding employment. Our priority is to reach female heads of family who are in a vulnerable situation.

The women who participate in the Social Centre programme are required to commit themselves to taking advantage of the daily support to improve their quality of life. They are also involved in looking after their children so as to strengthen their affective relationships and their ability to protect their children.

The families made up of these mothers and their children and some other relatives have the chance to participate in counselling services and psychological, legal and education support to improve their internal relationships and strengthen their family as a place where their children can grow up loved, respected and protected in line with the vision of the organisation.

The group of families with the same problems and the desire to join together to look for solutions makes up a participative community. The SOS Social Centre aims to promote their organisation and participation so that they move towards taking decisions independently and become aware of and act in favour of fulfilling children's and women's rights as the most vulnerable members of the community.

The SOS Social Centre provides low cost services to the children, mothers, families and community. To move forward and guarantee the sustainability of the results in the medium and long-term needs the participants to commit themselves and become the protagonists, to trust in their abilities as human beings and as a social organisation.



THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA

LEARNING TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

Growing from their roots as projects, the SOS Social Centres have developed goals and activities with the children, mothers and families to help them improve their living conditions and overcome situations that are often desperate. The SOS staff are known for their great sensitivity to the needs of others and their commitment to helping them. The SOS Children's Villages organisation looked for the resources necessary to help the participants.

Although help arrived, efforts were still concentrated on the SOS staff. They took the decisions, the solutions came from the offices of each SOS Social Centre and, if they existed, the Community Homes. This centralization created dependency and passivity in the participants, who did not know the contents and goals of the "project". Because they did not know the principles and way the projects worked, the participants, children and adults, did not value or take responsibility for the programme – or better said, for themselves and their own self-improvement.

Another consequence was that the SOS Social Centres and Community Homes' staff were overwhelmed with functions and obligations. There was a lot to do, too few people, the successes were not valued enough, there was a lack of follow-up and evaluation because of the amount of goals and activities proposed. Many people left the programmes.

As time went on, learning from experience the family boards were organised in some Community Homes. These beginnings of participation organised by the families could not function because of the lack of structure and guidelines for their participation. There was only minimal motivation to face emergencies or to organise small events.

Now the child abandonment prevention programmes state that the staff and participants advance together in organising the Family Committees. The participants are motivated to work together, be independent and active in solving their problems and becoming trained.

Through this way of working the results show that:

- Paternalism is ended
- Dependence is avoided
- Protagonism and active participation on the part of the community is strengthened
- The community's independence in decision-making is increased
- There is joint responsibility for the management of the programme
- Social control is demanded and constant
- The most vulnerable children and families are supported effectively and with respect
- Solidarity is shown towards the most vulnerable
- The sustainability of the results is guaranteed in the medium and long-term

Experience has taught us that the child abandonment prevention programmes need to combine promotional intervention with transformational intervention, placing emphasis on the latter.

THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA

MODELS OF INTERVENTION			
THEME	PATERNALISTIC	PROMOTIONAL	TRANSFORMATIONAL
Classification	"Give the person the fish..."	"Give the person the lake, the fishing rod and fry the fish"	"Organise everything so he can go and fish"
What is done	Satisfies a need	Develops the individual's abilities to insert themselves into society. This is a proposal for inclusion	There are no individual needs that can not be satisfied collectively. It is not enough to satisfy my need, there needs to be a collective effort to become organised. This is a proposal for interrelations
Who is being attended to?	The individual	A group	People as members of society
What is the aim?	To improve the life of a person	To improve the life of a person	To improve the quality of life of a culture
How are they incorporated into society?	They are incorporated into the social system as clients, as a favour	There is integration. It takes place slowly. They are integrated as a productive subject	They are empowered. The person goes into society with rights. Their relationship is as an active subject with a proposal. Exercise their rights
How is this developed?	Activities	Projects	Empowering
Subjectivity Becoming	Submissive	Productive	Critical and resistant

Source: Child abandonment prevention: family and community development - 2004

THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA

WHAT IS A FAMILY COMMITTEE?

The Family Committees are organised groups of parents who participate in the child abandonment prevention programmes. A total of 15 to 35 families decide to support each other voluntarily to satisfy their needs and solve problems that they all face, to improve their family and community life.

The families that make up the Family Committee choose a team of seven representatives or leaders, who can propose themselves for the team, to lead the group towards fulfilling its objectives. The Family Committee board plans its administration with the support of the SOS Social Centre facilitators who support their training in the different areas of results so that the leaders acquire specific skills. Each Family Committee carries out its activities independently but with the logistic-administrative support of the SOS Social Centre.

The Family Committees are linked to other grass root social organisations such as the neighbourhood boards or grass root organisations. They become legitimate points of reference for the neighbours in a disadvantaged zone and work to improve the quality of life in all the community, but especially looking after the welfare of the children, women and families at risk.

WHAT ARE THE FUNCTIONS OF AN SOS FAMILY COMMITTEE?

A Family Committee becomes organised and chooses its leaders or representatives to:

- Look for solutions to common needs and problems, such as education, food and protection for their children.
- Attend to their children's needs to bring them up as good citizens.
- Support the families materially and emotionally, looking for opportunities for their growth and development, especially for the most vulnerable, to prevent child abandonment.
- Guarantee the active participation of all the families who form the Committee in their activities and follow-up those who show apathy or a lack of interest.
- Sign a commitment with each family to progress over the year (affective, housing, income, training options) and follow-up their fulfilment, permanently giving encouragement so that they are achieved.
- Plan, call and lead the meetings with all the mothers and fathers of the children in the Community Home.
- Channel support for the activities planned with organisations that work with children and women.
- Actively participate in the community dynamics, leading in the improvement of the living conditions of their zone.

THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA

- Seek solutions to the lack of opportunities and solutions that the mothers have in relation to education, training, employment, domestic violence and legal support.
- Support each other in the growth of each of their families and their community, preventing child abandonment.
- Support the training and recreational activities that are held by the Family Committees.
- Administrate the Community Homes, taking appropriate decisions so that they function well and guaranteeing that the money given by the SOS Social Centre, other organisations or raised through their own activities directly benefits the children.
- Constantly follow-up and evaluate that the Community Homes' goals in the six areas of results and the finances are fulfilled.
- Supervise and monitor so that the agreements and regulations of the Family Committees and the Community Homes are fulfilled, mediating to solve conflicts.
- Keep the families and the SOS Social Centre informed of the progress in what has been planned.
- Become points of reference for their neighbourhoods for the defence and fulfilment of children's, women's and families' rights.



THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA

HOW DO WE SET UP OUR FAMILY COMMITTEE?

Training the Family Committees is the base for developing the Community Homes, and so should be fully taken into account when they are being set up.

We would like to talk about how my Community Home was set up with the help of some of the mothers who also needed to get out to work.

To start with we got together and saw how to set up a Community Home. Need became the driving force because we had to leave our children when we went out to work. We organised ourselves to get everything we needed, we borrowed what we didn't have for the kitchen, the living room and we brought in some toys that we no longer used in our houses.

Once the Home was up and running we got together to form a board. This meeting was supported by a member of staff from the SOS Social Centre who explained how we should set up our Family Committee. But we mothers always take the decisions. The training is guided by a leader who decides on what we will do at that meeting according to the following points:

- A roll call of the mothers
- The representative or head of the Committee is elected
- The community mothers approve the decision
- The heads of each area are elected
- The responsibilities for each area are assigned by the SOS Social Centre to our Committee
- Different topics of interest are discussed

And this is how we set up the Family Committee. For example, in my Home where I'm the leader, I call meetings twice a month to be able to discuss the needs of the Family Committee, the problems we are having such as providing food for our children. So we talk about different topics and once the meeting is over we do something; a group of mothers prepares food to sell to the committee and all the earnings go to buying something that we need for the Home.

When the Committee is strengthened we hope that we mothers can work on our own, carrying out our responsibilities, ensuring that each mother gets ahead, with her family united so that no more children will be abandoned.

As a leader, with the training sessions, I can see that we become more capable every day, we're not afraid anymore, we can express ourselves freely, we feel more empowered in our Committees, we take decisions for the good of our community, we aim for the women to be able to get ahead and we want to work to be able to overcome any obstacle that comes up.

Gloria Choque – leader of the Community Home "Rabanitos"

SOS Social Centre - Sucre

THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY HOME?

To contribute to the running of the Community Homes in vulnerable communities, the SOS Children's Villages philosophy extends to protecting many more children. The Community Homes are **houses** or homes where some community **mothers** take care of a group of **children** who live together in **fraternity** as a part of their own **community**, respecting and recovering their values and cultural traditions.

A Community Home functions in a family house in the community, where around 15 children below the age of 9 live together on a daily basis. According to the infrastructure, the home should have one or two rooms, depending on the number of babies there are in the group, a kitchen and a bathroom. The outside should also be safe and educational for the children.



The parents of the children are part of a Family Committee and decide which mothers will be trained to exclusively look after the children. One is in charge of the food and health of the children, another educates the children by preparing programmes that are age-appropriate.

The Family Committee, organised and represented by a board, plans and supervises the activities that will improve the childcare provided, seeking to involve the families as much as possible. The committee also checks that the families are improving their living conditions – housing, work, relationships among members, leisure, etc.- while their children are being cared for by the community mothers.

The Community Home model has been developed as an effective way of preventing child abandonment and influencing the development of the family and the community.

THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA

THE COMMUNITY HOMES PASS THROUGH **THREE PHASES** **FROM THEIR FOUNDING TO THEIR CONSOLIDATION:**

- 1. PREPARATION** (will last up to two months) In this first phase the parents on the Family Committee find the building where the Home will be and work with the community on improving it physically, especially the rooms and bathrooms. They equip these spaces for the children. The community mothers are trained by staff from the Social Centre.
- 2. DEVELOPMENT and EVOLUTION** (between four and six months) The other spaces are improved, the kitchen and the patio, and the community mothers trained. The curriculum is planned with the children. The planning of menus and preparation of the food is supervised.
- 3. AUTONOMY** (after the sixth month) The Community Home will have to be consolidated both in terms of its infrastructure and its day to day functioning under the responsibility of the community mothers with childcare skills. The children and the families should be used to the routine. Lists have been compiled to register the development of their learning and participation. All the services offered for the children and adults are functioning.

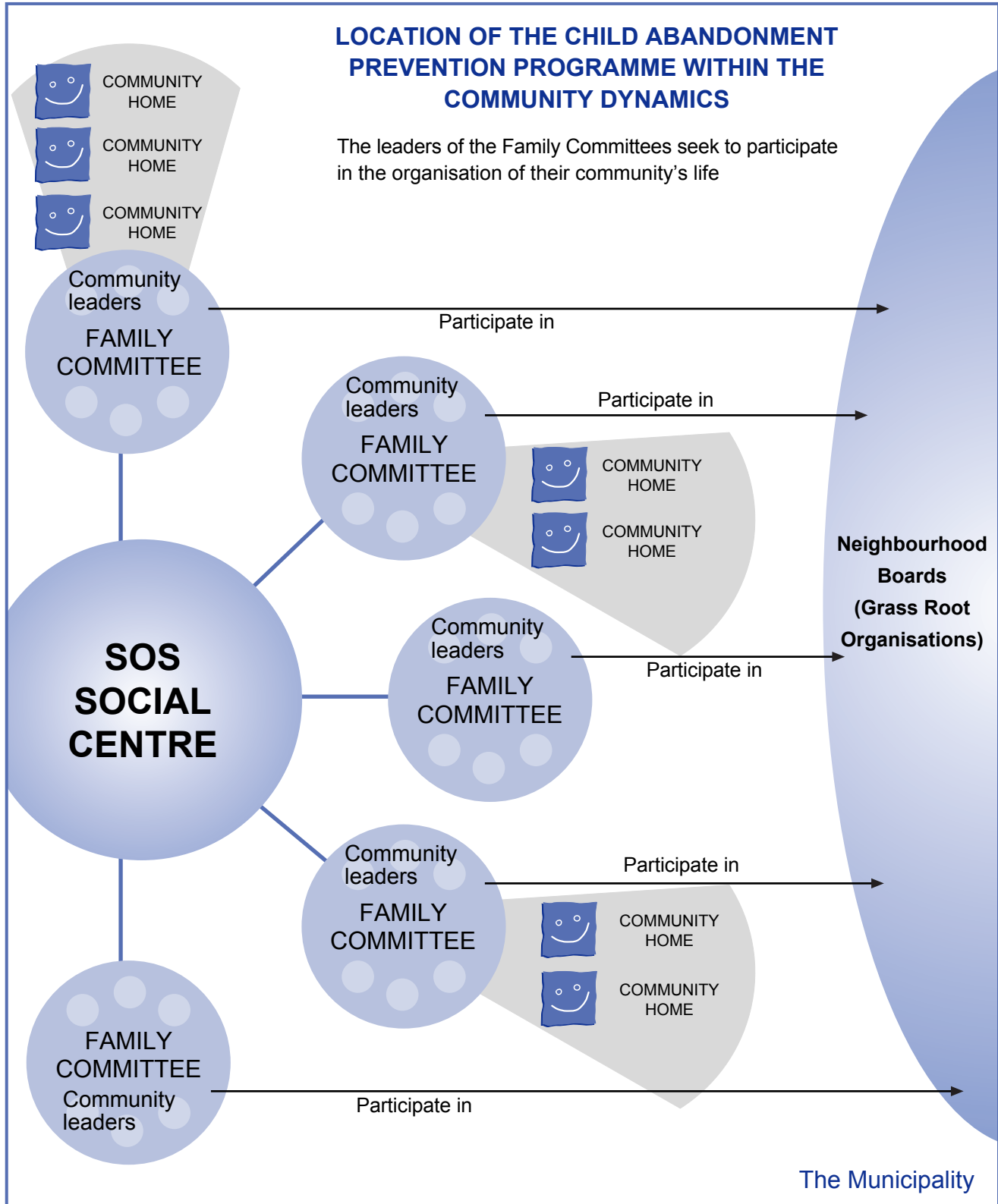
The Community Homes offer the same services as the SOS Social Centre for the children, mothers and families with **seven representatives of the children's parents taking joint responsibility**, coordinating activities with the SOS Social Centre facilitators.

Each Family Committee democratically chooses their leaders or representatives in six areas who will develop and plan the goals and activities:

- 1. Community organisation and participation**
- 2. Dietary improvement and sustainability**
- 3. Children's integral health**
- 4. Children's integral development**
- 5. Women's training and employment advancement**
- 6. Family development**
 - **Treasurer**

This board functions for two years and can be re-elected at the end of this period.

THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA



THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA

Number of children participating in the SOS Child Abandonment Prevention Programmes in 2004

CITIES	SOCIAL CENTRES	COMMUNITY HOMES	KINDERGARDENS
Cochabamba	155	1042	195
Tarija	186	1832	69
Oruro	146	808	75
Santa Cruz	172	1150	100
Sucre	104	521	72
Potosí	119	773	49
El Alto	126	830	35
La Paz	75	221	
TOTAL	1083	7177	595
8855 children below the age of 6			

Source: Facility Statistics Summary 2004 – SOS Children's Villages - Bolivia

This does not include paediatric and dental healthcare provided externally in the SOS Social Centres.

Number of organised families participating in Family Committees, SOS Social Centres in 2004

SOCIAL CENTRE	NUMBER OF ACTIVE FAMILY COMMITTEES	NUMBER OF FUNCTIONING COMMUNITY HOMES	NUMBER OF FAMILIES PARTICIPATING
Cochabamba	47	44	754
Tarija	55	98	986
Santa Cruz	27	43	1048
Oruro	42	37	410
Sucre	27	27	302
Potosí	34	30	500
El Alto	27	27	565
La Paz	10	10	130
TOTAL	269	316	4695

Source: SOS Social Centres

THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES – BOLIVIA

In order to ensure objectivity in the study on the child abandonment prevention programmes' impact on the lives of the children and adults participating, SOS Children's Villages has already carried out two external evaluations. These are forecast for every three years and it is hoped that the results will have an influence on the analysis and decisions taken to improve the services offered.

THE LAST IMPACT EVALUATION ON THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES

In the last four months of 2004 Proactiva, a consulting company hired by SOS Children's Villages, visited the SOS Social Centres and Community Homes in Cochabamba, Tarija, Oruro and Santa Cruz, developing an Impact Evaluation of the previous three years that the child abandonment prevention programmes have been running.

The objectives were to:

- Determine the level of impact that the SOS Social Centres programmes of the SOS Children's Villages had had on the children, families and communities who had received the services for at least 2 years.
- Analyse the results to propose, through pinpointing strengths and weaknesses, a reworking of the work of the programmes.
- Have a final document that includes both the research process as well as the results obtained and the conclusions and recommendations.

To achieve the objectives, information was sought with the help of the SOS staff in the following way:


1. QUANTATIVE DATA GATHERING:

- Surveys of 112 families that had participated in the programmes for at least 2 years since 1999, located with the help of the SOS staff.
- Interviews with 49 families who were in similar circumstances to the families participating in the programme and live in the same geographic location but had never attended the SOS programmes.

2. QUALITATIVE DATA GATHERING:

- Search for information in administrative registers, documents and SOS programme statistics.
- Review the bibliography related to the topic.
- Interviews with 33 SOS members of staff (directors, facilitators, educators, others).
- Observation visits to 4 Social Centres and 38 Community Homes in the four cities.
- Interviews with 17 key informers in the education, health and neighbourhood sectors near to the SOS programmes.
- Focus groups with participating women and those who do not participate (control) in each city visited who have been there for at least two years, with similar characteristics (socioeconomic, age, number of children).
- Focus groups with the children participating and those who do not (control) aged between 5 and 10, in the same geographic area as the programmes.

The results of this evaluation will be referred to throughout this publication.



**What we have
achieved
The road
travelled and
some lessons
learnt**

Part 2



Component

1

Protection and integral development of **children**

Which children are our priority?

- Children below the age of 6.
- Children whose basic rights have been disregarded.
- Children who are not protected.
- Children with mild or acute malnutrition.
- Children with aggressive and/or withdrawn behaviour who show apathy, depression or other emotional disturbances.
- Children who are physically and psychologically abused.
- Children who have not attended or have dropped out of school.

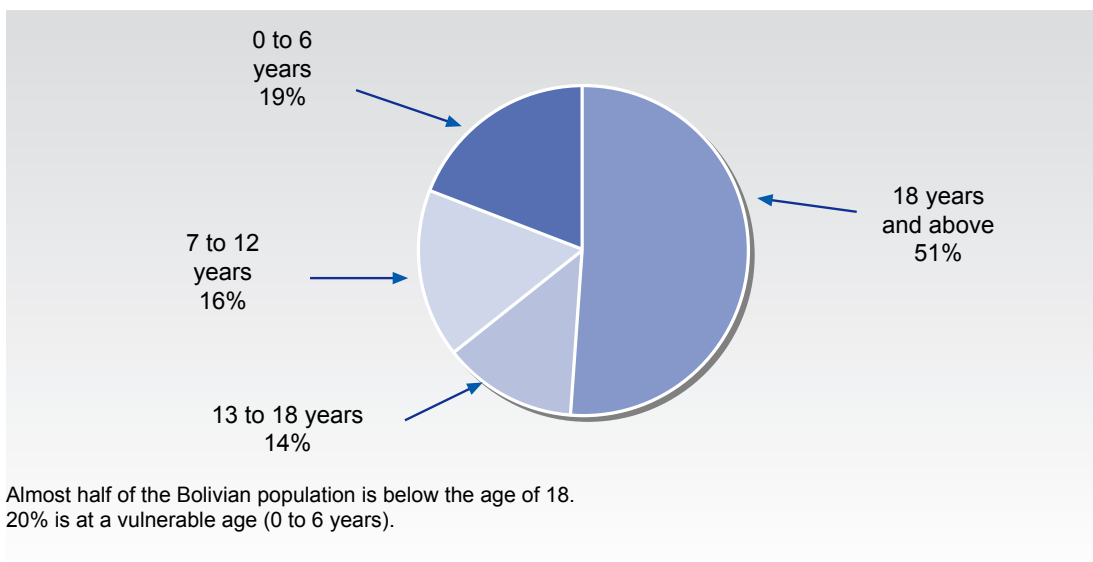


THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN IN BOLIVIA

The new poverty map drawn up using information from the National Population and Housing Census 2001 gives the following representative data:

- Bolivia has approximately **8.3 million inhabitants** and an annual growth rate of 2.1%.
- **58.6% of the Bolivian population is poor** because they can not cover housing costs or access education and health.
- **14% of the Bolivian population lives on less than US\$1 a day.**

Population in Bolivia according to age



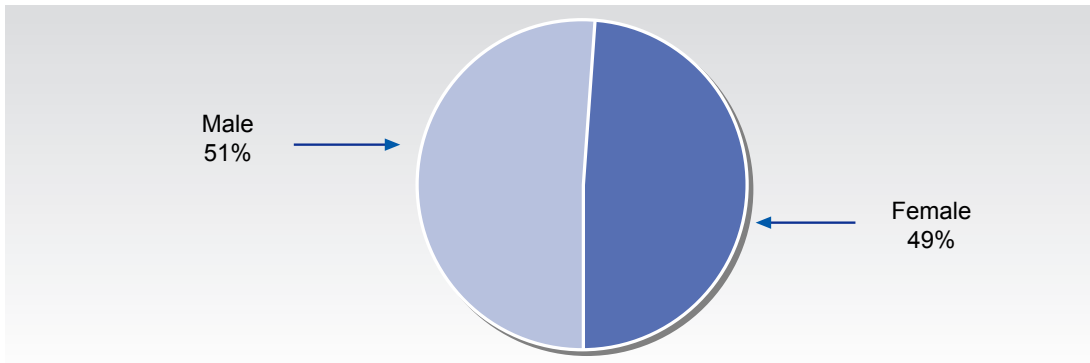
Almost half of the Bolivian population is below the age of 18. 20% is at a vulnerable age (0 to 6 years).

Source: INE - Census 2001

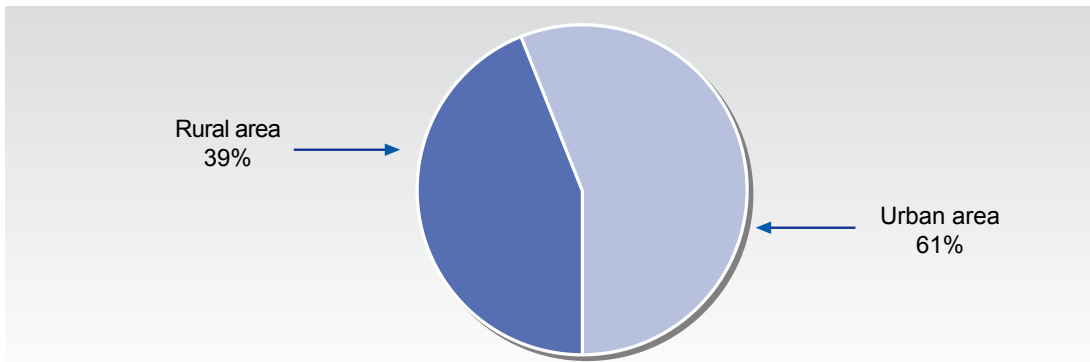


THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN IN BOLIVIA

Children and adolescents en Bolivia



Population distribution of children and adolescents in Bolivia



Source: INE - Census 2001



2 million Bolivian children and adolescents are victims of poverty and exclusion each day. The majority are adolescents.

21% of children aged between 5 and 14 worked between 1999 and 2003.

HOW IS THE WORK WITH CHILDREN IN CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES DEVELOPED?

RESULT 1: Children below the age of 6 protected

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Protection and daily care	Quality, warmth, safety and 8 hours a day childcare. Support in obtaining birth certificates to exercise the right to citizenship. Education and training in children's rights.

RESULT 2: Healthy children below the age of 6

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Preventative healthcare for the children	Application of public health policies through the SUMI (Universal Mother Child Insurance) for children below the age of 5. Training children and parents in preventative health; peer training and health fairs. Setting up of medical surgical support networks (reference – counter reference).

RESULT 3: Well- nourished children below the age of 6

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Diet	The providing of three meals a day that contain 80% of the dietary requirements for a child using standardised menus. Training community mother cooks to optimise menus using local, economical food.
Detection, treatment and follow-up of malnourished children	Monthly height and weight check-ups. Identification and follow-up of malnourished children. Application of corrective measures. Training parents in nutrition and nutritional cooking.

RESULT 4: Children with adequate integral development (physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual) and exercising their rights

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Integral primary school education	Child development follow-up and check-ups. Integral primary school education: timely stimulation, Montessori, learning corners and complementary programmes. Academic support.
Attention for and treatment of children with development problems	Identification of cases. Treatment and follow-up (reference and counter reference).
Promotion of children's rights	Education and training in children's rights. Peer rights promoters.

HOW IS THE WORK DEVELOPED WITH THE CHILDREN IN THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES?

The actions and services with the children are carried out by different actors:

1. SOS Child Educators in the Social Centres
2. Community mothers in the Community Homes
3. The children's parents who are involved with organisation of the daily care, programmes and campaigns they carry out with their children.
4. SOS staff specialised in paediatrics, paediatric dentistry, psychology, pedagogy, nutrition and cooking, and other subjects related to childcare.

All these people are being constantly trained to further their knowledge, especially those who work with children who are suffering physically, psychologically or emotionally.

The children below the age of 6 are divided into two groups so that they can carry out age-appropriate activities: the nurseries for those children between the ages of 6 months and 3 years, and the Montessori rooms with corners and workshops for those above the age of 3.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE?

TESTIMONIES

“They help us to bring up our children in the Community Home”.

Delfina Mayta – Mother from the Cristalito Community Home – El Alto

“I now understand that feeding our children well, helping them to learn and teaching them through play before they are 6 is very important.”

Teófilo Huallpa – Father and the leader of the 27 de mayo Community Home – El Alto

“I’m a single mother and I have three children. I leave them at the Community Home from Monday to Friday. My oldest daughter has become more affectionate and she’s learnt to play with her brothers and sisters. Seeing them I know it’s important for them to be in Community Homes from when they are very young.”

Jenny Ticona – Mother from the Urkupiña Community Home – El Alto

“My daughter Sonia is in the Community Home. She walks around singing and she’s happy. She says her prayers before her meals. I’m fascinated and I think and think.”

Joaquín Limachi – Father from the Mirador Atipiris Community Home – El Alto

“My daughter used to stay locked up in the house. She was sad and wouldn’t eat but now, since she’s been going to the Community Home, she’s happy and plays with her older brothers and sisters.”

Carmen Rosa Mamani – Mother from the SOS Social Centre – El Alto

TESTIMONIES

The general perception of the parents, as can be seen from the testimonies of families in El Alto, is that having their children participate in the child abandonment prevention programmes benefits their development. Although at first the parents are looking for a childcare centre where they can leave their children while they go out to work, they find a place for their own personal growth and that of their children. They “discover” their children and their potential.



98% of the parents say that it was good for their children to attend the programmes, because:

The children develop their mental and learning skills.

They learn to develop all their skills.

They learn to be respectful, independent and sociable.

They are well looked after and fed.

Source: Proactiva Impact Evaluation Report 2004

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE?

Result 1

CHILDREN BELOW THE AGE OF 6 ADEQUATELY PROTECTED

97% of the parents and children report that they feel that they are treated well and they feel safe in the Social Centres and Community Homes,

as:

The children are well looked after and fed.

The educators in charge are responsible and trustworthy.

The education that their children are receiving is good and counselling is provided.

SOS is dedicated to the personal development of the children and their families.

Source: Proactiva Impact Evaluation Report 2004

A small percentage of the parents consider “that it’s fine but there could be more.” Mostly they pointed out differences between the quality of services and the control over the children in the SOS Social Centres and the Community Homes. The opinion is that the differences arise from the different levels of organisation of the parents in each Community Home, how long it has been running and the personal characteristics of the community mothers looking after the children.

One thing that is apparent, however, is that the children who attend the programmes change in the ways they relate to their peers and their family. Generally they develop communication skills and manage conflicts by talking about the problem. Many children learn to control their impulses and levels of aggression and manage a more peaceful relationship with themselves and others.

One characteristic of the educational environments where the children are is that they are well structured – compared to the situation in the families – and regulated. There are rules for living that help the children to be clear about limits and respect them. The Good Treatment focus is applied throughout all the work areas.

Also cooperation and fraternity is promoted among the children. The fact that the classrooms are for different ages leads the smaller children to learn from the older who in turn learn to feel protective towards the younger children.

The children who attend the SOS programmes are considered and treated as people who deserve respect and to have their rights respected and one of the first steps towards exercising their rights is becoming a Bolivian citizen. For this all parents are given support in doing the paperwork to obtain essential documents such as the birth certificate for their children. There are also constant campaigns for registration.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE?

FULFILLING THE CITIZENS' RIGHTS OF THE CHILDREN IN ORURO

During 2003, through the Vice Ministry of Justice Civil Society Programme, and with financing from the International Development Bank, the SOS Social Centre Oruro obtained birth certificates for over 2,000 children below the age of 12. In order to do this we coordinated with people and institutions such as the Electoral Court, the Court of Justice, Registry Office officials, lawyers, institutions working with children, radio stations, television channels and others.

SOS Social Centre
- Oruro

BEST PRACTICES

SOME DATA ON IDENTITY AND CITIZENSHIP IN BOLIVIA

- In 2002, The National Electoral Court identified **778,000 people who were not legally registered in Bolivia**. These people cannot exercise their citizens' rights because they do not have a birth certificate or another type of document that proves their identity.
- According to UNICEF, 20% of these are children between the age of 0 and 14.
- 42% is below the age of 1.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE?

Result 2

HEALTHY CHILDREN BELOW THE AGE OF 6

The prevention of childhood diseases is carried out on different fronts, with good results. Following the model of joint responsibility, the family, especially the mother, is key to keeping the children healthy.

The child abandonment prevention programmes promote training on how to recognise, identify, prevent and treat different illnesses in children, especially when they are malnourished. The parents are also motivated to actively take part in the health campaigns that are constantly being carried out in coordination with private and government institutions. Some of these campaigns guarantee that all the children receive fluoride treatment, are vaccinated, dewormed and that they receive vitamins and iron supplements.

100% of the children have their weight and height checked. The frequency of these check-ups, which are carried out by the medical staff from the SOS Social Centre or in medical centres or posts or in the Community Homes, with external support, depends on the children's situation.

Those children who need medical or dental treatment receive it at a low cost. Those who need specialist check-ups or treatments that can not be carried out at the SOS Social Centres are seen by external professional services or partner institutions. Many children have been treated or have had the surgery needed to make them well.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE?

SOME DATA ON CHILD HEALTH IN BOLIVIA

- The child mortality rate in children below the age of 5 for the five-year period 1999-2003 is estimated at 54 deaths per 1000 live births.
- The neonatal mortality rate is 27 deaths per 1000 live births.
- The causes of death are usually preventable and include those diseases for which there is a vaccination routinely given in the country.

Source: National Demographic and Health Survey (ENDSA) 2003

- UNICEF estimates that in Bolivia in 2003 almost 5,000 people between the ages of 0 and 49 live with HIV/AIDS.
- The risk of a child dying is three times higher when their mother has not been through school than when their mother has finished secondary school.

Source: ENDSA 1998

One of the goals achieved in various SOS Social Centres is that those children below the age of 5 and their mothers have a Universal Mother Child Insurance card (SUMI)¹ and use these services.



The children, like their parents, receive health and sex education as part of their integral formation. The mothers become aware of how important it is to take care of themselves and their family to prevent illnesses. The programmes teach, from very early on in childhood, good cleanliness and personal hygiene habits, which are key to a healthy life.

¹ Since 2000, the SUMI has been the public health insurance scheme which attends to children below the age of 5 and their mothers in more than 400 branches of health. This system is administrated by the Municipal Governments who allocate budgets to the public health services network around the country.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE?

Result 3

WELL NOURISHED CHILDREN BELOW THE AGE OF 6

SOME DATA ON THE **NUTRITIONAL STATE OF THE CHILDREN IN BOLIVIA**

- 9% of children are born with a low birth weight, according to UNICEF.
- 26.5% of children below the age of 5 are chronically malnourished and their weight-height relationship is below normal levels.
- Of these children, 27% are severely malnourished, usually between 12 and 13 months of age.
- The mothers of 44% of those children who are chronically malnourished have no level of schooling.

Source: National Demographic and Health Survey (ENDSA) 2003

The children participating in the programmes receive 80% of their daily dietary requirements in three or four tasty and varied meals or snacks. The community mothers in charge of the kitchen are trained to prepare these meals making use of the food available in each region, and provided by donors.

Often the children, when they join the SOS programmes, are not used to eating fruit and vegetables. Part of their learning for life is good dietary habits. They learn the value of each food as part of a balanced diet. Their families – especially their mothers, learn to combine foods, to cook them and serve nutritional, economical meals. This is how we ensure that the children stay well-fed when they leave the programmes. Indirectly it influences on the whole family having a good diet.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE?



CHANGING DIETARY HABITS TOGETHER

Oruro is one of the departments with the highest rates of malnutrition in Bolivia, mainly because of the economic factor, bad dietary habits - excessive consumption of carbohydrates and little or no consumption of fruit and vegetables because of the cold climate - and a lack of knowledge of nutrition and how to prepare nutritional food.

Faced with this problem, the SOS Social Centre has been developing a project on Dietary Improvement with 450 families in 2004 and 2005 with financing from our Development Partners USAID/PROSALUD.

With the active participation of the community and the families of over 900 children in the programme training activities in nutrition, cooking, and the construction of greenhouses have been held. While the children improve their nutritional state, their parents and siblings change their dietary habits.

SOS Social Centre
- Oruro

BEST PRACTICES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE?

Children who are well-fed considerably improve their chances to integrally develop their attention span, interest in educational activities and interaction with their peers, parents and teachers. The relationship between food and the stimulus to learn is seen through the will to learn in children who are healthy and lively. The internal change is seen through a physical change: their skin, hair and eyes take on a healthy colour and shine². A percentage of children who enter the programmes are malnourished but they recover progressively.

All of the participants receive constant follow-up of their nutritional state and in many cases this is monthly. The mothers monitor the children's development and are trained by the health staff to support the children's improvement.

Result 4

CHILDREN WITH ADEQUATE INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT AND EXERCISING THEIR RIGHTS

Integral development of children refers to their having access to all of the opportunities they need to maximise their physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and social development. Given that those children participating in the child abandonment prevention programmes come from families and communities with many problems, it is the job of their educators or community mothers to identify their talents to be able to strengthen them while working on their weak points. A lack of adequate stimulation in unfavourable environments and situations affects many children's motor and sensory development and causes problems in their relationships with other children and adults, which can be seen by their being either very passive or aggressive. The programmes become places for social and cultural integration. Each child is measured against the Abbreviated Scale of Psychosocial Development³ and their progress is registered along with the areas where they need reinforcement. If necessary the family of a child who shows obvious delayed development is referred to specialised institutions where they will receive support. The programme follows up the child's treatment alongside the parents.

The education programmes are based on the children and the love and respect that they deserve as individuals. The child educators and community mothers learn about early stimulation, how to implement the Montessori method and other active methodologies along with the focuses and aims of the Bolivian Education Reform.

² Study on Child Nutrition and Development developed by the National Nutrition Institute of Mexico.

³ A scale that evaluates the development of children between the ages of 0 and 8 in four areas: gross motor, fine motor, cognitive development (auditory and language) and personal-social development. It was designed by the director of the Human Development Institute at the Universidad Javeriana of Bogotá. The SOS staff and community mothers are trained to apply the test and interpret the results.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE?

MONTESSORI AS AN OPTION FOR IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF CHILD EDUCATION



Maria Montessori worked with children in very poor neighbourhoods in Rome in its first orphanages at the beginning of the 1900s. In 1994 SOS Children's Villages became interested in the results of this method of working with children.

Many people have been working on expanding the Montessori method around Latin America since the 1960s and make up the current Interamerican Montessori Association. The first certified course in Guide Training for children between the ages of 3 and 6 and a short course in infant/toddler training was held

between 1996 and 1998 to train 24 members of staff from SOS Social Centres, Nursery Schools and Child Development Centres. Ten years later guides trained in the first course trained over 50 educators around the country. Also, each affiliated centre and programme has developed strategies to multiply the Montessori area and expand the methodology to the Community Homes.

Montessori has had an impact on the SOS programmes – the rooms are furnished for the children's size and equipped with material according to subject area with routines that respect each individual's rate of learning and "rules" that are respected naturally. Above all the method has had a great impact on the private and professional life of those who "guide" the children's learning. Many of the educators had no academic background before being trained in this method.

The results of the thousands of children who have passed through the Montessori classrooms in the SOS child abandonment prevention programmes reflect our trust in this methodology, and above all are still reflecting the teachings:

- Children with good academic results later on.
- Children who are sure of themselves.
- Children who are independent, organised and can concentrate on the task at hand.
- Children who observe and research.
- Children who are creative.
- Children able to generate new ideas and communicate them to others.
- Children able to locate themselves in time and space.
- Children who clearly express their emotions, both positive and negative.
- Children who adapt their behaviour to any situation.
- Children who are able to listen and participate in a group.
- Children who are more self-possessed, less aggressive.
- Children who are happy learning.

The parents also see the results. They are impressed with their children's progress and cooperate by doing some activities and preparing materials for the classrooms.

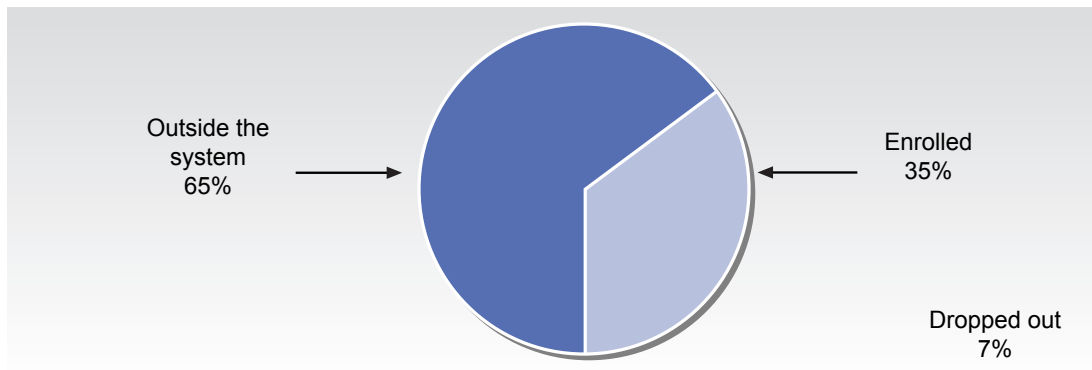
WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE?

The results of the children having studied in the classrooms of the child abandonment prevention programmes are seen later on in academic life. They know more, are open to carrying on learning, have good study habits, are independent and take on the responsibility for their personal improvement. The immediate impression upon seeing the children who attend the programmes is that they are happy in their classrooms with their educators, the activities, materials and appropriate equipment. They show progress while they participate.

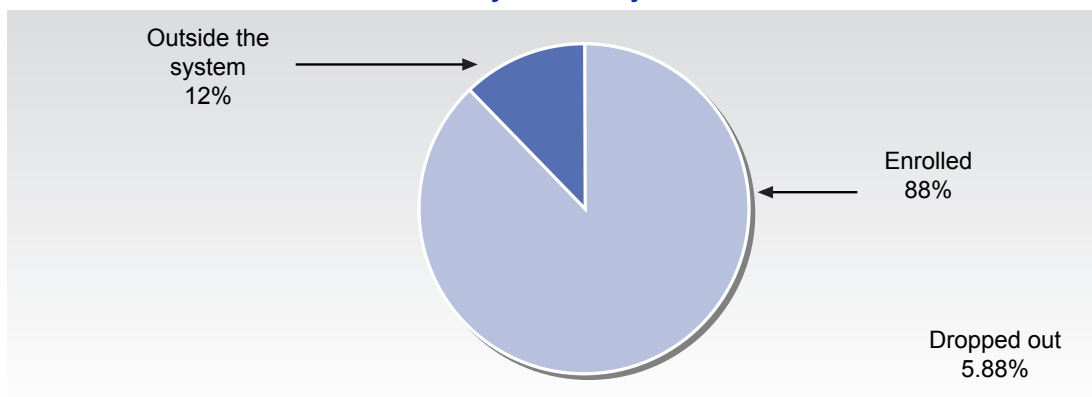
Some school-age children also attend the child abandonment prevention programmes where they receive support to improve their performance and abilities.

SOME DATA ON EDUCATION IN BOLIVIA

Preschool state system (children below the age of 6)



Primary state system



Source: INE - Census 2001

Most children do not attend education programmes until they reach 6 years of age.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE?



CHILDREN WHO ENSURE THAT THEIR RIGHTS ARE RESPECTED

Over the years and through all of our actions, SOS Children's Villages has been seen as an organisation that defends and promotes children's rights but maybe this has only been a discourse and has not been the reality.

A replacement teacher had to be found because the educator in charge of academic support in the SOS Social Centre Tarija was going on maternity leave.

Paola, Emerson, Marisol, Navy, Lizeth and other children who attended the support class went to see the director to talk about their fear and anxiety because of two important motives: first because the educator was always pulling their ears and shouting at them, and second to talk about their remaining at the Social Centre as most of them were almost 9 years old – the maximum age for attending the programme.

They said that what they were taught about their rights being respected was not always what happened in reality and that the “new aunt” did not respect them. They felt that their rights were not being respected but they still felt sure that they would be listened to because that was their right. They also said that they did not agree with having to leave the SOS Social Centre because of their age as “we're still children who need protection and food, just as our rights state”.

Of course their worries and complaints were listened to and sorted out and we knew that we were reaping the rewards of our work as the children had shown themselves to be critical, expressive and capable of having their rights respected.

Geovana Michel – Health and Nutrition Area

SOS Social Centre - Tarija

BEST PRACTICES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATE?

Those children who attend our programmes request good treatment and that their rights are respected. We work with them to develop their values to ensure that the children respect others' rights promoting solidarity with those who need it, tolerance and respect, individual and group responsibility. Although the children are young, with help, they can live in a community and practise values.

Through this the children become educators within their own families, especially with their parents, by sharing their experiences and knowledge. The change in the participants is also integral: working on the Protection and Integral Development of Children Component affects the lives of the mothers, the families and the community. Awareness is raised on the care that children deserve and the need to prevent their abandonment.

SOME DATA ON EDUCATION IN BOLIVIA

Secondary level - 15 to 19 years old		
Attendance rate	Male	57%
	Female	52%
Further education		
Finished courses	Male	17%
	Female	13%
Completed 12 years of education		
National level	Male	16%
	Female	12%

Source: INE 2003

In the child abandonment prevention programmes, the children work on topics fundamental to improving their quality of life, such as human rights and children's rights. They understand them and defend them. The overall experience shows that children are very critical and demand that people practise what they preach.



Component

2

Developing and empowering **women** to better protect their children

Which women are our priority?

- Very young mothers.
- Illiterate mothers or mothers who have only attended primary school.
- Single mothers.
- Mothers with very young children.
- Mothers who do not show a bond with their children.
- Women with low income and little work stability.
- Women with few or no technical skills.
- Unemployed women.
- Women who have migrated looking for a better quality of life.
- Women who are victims of domestic abuse or abuse in the workplace.
- Women who have low self-esteem.



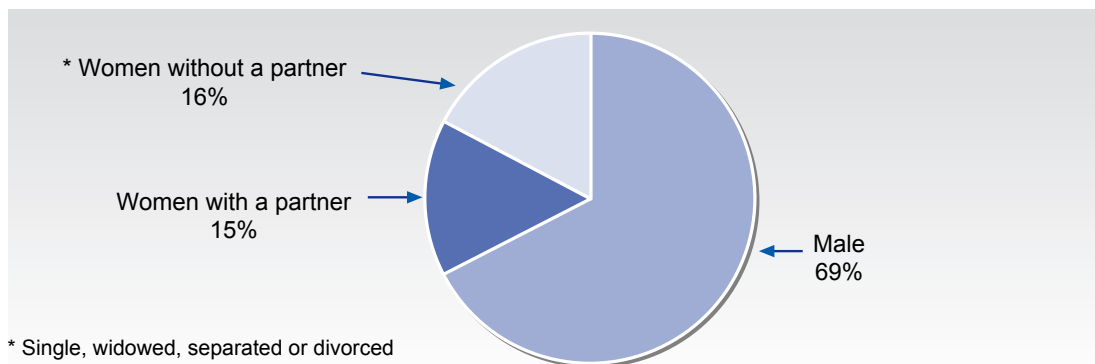
SITUATION OF WOMEN IN BOLIVIA

- **The global fertility rate is 3.8 children per woman.** In the rural area it is 5.5 children and in the urban area it is 3.1.
- **65% of the women interviewed did not want to have any more children.**
- **72% of the women** interviewed who were in a relationship said that they **needed family planning services.**

Source: National Demography and Health Survey (ENDSA) 2003

Heads of households in Bolivia

(from 1,977,665 private homes)



Source: UNDP – Human Development Thematic Report



SOME OTHER DATA ON HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN BOLIVIA

Female responsibility has increased from 24% to 31% at the national level. The level of income in the households headed by women has been affected.

Source: Bolivia National Report – Vice Ministry of Women, 2004 (base line)

In the rural area a quarter of the households are headed by women.

24.8% live in moderate poverty.
23.3% live in extreme poverty.
22.9% live in poverty.

Source: UDAPSO, INE, 1994

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WOMEN WHO TOOK PART IN THE SURVEY FOR THE LAST IMPACT EVALUATION?

The majority of the women interviewed participated in the Social Centre, so it was still easy to locate them. Those who had participated in the Community Homes were more difficult to contact and some had even cut all contact with the Social Centre.

Their average time of participation was almost 4 years.

Both in the Social Centre and the Community Homes they mainly participated in the employment skills training workshops and to a lesser degree in personal development activities. (Table 1)

The families said that the programme supported the most vulnerable people in the community and the parents who work. (Table 2)

The women surveyed were mostly between the ages of 26 and 30. (Table 8)

70% were married or living with their partner. (Table 10)

The majority had migrated to the city where the programme operated. (Table 9)

41% had finished primary school and 40% secondary school. (Table 11)

The average number of children per woman was between 2 and 3. (Table 12)

Source: Proactiva Impact Evaluation Report 2004 – See tables in Annex 2



HOW IS THE WORK WITH THE MOTHERS DEVELOPED IN THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES?

RESULT 1: Literate women with a decent level of self-esteem, who exercise citizenship

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Women's human development	Training and education on self-esteem, literacy, women's rights, gender and equity, domestic violence and leadership. Training to defend women's human rights. Groups and other strategies for women to meet and support each other.

RESULT 2: Healthy women

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Women's health promotion and prevention	Application of public health policies for women. Information and training for women in sexual and reproductive health: sexual rights, safe maternity, early detection of cervical and breast cancer and other women's health problems.

RESULT 3: Women who work and earn decent wages

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Work training and economic development	Work training in a trade and/or as a technician, employment rights. Solid employment agencies. Training in opening small businesses and access to loans.

Many women who come to the child abandonment prevention programmes are looking for support, generally to be able to leave their children at the centre while they go out to work. They are looking for help, for other people to look after their children. This way of thinking gradually changes as the mother is strengthened and becomes willing to take on the joint responsibility for looking after her children.



HOW IS THE WORK WITH THE MOTHERS DEVELOPED IN THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES?

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

IT'S LIKE A FAMILY HERE, LIKE IT WOULD BE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE



Emiliana Huanca, a single mother aged 28 with a 4 year old daughter, had to migrate to Oruro 8 years ago because what she earned from farming with her mother in the countryside was only just enough to survive on. She has been going to the SOS Social Centre Oruro for 3 years.

“I came from Vichuloma. I used to help to farm but because I needed to work and didn't know where to leave my daughter I found the Village. My boss wouldn't let my daughter stay with me where I was working as a maid. There were nursery schools but I didn't have enough money and I found out about here so I travel a long way to be able to leave my daughter here.

I've learnt a lot here. I've learnt machine and hand knitting, marketing, and quality control with another institution, IDEPRO. I used to be so afraid of everything; now I have my own machine and I took out a loan from IDEPRO with a partner who's also a mother. Now I have a trade and when we get orders we knit.

We also learn about childcare. My child eats better now. She's well-fed here and I like that. I'm single, if I work I have money, if I don't work I don't have money.

It's always like that, I have to pay 60 Bolivianos for my room .

SOS Children's Villages has changed my life. I think it's even changed me. I'm not so worried all the time, I've learnt so many things like how to cook, how to knit, how to use the knitting machine, food groups, nutritional cooking, greenhouses.

It's like a family here, like it would be in the countryside. Sometimes my family isn't here and I feel very lonely. When I came here I felt like this was my family. Everybody calls each other aunt, uncle, I like that. I'm happy now.”

**SOS Social Centre
- Oruro**

HOW IS THE WORK WITH THE MOTHERS DEVELOPED IN THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES?

For a mother to be able to incorporate her children into the child abandonment prevention programmes she has to be willing to participate in all of the activities related to her own development as a mother, a person and a citizen and in those activities that benefit her group made up of other women with similar problems.

Often when a woman first comes she does not want to join in. She is in a desperate situation and is just surviving. Many of the women who have migrated to the cities bring with them stories of exclusion and violence, they have a low academic level... By giving them opportunities and a lot of support they begin to set themselves goals.

The people who are a part of these processes are:

1. SOS staff from different specialities, mainly social and pedagogic.
2. Facilitators.
3. The mothers, organised in Family Committees, in their own different stages of social and personal development.
4. The leaders who represent the Family Committees.

“... I was in the maternity ward having my fourth child. He (her husband) had left me alone with my other three children – all of them small - and a newborn baby. He went off with another woman... He didn't just leave me, he took everything I had... he left our home empty. I was crying so much...

The woman in the bed next to mine spoke to me, she comforted me and told me that I should go to the SOS Social Centre. “They'll help you there”, she said. That was 6 years ago. My youngest has finished the Social Centre programme. I'm always coming here... it's amazing that I'm a leader now...”.

Lucía - mother



SOS Social Centre
- Cochabamba

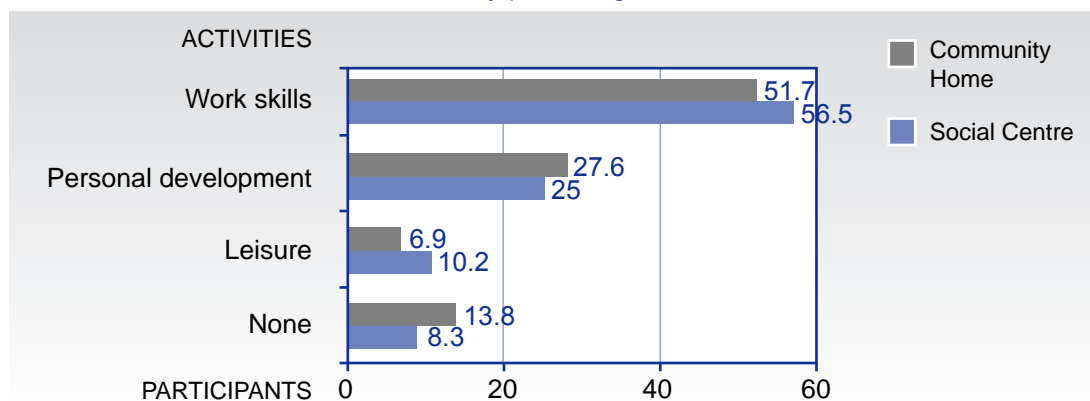
TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

Most of the mothers take advantage of the development and training that the programmes offer. The activities are new to them and help to empower them

Women's participation in programme activities
by percentage



Source: Proactiva Impact Evaluation Report 2004

Result 3

LITERATE WOMEN WITH A DECENT LEVEL OF SELF-ESTEEM WHO EXERCISE CITIZENSHIP

The mothers improve their perception of themselves and the possibility of changing their personal and family life whilst they participate in workshops and other training and sharing activities. The women reflect on their experiences and the opportunities they have had since childhood that have influenced how they are and on what was theirs by right but they never received such as education, being well treated and respected, etc.

They can see themselves reflected in the other women who have had similar experiences. With patient and firm monitoring, their abilities and self-esteem improve. They work towards personal development goals which they can fulfil with the support of their friends and the SOS staff. These commitments range from paying the fees for their children at the programmes to changing the way they present themselves, improving their living conditions – buying a bed so that their children can sleep separately, for example – or continuing to study.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

FIRST IT'S YOU, THEN IT'S YOU AND FINALLY IT'S YOU

We started with 15 families who were assigned to our Family Committee. At the first meeting we met each other, we felt strange, afraid of speaking or suggesting something and then the 7 area leaders were chosen. At first we didn't understand the importance of these areas and the mothers didn't like being told what to do. It's like being told all the time what you have to do. Maybe this was because we all had a partner at home who was always ordering us about; we didn't have any chance to take a decision.

The first workshop we attended was on self-esteem. At the first class we weren't really well-presented, ponytails, sandals, aprons, and we were all shy but we learnt so much. I'll never forget when Emilio told us: "First it's you, then it's you, and finally it's you." We had to learn to value ourselves, to think that we can talk, that we can take decisions, that we can stop any attempt to hurt us, and we all face that.

Suddenly we saw the light at the end of the tunnel and that there was a wealth of opportunities that we could all choose from and we liked that. For the first time in a long time we saw our classmates happier, livelier, with more concerns looking for someone to listen to them, family counselling and feeling like someone cared because we could all identify with each others' problems.

There were mothers who didn't join in. Like they didn't understand what it was all about but we insisted that they stay and at the end most got involved. Many of us became more than just friends; we became sisters, helping each other every day. Because of this, now when we meet we respect each other, we want to talk about everything we did when we were representing the Committee, especially when we were dealing with a crisis. Now two of us are professionals and three are studying. Others are sellers and are leaders in their marketplace. The others are still changing.

Lidia Quispe - mother

SOS Social Centre
- Cochabamba



TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

One of the activities that seeks to strengthen the women is the literacy programme. There are classroom or classroom/self-study programmes in different SOS Social Centres either independently or with the support of other specialist organisations. The educational level that the women reach is very important so that they can access other training programmes such as employment skills training. It also has an influence on their self-esteem and helps them monitor their children's education.

Little by little the women who take advantage of the opportunities begin to take control of their life and their family's. They develop skills to plan their time and their expenditure. Their commitments, which before were small and verbal, become life plans that help to direct them and are written down. Most of the women fulfil their commitments. Some do not but the other women encourage them. This way of working together is so important that the "godmother" system is being implemented in some programmes, such as the SOS Social Centre Cochabamba.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

THE “GODMOTHER” SYSTEM

Constantina, an old mother and leader of a Family Committee in the SOS Social Centre Cochabamba had to have surgery about two years ago in the Hospital Viedma. On the second day a woman came in who was in labour, she was in the bed next to Constantina and cried inconsolably. Constantina asked her what had happened, and the woman said that she was desperate. Her husband had left her for another woman and had sold most of her furniture and home appliances whilst she went to visit her parents in Oruro. She could not find him. She had three small children and the new baby and she had nowhere to live and no food for them. She was also in debt to her landlord.

Constantina invited her to visit the SOS Social Centre, telling her about what it meant to be a part of the Centre, and she told her she would help her. The next day they both left the hospital and as a friend, Constantina accompanied Catalina to the Social Centre, telling her that one day she had also come to the Centre and other mothers had helped her. Immediately Catalina was helped to find a room. The programme paid for two months of rent. They took her few belongings to her new room and lent her things to cook with and for sleeping. Catalina entered as an assistant to be trained in cooking in the SOS Social Centre and received a stipend from PAN. She participated with enthusiasm in the workshops on Human Training, Literacy and others. Over the months we saw how Constantina became Catalina’s “godmother”. She gave her advice, listened to her problems, Catalina found somewhere to live with Constantina’s support... Constantina, on her own steam, went to the Family Support office to report on how her friend was doing and to ask for help to keep on supporting her. Very quickly Catalina came out of her depression, raised her self-esteem, integrated herself into the community of mothers, became interested in the training activities, etc. Now she is the leader of her group, participates enthusiastically in the Family Committee and supports the other mothers coming into the programme who are suffering similar situations to what she went through.

As a result of this experience, the SOS Social Centre has started the “godmother” system with success in 8 of the 10 families participating. Some were referred from the Family Committees, others from the SEDEGES (Departmental Social Services), dependent on the Prefecture and the Municipal Child Ombudsman’s Office in the province of Cercado, as part of the coordination of the Violence against Women Network. Other private organisations such as Infante (Women’s Shelter) participate.

At the beginning we sought to provide support, mainly emotional, to the women suffering from domestic violence and intending to abandon their children because of the desperate situation they found themselves in. We wanted to surround them with positive support to strengthen them and work on their self-esteem. After the first experience of Catalina and her godmother Constantina we followed this example because of the immediate results that we had had with her and her family. The only requirement for the woman to be admitted is to want to overcome her situation and keep her children with her. They enter a phase of holding as they are considered high risk families. Over time and in the second phase, they are integrated with the other families participating following the same road and pursuing the same objectives to strengthen and develop themselves to influence their quality of life.

SOS Social Centre
- Cochabamba

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

One very satisfying result of the work with the mothers is that they organise their own support circles as friends who decide to help each other in different situations and at different times. These groups also continue even when the women leave the programmes.

SOLIDARITY AMONG WOMEN

At the Family Committee meetings Libertad met ten mothers who take their children to the Chaguaya Community Home. They work in different areas, some are sellers and others work the land.

They commented to the facilitators that their friendship was very strong because they helped each other in different situations. This was seen when at a meeting eight of the ten women had to approve a loan but the members from the other Community Home were not there and so the eight mothers decided to support each other and be the guarantors for each other. They promised to look after each other and make sure that the money was returned. As the other Community Home had not attended the meeting, they trusted them and approved their loan also. When a mother could not come to pay her debt, another mother came with the money and so the mothers supported each other throughout the year.

Another good experience was when the fifteen mothers from the same Family Committee decided to enrol in a training course on sewing. After a few days, the mothers from the other Home did not attend and so the mothers from the Chaguaya Community Home took the initiative and motivated their friends to return to classes because they wanted to finish the course as they knew it would benefit their personal development and that they would learn to make clothes for their children there.

After finishing the sewing course, they decided to take a course in baking. They were asked why they had chosen that course instead of another such as marketing, which would be useful to them as sellers. They said that as they are out all day selling they did not have the chance to cook and they wanted to learn how to bake so that they could learn to make cakes to show their husbands that they could make something delicious, make birthday cakes for their children and also take desserts to the market to sell.

And that is just what they did: when they didn't have enough money to eat what they had made one sold coffee and offered the bread or cakes that they had made. Another sold the ice-cream cakes that they had made at her soft drinks stall.

The most wonderful thing that came out of this experience was the friendships that arose among the mothers in the Community Home and the result is that they support each other when the need arises.

María Isabel Lima

**SOS Social Centre
- Tarija**

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

It is still a challenge to have the women report domestic violence to their families and the authorities that can support them. The issue of violence is covered up and it seems to be difficult for the women to talk about it. When faced with violence the women confront it in two ways: by being passive or separating from their partner and the conflictive and violent relationship. The fact that they now have some sort of support from people and safe spaces for them and their children and their own desire to change the situation influences their decisions, along with their decision-making in the training sessions that they attend on self-esteem, good treatment, women's rights, etc.

“Since I've been coming to the Community Home I can work. I've left my husband... he was always jealous, we were always fighting. I'm young and me and my child can get ahead. Now I sell kebabs in the nights. It's not so bad, I earn something and I study during the day while my child is in the Home. My mum helps me a lot too.”

Eliana - mother

Community Home - Oruro

TESTIMONIE

SOME DATA ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN BOLIVIA

- 17% of the women in the urban area and 35% in the rural area are married or living with someone before they are 18.
- 1 or 2 of every 10 married or cohabiting men say that they are victims of abuse in the home, mainly psychological abuse.
- 5 to 6 of every 10 married or cohabiting women say that they are victims of physical, psychological and sexual abuse in the home.
- 7 of every 10 victims of abuse are women.
- In 75% of the cases the violence is constant and is not reported by the victims.
- 53% of the women who do report having been abused in their home did not take any action. Most of them were aged between 29 and 50; they were unemployed or only occasional worked.
- 17% reported violence to the Family Protection Brigades, the Integral Legal Services or the Legal System.
- 30% sought solutions within their family.
- The most frequent physical violence against women took the form of shoving (8% of the women in a relationship) and being hit or kicked (7%).
- 48% of the women who were or had been in a relationship reported having suffered different forms of abuse from their partner at one time or other.
- 15% reported having been forced to have sexual intercourse.
- The type of violence is greater as the woman gets older and among uneducated women.

Sources: National Demographic and Health Survey (ENDSA) 2003
Frequency study in three municipalities in Bolivia, PAHO-MSPS-VAGGF, 1998

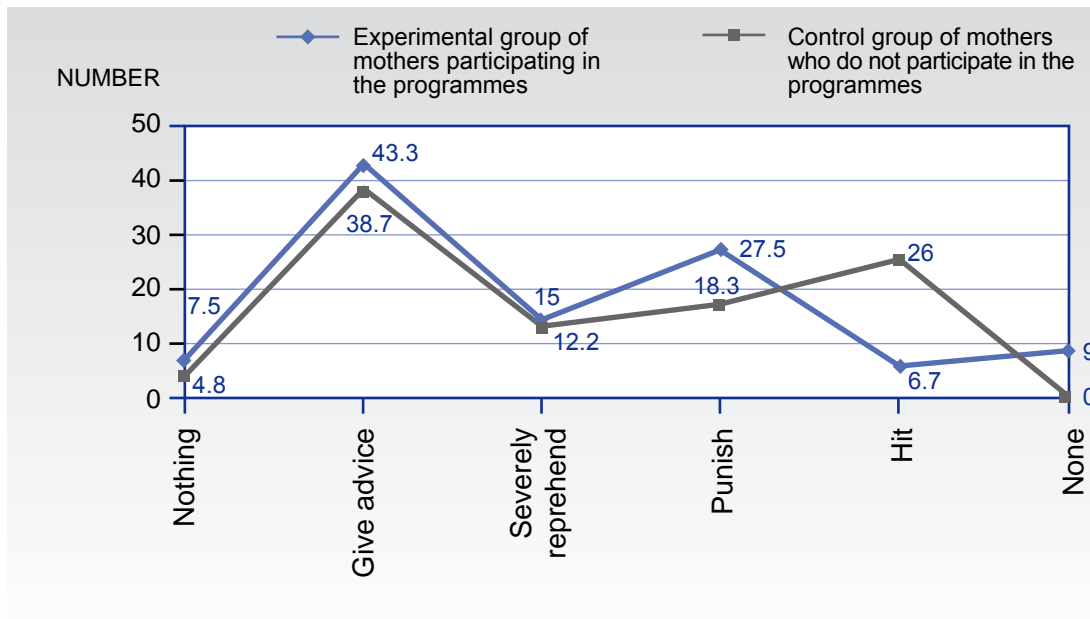
WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

There are 80 Integral Legal Services, which are under the responsibility of the municipal governments, in Bolivia that implement the violence attention policies. Also, 53 Attention to and Prevention of Domestic Violence Networks have been set up that specifically attend to violence against women.

Source: Bolivia National Report – Vice Ministry of Women, 2004 (base line)

Another option that the women can use in their families is to manage conflict without resorting to violence. They learn to use dialogue as a way of relating to their children. They learn to overcome their own background and that they can break the vicious circle that makes a person who has suffered abuse become a potential abuser. They understand that certain ways of raising children and situations made their parents or guardians treat them in a certain way when they were children themselves.

What do they do when their children misbehave?



Source: Proactiva Impact Evaluation Report 2004

Physical punishment is more frequent in women who do not participate in the programmes, according to the results of the last impact evaluation.

In general, whether alone or in a relationship, the women respond to the challenge of improving the situation that brought them to the programme.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

Result 2

HEALTHY WOMEN

Although the child abandonment prevention programmes seek that the mothers, with higher levels of self-esteem, take care of their health, this result does not reach even the minimum percentage. The majority do not see their health as a priority, do not prevent women's illnesses and do not take advantage of the campaigns coordinated by the SOS Social Centres.

SOME DATA ON **WOMEN'S HEALTH IN BOLIVIA**

- 270 of every 100,000 women die because of complications during pregnancy, and childbirth.
- It is estimated that unsafe abortions cause 30% of deaths in women.

Source: Basic indicators PAHO/WHO 2000

"... there's no time for anything. When our children get ill we have to take them to the doctor. We get up early and join the queue. When we get ill we get better on our own or just put up with it. There's no time or money to go to the doctor."

Juliana – Mother

SOS Social Centre - Oruro

TESTIMONIE

The programmes should look for strategies to motivate the women to take advantage of the public health services, which they have a right to, such as the SUMI. Healthcare has to become one of the indicators of progress in the development of women's self-esteem.

Result 3

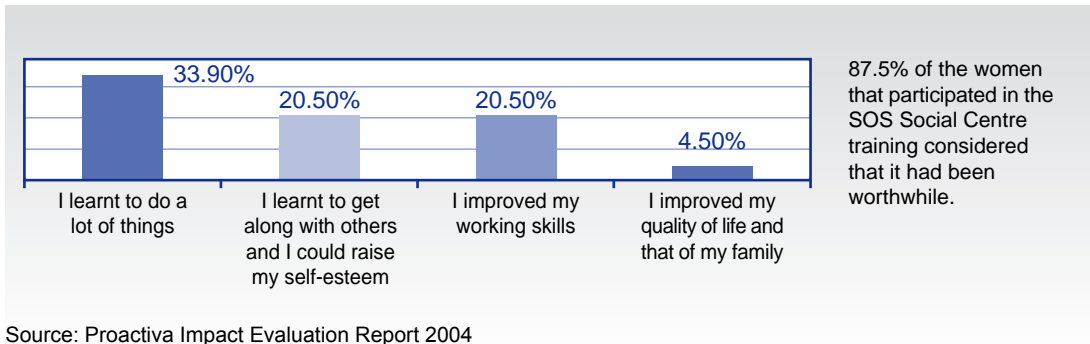
WOMEN WHO WORK AND EARN DECENT WAGES

80% of the mothers participate in the technical training courses that are offered by the child abandonment prevention programmes. Attendance is higher in the SOS Social Centres than in the Community Homes.

Probably many mothers from the Community Homes do not attend the training sessions because they are usually in the evenings, the Centre is far from their home and many of the cities lack security and public transport. Some say that they do not have time. However, those who do participate in the sessions feel that they have benefited and value them.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

How did the training benefit me? (mothers)



The techniques or specialities that they learn come from the participants' interests and the opportunities that will be opened to them in the employment market wherever the programme is.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

TRAINING JUST IN TIME

Dani Ramos is a mother of 6, and was referred to the SOS Social Centre Tarija from Social Services⁴. Her husband had left her and she found herself alone and desperate in charge of her 6 children. She had worked in PLANE⁵ but at that time did not have a contract. Her self-esteem was very low and she was suffering because she knew that her husband had left her for another woman.

The year was drawing to a close and the SOS Social Centre could not give her a loan. Also, because she was so depressed she could not work alone. We began to think about her working for two months in the Centre itself in charge of cleaning the offices and during that time she could train to be able to find stable work in the future.

After long conversations with the educators and the person in charge of the Area of Training she began to be more positive and work well. As she gained more confidence she spoke of her problems with her partner, he had been very jealous and had not let her work; he was jealous of everyone and it ended in high levels of domestic violence which led to his leaving her.

She had never known what to do. When a baking course started up in the SOS Social Centre, she said that she would like to learn, to be able to have a cake stall and eventually become the owner of her own business: she believed that she could learn to bake. She showed a desire to overcome her situation and for her older daughters to help her to sell while she was in classes. She had never had the chance to learn as her husband became jealous when she came home late.

She began to study what she had always wanted to. She studied in the evenings and by the time the SOS Social Centre work finished she had learnt to make delicious puddings and cakes, so much so that she decided to sell them. Everything went so well that she is still making and selling cakes and her economic situation is stable.

What we want to transmit through this story is that the course she received was just when she needed it the most. This woman was trained in something that helps her whole family as her daughters are learning alongside her and will also have a means of survival in the future.

SOS Social Centre
- Tarija

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

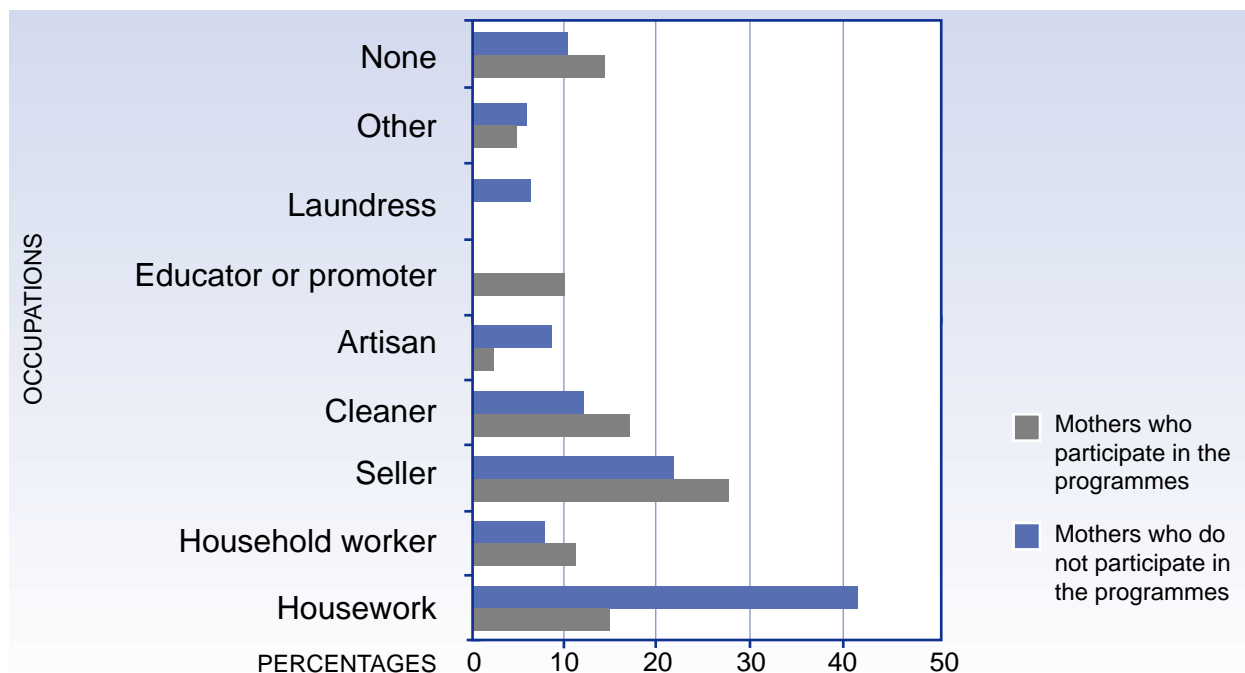
⁴ Social Services (SEDEGES), dependent on the Departmental Governments or Prefectures, attend to the community at risk, in coordination with non-profit institutions or organisations.

⁵ National Emergency Employment Plan

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

The women apply what they have learnt on the training courses to improve their family income. Some generate income additional to what they earn from their main work. Their work opportunities become diversified. This can be seen from the results of the last impact evaluation comparing the occupations of the women participating in the programmes – or who have participated at some time - (experimental group) and those who have not (control group).

Occupation of the mothers (by percentage)



Source: Proactiva Impact Evaluation Report 2004

TESTIMONIES

I AM FULFILLING MY DREAM

Cristina Yanana is an active mother in her Community Home “San Antonio 18”, located in the Plan 3000 zone in Santa Cruz. She begins her day early by getting ready her 3 children, 2, 4 and 5, to leave them in the Community Home and then go on to work. She distributes sweets to small stalls until 6 pm. when she goes to collect her children and take them home. In the evening she participates in the meetings or the training sessions in the Community Home along with other mothers who, like her, want to get ahead.

“SOS Children’s Villages has been good for me because when I was in a difficult situation, I found somewhere to leave my children whilst I go out to work.” She has participated in the employment training workshops and course on how to prepare food using soya and home budgeting. The workshop where she learnt to decorate parties with balloons has helped her to earn extra income. Now she trains other women in this area. “I’m teaching other mothers in other Community Homes. They know me now... My dream was to work decorating parties and now sometimes they look for me to do this and so I get some extra money. I like taking part, motivating the mothers of the other children to learn, motivating them to get out, get ahead and not just stay at home”.

SOS Social Centre - Santa Cruz

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME IN BOLIVIA

	Urban area	Rural area	National average
Men	1351 Bolivianos	346 Bolivianos	889 Bolivianos
Women	773 Bolivianos	95 Bolivianos	483 Bolivianos

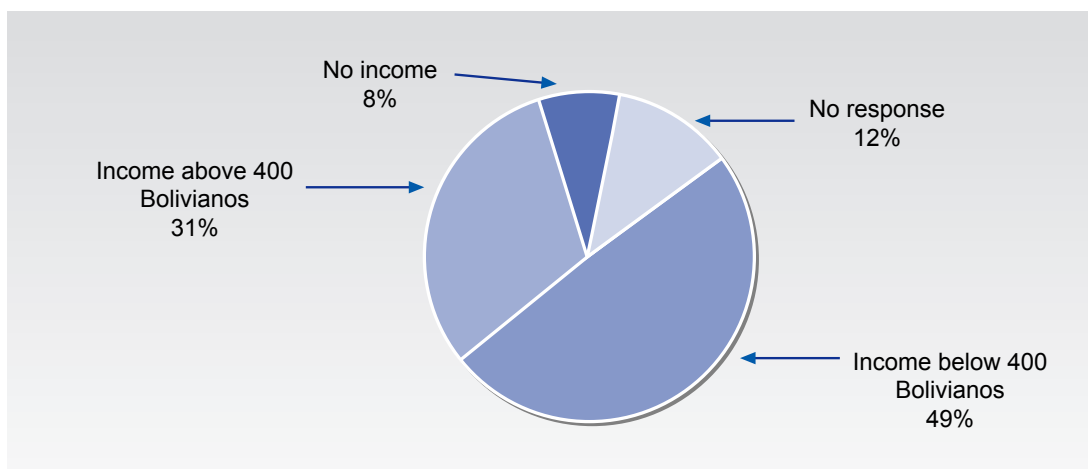
Women's income is less even when they have the same level of education as men. In agriculture, the women receive only 29% of what the men earn.

Source: National Report Bolivia – Vice Ministry of Women, 2004 (base line)

In the last impact evaluation, the women who did not participate in the programme (the control group) reported their monthly income as below 400 Bolivianos, which is less than the minimum salary established for Bolivia. Almost half of those interviewed did not declare their income. This may be because the majority are housewives.

Once they are trained, those mothers who do participate in the programmes increase their income and improve their chances of finding better work.

Monthly income of the women participating (112 interviewed)



The income of the household workers did not exceed 400 Bolivianos in all cities in Bolivia. The sellers declared income up to 600 Bolivianos.

Source: Proactiva Impact Evaluation Report 2004

Income stability could not be verified. Neither could the study determine if the length of time in the programme improved income comparing participation of between 1 and 3 years.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

TESTIMONIES



TESTIMONIES

I DIDN'T KNOW MANY THINGS AND I WAS SCARED

“My name is Zenobia Espejo, I come from Cacachaca (Challapata), I'm 38, I'm married and I have three children; 12, 8 and 4 years old. I worked for 5 years as a community mother cooking for the children. Before I used to work wherever but nothing stable. My husband is a builder. We earned little and my children didn't have what they needed. Sometimes when I didn't have any money I had to wash clothes for people or help other people and they paid me very little. I had to pay rent. When I began to work at the Village I didn't know how to cook, I didn't know how to look after children. They took me to another Centre to learn seeing how nice it was to work with children. I didn't know many things and I was scared.

With the help of SOS Social Centre we remodelled the house so that the children would have a better place to live. I've learnt to cook, we cook differently in the countryside. I've learnt to talk to the parents at the meetings. We learn so much: we talk about what we do in the Home, and what we need to improve our zone. I also learnt to knit with alpaca and other natural fibres, to read and write. The other mothers also learned a lot with their children.

Now I don't work in the Centre and I make hand-knit products in a small business (weavings, tablecloths, bags) and I also work on the farm with my husband. My children learnt a lot in the Community Home. The material is so that the children can learn to draw, paint, have fun with their friends, they can read and write.”

Zenobia Espejo – Mother

SOS Social Centre - Oruro

TESTIMONIES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

As an effect of having been trained, many women want to share their knowledge with other mothers in their SOS Social Centres or Community Homes. These empowered women bring so much to their friends; not only do they try to impart their knowledge but also their enthusiasm and experience for improving themselves and their situation. They become a role model and also, as trained mothers, earn an income from the workshops that they participate in.

TESTIMONIES

“I was shy, I didn’t have many friends. I changed a lot at the Social Centre. Taking part in the courses on Leadership, Self-Esteem, Human Relations and others as well as making clothes for women and Designing Quilts and Cushions has helped me, especially because now I’m a trainer in the Community Homes.” These are the words of Evia Rivero, a mother and trainer in the SOS Social Centre Santa Cruz who, thanks to her effort and attendance at the training sessions reached the goal that she set herself two years ago; to train other women.

TESTIMONIES

“Until now I’ve trained around 40 mothers in Designing Quilts and Cushions in four Community Homes. But it’s not just about teaching them to sew; I also give them advice on how to get ahead. I like motivating them and my next goal is to be a self-esteem trainer.”

Evia Rivero – Mother

**SOS Social Centre
- Santa Cruz**



The women with concrete proposals to take on financial enterprises can request loans with no interest rates and convenient instalments from the SOS Social Centres. In some cases the programmes coordinate with specialised financial companies to back private or family businesses.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

SOME DATA ON **ACCESS TO CREDIT IN BOLIVIA**

- 61% of the borrowers in cities are women.
- The majority of the women borrow small amounts to invest in trade.
- The men borrow larger amounts to invest in manufacturing.

Source: Gender Equity Analysis in Bolivia, Vice Ministry of Women, 2003

Small businesses that need a little capital to generate profit are started up or strengthened with these loans. Our experience has shown that many women –single or with a partner- have taken advantage of these micro credits to improve their income and reach greater work stability.

THE **ROTATING CREDIT PROJECT**

Since 2001, and with the technical and financial support of the Peace Corps and the Micro and Medium Business Development Centre (CEDEMyPE), the SOS Social Centre Oruro has been executing the rotating credit project.

65% of the women participating in the projects work informally earning low and unstable income. The majority of the mothers are small-scale traders (food, soft drinks, vegetables, toys, etc.), and office workers, laundresses... Some are household workers whose time outside work is too limited for them to be able to take care of their children, some live in the house where they work. Those who sell have capital of between 200 and 1000 Bolivianos, which generates enough for them to survive on but not improve their situation.

The rotating credit project helps the women to start up, expand or improve their small business using the loan to reinvest and/or for capital (to purchase tools, equipment, raw materials, merchandise, or to do advertising, legal paperwork, etc.). It has been noted that it is not enough to train the women if they do not have support to raise their capital. Knowledge alone will not improve their employment opportunities or their family's quality of life.

Three main objectives are pursued:

1. That 80% of the women who took out loans improve their income.
2. That 50% of the women who take out a loan use this improved income to invest in furniture and household equipment and to develop their family.
3. That these women improve their self-esteem through being empowered by their business.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

In 2004, 48 participants between the ages of 18 and 50 (empowered grandmothers) from the Social Centre and Community Homes borrowed amounts between 50 and 1500 Bolivianos for 3 to 6 months. They passed through the project's two stages:

- Training for Successful Businesses (8 days – 32 hours), on topics such as the characteristics of a business, customer service, costs, seven good habits, self-esteem, selling techniques.
- Request for credit with the guarantee of the Family Committee, which comes after a case study has been done, and the loan has been approved.

The business is monitored weekly and the mother will pay weekly instalments until the loan is paid back. 20% of the amount lent is held back and returned to her when she has paid back the loan in full. The facilitators are key throughout the project, motivating the mothers to participate through to monitoring their progress. They also monitor the physical improvements that the mothers carry out with their savings. Those in charge of the Family Committees also actively participate throughout the project.

The results of the project are very encouraging:

- 81% of the women reported higher income, an average increase of 60 Bolivianos a month. Most stayed as traders but diversified in what they sell.
- The majority of the mothers managed to save 20% of what they used to, which they invested in improving their business (62%), in their home (furniture and equipment – 29%) and in their children (food – 10%).
- The women made a great effort to move forward and improved their self-esteem. They felt more confident; less worried and saw a better future for themselves and their family.
- Feeling stronger as women and improving their income, some women took measures against the abuse they were subjected to at home and made their partners respect their rights.
- Many decorated their stalls with signs and the name of their business and treated their customers better.
- Many of the mothers encouraged and trained other women who wanted to obtain loans and were going through hard times.
- The Family Committees guaranteed the mothers, guided them and monitored them. They have the chance of working in the Area of Employment Training and Promotion as a way of supporting their families.
- The mothers who set up businesses also took on risks. Those who were successful want to expand their business and will request new loans.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

TESTIMONIES



TESTIMONIES

“I had my business but I didn’t know much about selling techniques or about how to treat my customers so I lost a lot. Thanks to the training we got I improved my business and gave better customer services. I used the loan to improve my business and it’s going well now, I distribute meat to the three Homes in Challapata; these are my fixed clients. And I’ve been able to buy a piece of furniture that I’ve always wanted.”

*Madyabe Quispe – Mother
Llama crackling seller*

“Before I didn’t have any capital and I wasn’t in a good situation. Often I didn’t have anything to take home for my children. The Homes have helped me a lot; now with the loan that I got I set up my toasted cereal business, I sell here in Challapata and take it to Oruro to sell in bulk. I’m doing well. I make a profit of 150 Bolivianos or a bit more per week.”

Toasted cereal seller

“Neither me nor my wife had stable work. I had to go to other cities to look for work and leave my family in Oruro. Now with the training in Producing Sportswear and other clothing and the loan we got I could buy a semi industrial sewing machine to make t-shirts and running pants and I can work with my wife at home. I also learnt Marketing and I’m promoting my clothes, still on a small scale, because I want to buy another machine.”

Antonio Colque – Father

**SOS Social Centre
- Oruro**

TESTIMONIES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

AGAINST ALL THE ODDS, I'M GETTING AHEAD I

Delia Olarte is a mother at the Amancayitas Community Home, which is a part of the San Luis II Family Committee, in Tarija. She is 31 and has 4 children. In 2003 she found herself in a difficult situation; her husband had been stabbed by a couple of drunks and was in hospital. Delia had no income of her own as her husband worked as a bricklayer and she stayed at home with the children. She did not have any money to pay for the hospital bills or the medicine that her husband had been prescribed.

She felt alone and desperate, with no way to turn... her children were hungry even though they ate at the Community Home. When they got home at night there wasn't even bread for them to eat.

Delia was new at the Community Home. The other mothers on the Family Committee didn't really know her or how to help her. The only thing that they could do was to advise her to go to the SOS Social Centre office to ask for help.

After an interview with her facilitator Delia thought about taking out a loan to be able to sell something or do anything to get herself out of her situation. After analysing the case it was decided that she should borrow 1000 Bolivianos, even though she was new to the programme and didn't fulfil all of the requirements. Delia used the loan to sell fruit at the bus stops and be able to earn some money each day. She was very active and her business built up rapidly. Whilst her husband was getting better he helped her to sell during 2003.

At the end of the year and seeing that she could get a loan without having to pay interest, which is a great advantage for people with low income, they decided to put her husband's parents' land to use. As they already had a little capital, they wanted to grow vegetables and sell them at the bus stops. Trusting in their success of selling fruit they requested another loan for 1500 Bolivianos in 2004 to buy seeds and medicine. They worked hard and everything went well for them.

And so with an accessible loan and hard work, Delia has ensured that her family has a stable, decent income. She and her husband found their strength in difficult circumstances, a way of working independently and how to help their children and family unit move ahead.

María Isabel Lima

**SOS Social Centre
- Tarija**

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

AGAINST ALL THE ODDS, I'M GETTING AHEAD 2

Sirila Villca is a mother at the Ositos Community Home and belongs to the Obrajes Family Committee. She's a 27 year old mother of 5. She currently lives in her mother-in-law's house.

At the beginning of 2004 she had a lot of personal and financial problems. Her partner was a violent alcoholic who stole the little money she made from washing clothes. Her children were very neglected and they did not have anything to eat. Sirila was afraid of going home because when her husband could not find work he took his frustration out on her and their children. Her self-esteem was very low because of the psychological and physical abuse she received.

The Family Committee gave her a temporary stipend when they found out about her situation. The facilitator asked her to do the cleaning at the SOS Social Centre for a short time. They would assign a small payment and would train Sirila in cleaning so that she could find employment in the future.

After working for two months in the Social Centre and becoming a little more financially stable she decided to leave because she wanted to request a small loan. She filled out the request form with her facilitator and spoke with the head of the Training Area to decide on what business she wanted to set up. After looking at different possibilities she decided on a fruit stall in the market. Sirila went on training courses and received a loan of 500 Bolivianos. It was difficult for her at first but little by little she improved her economic situation.

The most significant change was that as her financial situation improved her family situation also improved as her husband was not as worried about his situation and seeing his wife with stable work led to him giving up drinking, which meant that he found work. This helped the family to become more stable; the children were better off because they were not abused. The family began to trust each other, their relationships improved and the risk of family breakdown passed.

Doña Sirila Villca still sells fruit in the market. She is stable, her self-esteem is high and she provides a warm, safe family for her children.

Maria Isabel Lima

**SOS Social Centre
- Tarija**

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

The women help each other by talking about work opportunities. By doing this they have their own “employment agency”. Some employers go to the SOS Social Centres to look for women with specific skills. The programmes guarantee the training and moral upstanding of the mothers so that they can find employment.

MY DAY EVERY DAY

This mother’s day is probably just like most of the mothers’ when they leave their children in the Social Centre or in the Community Homes as they all have similar needs and most have to be both mother and father to their children.

She gets up at 5 in the morning, has a wash and quickly prepares her husband’s lunch. Whilst she peels and chops the vegetables she thinks about what she would have been if she had finished her studies... But turning around she looks at her two children who are still asleep and sighs, “But they wouldn’t be here”. Suddenly she looks at the clock and sees that it is 7 o’clock. She wakes the children up and gets them ready, the elder goes to school and the younger to the SOS Social Centre. While she finishes telling her children to hurry up with their simple breakfast she tidies the small room as quickly as possible. They go out together to the market, she has to tell her youngest to hurry up.

Walking towards the market she thinks about what she needs to buy. She puts her child onto the bus for the Hermann Gmeiner school. She does her shopping and then goes to the SOS Social Centre with her other child. She is in a hurry but stops to say hello to everyone. It’s 7:30 and she leaves quickly saying that she has to get to the house where she will clean until 3 o’clock in the afternoon. From there she goes to another house. She cleans until 6:30 when it is time to collect her children. She arrives at the SOS Social Centre and heads towards her children’s classroom to ask how they behaved. Then she goes to the kitchen to chat with the other mothers about how their day was.



She goes back home talking to the children about their day, she prepares a light supper and helps her elder child with his homework. Finally they all go to bed, hoping that the next day will not be the same as always but rather will be a little better.

SOS Social Centre
- Tarija

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE MOTHERS WHO PARTICIPATE?

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A MOTHER FROM THE SOS SOCIAL CENTRE

“I get up at 6:30 in the morning and tidy my room. I get my children up, dress them, wash their faces and all of this takes until 8:00. We go to the Social Centre and get there at 8:15 as we only live four roads away. When I say goodbye to them I always tell them to behave and eat all their food. Afterwards I go to work knowing that my children are somewhere safe. I sell lunch in the street until about 5:00 or 5:30 in the afternoon, and then I go to get my children. If there are workshops or a meeting I go to my room, cook something quickly, leave the children eating and I go back to the Social Centre. I am in the workshops until about 8:00 or 8:30. We get together with all of the mothers and we talk about work or other things to do with the Committee. It’s a time to rest and also to find out things. At 9:00 we all go home. Those of us who live close to each other go together. Sometimes when we get home the children are already sleeping, we go to bed immediately, but sometimes there’s a lot to do in the room so we do it and then go to sleep. The next day it’s the same thing all over again.”

Mirtha Ríos – Mother

SOS Social Centre - Cochabamba

WORK DAY

AVERAGE HOURS WORKED BY BOLIVIAN WOMEN

Productive activities	7.7 hours a day
Reproductive activities	8.4 hours a day
Community work	0.2 hours a day
Average work day	16.3 hours a day

Source: CA/IDB Study II 1996



Component

3

Developing and empowering vulnerable **families** to take better care of their children

Which families are our priority?

- Families who live in poverty.
- Families with precarious housing conditions without access to basic services.
- Families with low, unstable income.
- Single parent families.
- Large families.
- Families with a history of domestic violence.
- Families without the skills needed to take care of their children.
- Families with a history of negligence and parents who do not protect their children.
- Families with parents who frequently consume alcohol or other drugs.
- Families where one or both parents have serious health problems.



SITUATION OF THE FAMILIES IN BOLIVIA

- Bolivia has a population of around **8.3 million** and an annual growth rate of 2.1%. The life expectancy is **64**.
- Most families have **3 or 4 members**, including an average of almost **2 children below the age of 18**.
- Of a total of 1,977,665 private homes registered in the 2001 Census, **66% are nuclear families** with one or both spouses present, and 31% are extended families, related or not related members.
- The nuclear families, single parent or with both parents, are home to almost 61% of the children below the age of 18.
- Between 1976 and 2001 – census years-, and above all in the 1990s, the family structure changed radically because of the processes of urbanisation and sociocultural changes in the family makeup and reproductive behaviour:
 - Single parent families rose from 12.7% to 15.5%
 - Nuclear two-parent families fell from 44% to 37%
 - The average size of families decreased along with the average number of children below the age of 5 due to the drop in fertility in the last few decades
- 15% of private homes reported having one unemployed member of the family who lived on a pension, a scholarship, help from members of the family and other unearned income.
- The types of family organisation combined with employment status divide the homes into three groups: peasant, self-employed and wage earners. The earning families have grown over the last few years: independent (4.36% annual growth) and salaried (6.72%).
- **Most of the houses are inadequate**, reflected in ownership and the quality of the infrastructure. The houses are built with unsafe materials and lack a bathroom. Many do not have access to basic electricity and sewage systems, especially in peasant homes.
- Almost 70% of Bolivian homes have a radio. 80% of the salaried and independent income homes have a television, in contrast with just 15% of peasant homes. Only 28% of homes have a refrigerator.

Source: UNDP – Thematic Human Development Report

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HOMES OF THE FAMILIES INTERVIEWED FOR THE LAST IMPACT EVALUATION?

The families are mainly made up of 4 to 5 members.

Almost half of the families pay rent. 32% are home owners. (Table 3)

One of the reasons for the rapid turnover of the families in the programmes is that their rent contracts run out.

Most live in one room used for different purposes, which is overcrowded – one of the characteristics of poverty. (Table 4)

It is possible that those families that live in more than one room have improved their situation since participating in the child abandonment prevention programme.

56.3% of the participating families have a space used only for cooking, which makes the home more hygienic, cleaner and safer. (Table 5)

The bathroom is shared with other families. Only 32% have their own bathroom. (Table 6)

Most of the families have water and electricity in their home. What they do not have is a sewage system. (Table 7)

Source: Proactiva Impact Evaluation Programme – 2004 – See tables in Annex 2



HOW IS THE WORK DEVELOPED WITH THE FAMILIES?

RESULT 1: Families who know about and respect rights

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Family legal guidance and support	Reference and counter reference in cases of domestic violence. Legal guidance for family welfare, recognition of children, personal documentation of the mother and child. Family rights.

RESULT 2: Families with a better quality of life

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Support and monitoring for family life projects	Training, support and monitoring of drawing up family improvement projects (improvement of relationships, housing, income, etc.).

RESULT 3: Families that practice positive childcare methods

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Training and guidance for parents	Training at practical workshops with parents on different topics: development, sexuality, gender equity, children's rights, children's self-esteem, children's health.

RESULT 4: Strengthened, integrated families

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Spaces for family strengthening and support	Development of effective and affective communication processes in the family. Workshops for partners. Training partners in the new roles within the family and the couple. Bringing a new meaning to masculinity. Conflict resolution.
Attention in focus groups to specific social issues	Identification and referral of families with problems with domestic violence, alcoholism and drug addiction. Care for mothers who are victims of violence.

HOW IS THE WORK DEVELOPED WITH THE FAMILIES?

The family is understood as the “space where a human group lives, linked together by different ties: blood, affective, responsibility and convenience of sharing, among others”⁶. This includes all the known types of families.

SOME FAMILY STRUCTURES

Single parent families: only the mother or father is responsible for the children.

Two parent families: both the mother and father live with the children and take joint responsibility for raising them.

Families without a nucleus: there is no parent-child relationship. The family may work under the direct leadership of one or more children.

Nuclear families: father and/or mother live with their child(ren).

Extended families: father and/or mother live with their child(ren) and other relatives, such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces, etc.

Open families: mother or father or both, with children, with or without other relatives and non-relatives.

The families participating in the child abandonment prevention programmes are organised in Family Committees. In these support groups, under the responsibility of a board made up of the fathers and mothers and monitored by a facilitator, the support, guidance and training needs are evaluated according to each family’s situation.

If there is no parent in the family, an adult, either a relative or a member of the community, should participate. The families at risk of breaking up or that live in situations that put their members at risk take priority and receive permanent support and monitoring.

When working with the families it is important to earn their trust and that all the members participate, especially those who have a direct responsibility for looking after the children.

In the last impact evaluation it was established that the families participating in the SOS Social Centres keep up a relationship with the programmes even after their “leaving” but it is not the same for those from the Community Homes. The families interviewed participated for an average of between 3 and 4 years. In the opinion of the staff of these programmes, this length of time is convenient as no dependency has been formed and concrete results can be seen in the families having improved their situation over this period of time.

⁶ Child abandonment prevention: family and community development, page 47.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS ACHIEVED FROM WORKING WITH THE FAMILIES WHO PARTICIPATE?

Result 1

FAMILIES WHO KNOW ABOUT AND RESPECT RIGHTS

By detailing the results from the previous components, it can be seen that the children and women, who are the main members of the participating families, make progress in their knowledge and respect of their rights as individuals and citizens. A new type of family relationship is set up, characterised by the search for common well-being. Parents, siblings and other relatives are indirectly influenced by the programmes.

The families receive support to obtain documents that are important for them to be able to exercise their citizens' rights, such as birth certificates, ID cards, marriage certificates. These benefits are obtained thanks to interinstitutional coordination.

The SOS staff support the families by advising them so that they can go to governmental and private services when they are in a crisis, usually because of parental neglect or domestic violence. Timely support is highly valued by the families and contributes to improving their situation.

Result 2

FAMILIES WITH A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE

WHAT ARE THE **WORKING CONDITIONS** OF THE FAMILIES INTERVIEWED IN THE LAST IMPACT EVALUATION?

The women on the programme do different types of work compared to the women who do not participate (control group). Most are sellers. (Table 13)

The women's monthly income is mostly between 200 and 400 Bolivianos. (Table 14)

The sellers earn the highest incomes. (Table 15)

The women's partners or husbands are generally self-employed or work on temporary contracts. (Table 16)

The husband or partner's income is higher than the woman's as it varies between 400 and 600 Bolivianos. A high percentage of women did not know how much their partner earned or did not reply to the question. (Table 17)

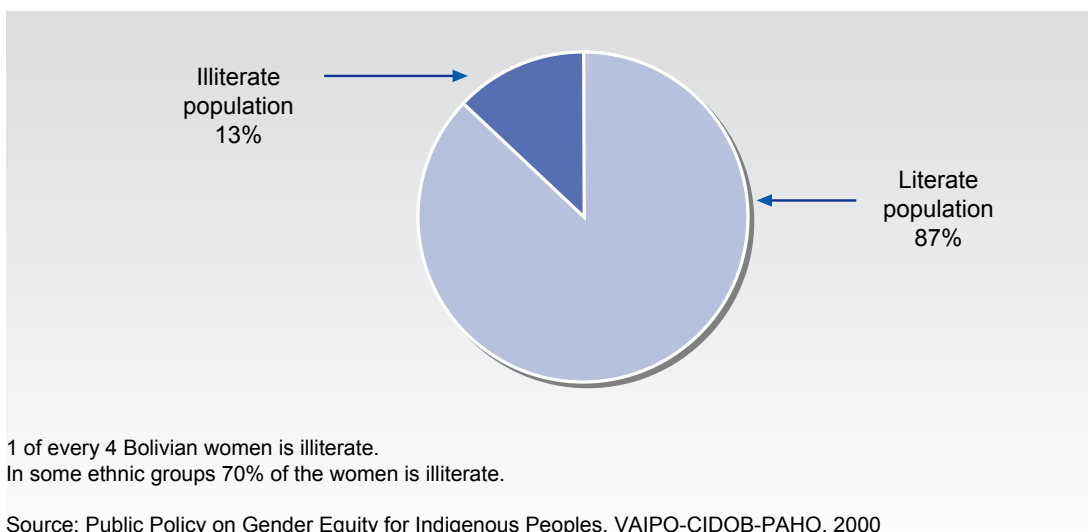
Source: Proactiva Impact Evaluation Report 2004 – See tables in Annex 2

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS ACHIEVED FROM WORKING WITH THE FAMILIES WHO PARTICIPATE?

An increase in income is essential for the families to overcome their initial situation when they entered the programmes. The incorporation of the woman into the employment market under more advantageous conditions has an impact on the stability and the amount of family income. In various SOS Social Centres the members of the family who are responsible for managing the finances are trained in family budgeting.

Raising the academic level of the adult members of the families is fundamental to generating more opportunities and stability. Especially for the mothers, but also for the fathers and other people responsible for the well-being of the children, who are motivated to begin or continue studying. When given concrete opportunities they take on the challenge and advance in their education alongside their children.

Illiteracy in Bolivia (above 15 years old)



TESTIMONIE

“If I had studied more, I would know more now. Life wouldn’t be so difficult. I could help my children, I could teach them too. Maybe I’d have a different job...”

Eva – Mother

**SOS Social Centre
- Cochabamba**

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS ACHIEVED FROM WORKING WITH THE FAMILIES WHO PARTICIPATE?

WHEN YOU WANT TO YOU CAN DO ANYTHING

Alejandrina Díaz came from Potosí to Tarija in 1994 with her husband and her eight children. Now she is 52. She began to work with PAN in 2002 with very little skills but from the beginning she identified with the programme and dedicated herself to the children with great affection. She did not know how to read or write and that made some of her tasks difficult. She had not taken advantage of the training that she had received.

The following year, in 2003, the Home where she was working became part of the PAN – SOS partnership and the areas of result were expanded. One goal was to train the mothers. Alejandrina, in spite of her age, decided to take the literacy courses. This helped her and opened many doors for her. Now, thanks to the fact that she can read and write, she does not have any problems at work and she feels capable of supporting the community mother, at least by reading the children a story. Becoming literate has also helped her in her personal and family life as she decided to open a small shop in her house and she can manage her money because she has also learnt to add and subtract. She is grateful for having had the opportunity to grow as a person and build a better life for her children.

Debbie Barriga - Facilitator

SOS Social Centre - Tarija

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

PARENTS AND CHILDREN BEING EDUCATED IN THE COMMUNITY

In a joint effort, this year the SOS Social Centre and the SOS School in Santa Cruz will become a Pilot Centre for Primary Education and Literacy for Young People and Adults, as a reference point in its zone. Since 1997 we have been coordinating with the Instituto Radiofónico Fe y Alegría (IRFA), which broadcasts the radio programme “The Teacher in your Home”.

In the first half of this year there were already 40 people enrolled for levels 1°, 2°, 3°, 5° and 7°. The classes or tutorials will be in the SOS School on Saturdays monitored by three teachers who are mothers from the programme. Parents and children progress together through primary school, following new goals and life projects.

2004 – Obtained their certificates

SOS Social Centre	48 parents
SOS School	10 parents

2005 – Currently participating in courses

SOS Social Centre	25 parents
SOS School	21 parents



BEST PRACTICES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS ACHIEVED FROM WORKING WITH THE FAMILIES WHO PARTICIPATE?

Like most Bolivian families who are living in conditions of poverty and exclusion, their living standards are precarious. They live in rented accommodation or rooms lent for a short time, which means that they have to move every time the contract comes to an end. This is one of the reasons why the families leave the Social Centres and Community Homes.

The participating families live in one or two overcrowded rooms and generally share a bathroom with other neighbours, which puts their health at risk. It seems that some of the families on the programmes have managed to improve their living standards a little by having the kitchen separate from the bedrooms. Improving living conditions is still something to be worked on as part of the family self-improvement projects, so that the families can actively participate in some social housing plans promoted by the Bolivian State.

Result 3

FAMILIES THAT PRACTICE POSITIVE CHILDCARE METHODS

The child raising styles of the families are determined by their own childhood experiences and cultural patterns that are based on authority and the relationship between adults – men and women, who fulfil the roles of mother and father – and between adults and their children. When participating in meetings and practical workshops where they share experiences, the parents understand that they can change these patterns and set up new, healthier styles. Fathers and mothers regain the right to enjoy being parents by watching the development of their children.

It is wonderful to see how the mothers acquire skills to exercise their maternity with responsibility and affection. The training activities have an influence on this, as well as their feeling strengthened and understood in their processes of self-improvement. The mothers have the chance to actively participate in the programmes, in the different services offered to the children. They learn about child development, the care that the children need and deserve, adults' responsibility for this care, etc.

Part of the previously mentioned pattern is that the mothers are in charge of the children. In a sexist environment the fathers are deprived of participating in their upbringing. Many men exclude themselves and only intervene to “discipline”, others evade their paternal responsibilities completely. Some of the learning in the child abandonment prevention programmes is based on changing concepts of masculinity and make the men participants in and jointly responsible for their children's development.

There are important results from single fathers or in a relationship within the SOS programmes.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS ACHIEVED FROM WORKING WITH THE FAMILIES WHO PARTICIPATE?



A MAN WHO BELIEVES IN WOMEN AND SUPPORTS THEM

Miguel Delgado Castro, a carpenter, is 33 years old and has two sons, Claudio 6 and Francisco 4. He and his wife separated three years ago.

When his wife took on the responsibility for their children she looked for support from the Amorositos Community Home, where she found a safe, loving place for her children. Miguel, despite not living with his children, began to attend the parents' meetings and became interested in the way that the families participated and became organised. When the Family Committee board was set up in 2004 he offered himself as a volunteer to lead the area of Development and Empowering of Women. The Committee was startled but Miguel said that the fact that he was a man should not prevent him from working on the actions in this area and that he admired the bravery of women who could face different situations at the same time, and that he felt that he could actively contribute to women's self-improvement.

The Committee applauded and praised his determination; the women said that they were glad that for the first time there was a responsible man in this area. One of his first responsibilities was to coordinate a baking course because there was a need to improve the diet of the children in the Homes.

Once the group had formed the classes began under the guidance of a baking teacher who attended twice a week. During the course there was a gas shortage and there was a risk that the course would not be able to continue. Miguel built a wooden stove that used sawdust to be able to cook the bread and pastries so as not to interrupt the mothers' classes.

Apart from his activities in the area, Miguel became committed to all the work that a Committee does for the families. He played traditional dance music on his guitar at the District 13 committees' Dance Festival. He was also one of the organisers of the children's championships in the same district. Through his participation and commitment he shows that he is committed to the programme and also that he loves his children very much.

Currently Miguel shares the responsibility of bringing up his children with his ex-wife without any fear of problems or arguments that might threaten the stability of their children.

SOS Social Centre - Tarija

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS ACHIEVED FROM WORKING WITH THE FAMILIES WHO PARTICIPATE?

Result 4

STRENGTHENED, INTEGRATED FAMILIES

STIMONIE

“... I began to talk to my husband about the things I learned at the SOS Social Centre. And that’s how we started to work together. He helps me a lot in my work. We’ve managed to save enough money for a long-term lease... We’ve come so far...”

Elvira – Mother

SOS Social Centre - Cochabamba

The families also learn different ways of relating to each other, which helps them to face conflicts through mutual support and assertive communication. The workshops and family groups work on topics such as conflict management, good treatment, gender equity, children’s and women’s rights, the causes and consequences of child abandonment, parents’ responsibilities, etc. This training and the improvement in living conditions – income, housing – make the family atmosphere less tense.

TESTIMONIES

AS PARENTS IT’S BETTER TO BE MORE UNITED

Most of the adults participating in our programme are mothers who have the common need to leave their children in a safe place while they go to work. However, there are fathers who are involved with their children both within and outside the Community Home. They also know how to take advantage of the activities the programme does with the families and thus improve their life.

“As a father I decided to work together so that the Home would open and I’m still fighting to see it stay open and not close. My daughter stays here because she’s looked after well, that’s why I don’t want to take her out; they treat her well. It’s good for me too, being in this Home has helped me to grow up and think about things more because I have the support of my friends from the other families. I can organise my time better because I know that my daughter is somewhere safe and that she’s getting a decent education – now she knows her colours, numbers, letters and she sings songs. I’ve learnt a lot since I started coming to the Home.”

“My wife and I work all day long and we don’t trust our relatives to look after our daughter because we think that they won’t be kind to her, I know she’ll be better looked after here. Before me and my wife didn’t get on very well because we never knew who we would look after her and so we fought because we couldn’t leave her in our houses. Since we’ve been coming to the Community Home we’ve been trying to get on better”.

“I think it’s great that we have a Community Home here because as it’s close to my work I can come and see her at least for a little while at midday. The Home is like a huge family for me, they treat their children and the other children the same and there’s no favourites. That’s what I see. Also we do nice things for carnival; all the parents got dressed up with our children. It was great because it was good for us parents to get together and we can talk about our children’s talents and skills.”

Juan Carlos – Father

SOS Social Centre - Sucre

TESTIMONIES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS ACHIEVED FROM WORKING WITH THE FAMILIES WHO PARTICIPATE?

Those families who are at risk of breaking up are priority for guidance and monitoring from the SOS Staff, members of other families, participants in and leaders of the Family Committees. Some cases are referred to use the services of specialist institutions to review the causes of their conflicts and confront them. The testimonies of strengthened families that improved their relationship are the positive results of these actions.

FAMILY SUPPORT AS A WAY OF SHOWING SOLIDARITY

Rosario Paredes, Sacarías Mamani and their four children are a family that could be said to be empowered because of their progress in family development and strengthening. This family makes up part of a community that is beginning to understand its situation, is identifying its needs and priorities to the point where it can find effective solutions to the problems it faces together. All the families are poor and on the verge of family disintegration.

The Mamani family assesses the poor families when they do not know where to turn or how to solve their problems. This is when the Mamani family takes on the responsibility and commitment to help them while they are going through the social intervention process to prevent child abandonment.

Sacarías supports the training sessions and meetings organised in his community, always inviting new people to find out about the work model coordinated with the child abandonment prevention programme. He and his family have always set a good example for their community: father and mother take part in the literacy courses; both are learning to read and write to be able to get ahead and to support their children's education. They also pay their small loan instalments on time. Rosario is a programme leader and over the last two years has supported the SOS Social Centre and the Community Homes. Along with her family she prepares the families participating to improve and construct their own life project. She talks to them, supports them at the training sessions, visits their homes, counsels them and guides them in childcare matters and the importance of providing for their family's basic needs.

All of her family help her in her task as a leader. Her children, along with their father, enrol the children entering the SOS Social Centre and talk to the vulnerable families or single mothers. The Mamani family promotes the protection of children so they can grow up in a safe family environment.

SOS Social Centre - Sucre

BEST PRACTICES



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS ACHIEVED FROM WORKING WITH THE FAMILIES WHO PARTICIPATE?

TESTIMONIES

NOTHING IS IN VAIN, DO EVERYTHING YOU CAN AT WORK

Some say: when you are born your destiny is already written and others say that sometimes you need to help it along. Arturo Machicado was born in Camargo. He had a very sad childhood and could not go to school with the rest of the children. He grew up poor but learnt to farm because he did not believe that being poor was his destiny.

He got married but a few years later his wife left him and his three children. From Yacuiba he decided to go to Sucre to look for a better future for him and his children. He walked the city with his children looking for help and finally went to the press where they told him about the SOS Children's Villages child abandonment prevention programme.

Now Arturo is a single father who fights for his children's well-being. He tells of how for 25 years he has been selling books and is proud of having studied with the help of his best friends, his books, which are "his school and university". When asked what he wants for himself, he replies: "One day I would like to have a very big bookshop and grow old with my books." He teaches his children to always help the poor. One of his greatest dreams is to see his children become good, professional adults.

When he talks about the SOS Social Centre he says that it has been a great help. He found support there, especially from the mothers and he sees the programme as a large family where each member works hard to prevent child abandonment. "It's a wonderful shelter", he says. "It has everything you need, it's safe and it's available to all those who need it and us parents can work without worrying because we know we've left our children in a safe place. I'm happy and grateful".

After talking he wanted to advise all single parents to teach their children by setting them an example and to love them with all their heart. Children never asked to come into this world, they just want to be loved and respected. Sighing, his eyes wet with tears he says: "Nothing is in vain, do everything you can because if you work you'll get through."

SOS Social Centre - Sucre



TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS ACHIEVED FROM WORKING WITH THE FAMILIES WHO PARTICIPATE?

FAMILY DISINTEGRATION: ONE OF THE MAIN CAUSES OF CHILD ABANDONMENT



The Joint Responsibility Model put forward in the second strategic initiative of SOS Children's Villages is an integral proposal to tackle the issue of child abandonment. The work in the family integration model is essential to this as it is not paternalism but rather means developing levels of commitment within the family itself. This is why for our organisation it is crucial to face child abandonment as one of the worst social ruptures in the family environment as the family is the first place where children learn to socialise and internalise social rules and grow up to be who they are – be it good or bad.

Socially our vision tries to preserve the positive points and potential of the people in our society, this means improving living conditions so that these men and women are a positive part of society. This would not be possible if we did not start with where the children come from and recognise that our work is already determined by the identity of each of the children that come to our programmes. This is why we do not adhere to concepts such as family integration or disintegration to undertake work that is sustainable over time and space as we believe that it would lead to our failing in this issue.

The sustainability of the work components regarding children and mothers can only work when we take the family as our main base. This is where the most effective solutions or the impacts sought of the programme will be generated. The family is where the children should develop, should not be the victims of abuse and where their rights as human beings should be respected. Therefore it is the family's responsibility to look after the well-being of all of its members, especially of the children.

And so, within what it means to work on this issue in countries such as ours, there are also a series of idiosyncrasies, which may be shared across the cultures of our region, which characterise the target population of our programme. Because of this, the target group – families at risk of breaking up or in the process of breaking up – shows certain other characteristics



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS ACHIEVED FROM WORKING WITH THE FAMILIES WHO PARTICIPATE?

that compound the issue. It should be noted that it is our organisation's policy to adapt to the culture to guarantee that our work really is aimed at the poorest children, the families at greatest risk of breaking up, the women with the highest rates of exclusion and social risk and therefore communities with the highest rates of poverty, marginalisation and social vulnerability.

To begin planning, the conditions of the target population and how far we are from achieving the impacts set out for the programme need to be analysed to achieve:

- Less children being abandoned
- Community development and capacity to administrate independently developed
- Sustainability
- Support for a decrease in the poverty rates in the communities

First a diagnosis of the population's needs and conditions is carried out to be a baseline for the planning process. It also enables us to define the target population and the range of elements and factors that are interwoven, making the issue more complex. On the other hand this type of study enables us to assimilate how the population arises from and is part of its environment whilst also enabling us to work on the possibilities there are for us to use to our advantage and work towards the results we want to achieve.

This is all specifically aimed at being able to affirm that our organisation works on the concept of the family based on the strengthening of affective, lasting family ties and not so much on what is more commonly known as functional or dysfunctional families. This means that generally, and because of the poverty in our region, the families that we work with are extended and/or nuclear, or they are headed by single mothers. On the other hand there are situations where the children have been left with their grandparents or older siblings. This does not exclude them from our work; our programme works on strengthening the responsibilities and roles of members of the extended family who take care of children who have lost their parents.

We should have a clear description of the families with whom the programme works and clearly show the real challenges of our work on family integration; to see the placing of responsibility and the empowering of the families as the agents of dealing with their issues and conditions.

Magela Luksic



HOGAR
COMUNITARIO
SANTA ANA 1



Component

4

Developing and empowering the **community** to take better care of and protect their children.

Which communities are our priority?

- Communities living in poverty.
- Communities with limited access to basic services.
- Recently settled communities in cities and the surrounding areas.
- Communities with little ability to generate their own organisation processes.
- Communities which are indifferent to common problems.
- Communities that do not respect children's and women's rights.
- Communities that identify with the SOS Children's Villages vision and request to take part in the child abandonment prevention programmes.



HOW IS THE WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPED?

SOS Children's Villages has defined three areas to work on with the community, which comprise of their level of joint responsibility in improving their living conditions:

COMMUNITY DIMENSIONS

1. PARTICIPATIVE COMMUNITY

This comprises the children, adolescents, young people and adults who participate in the child abandonment prevention programmes. They are generally interrelated because of the geographical zone they live in and even more because of their common needs based on their standard of life. The families are organised into Family Committees, which actively participate in the life of their community.

2. INVOLVED COMMUNITY

This term could be a synonym for committed. This is a community that takes responsibility for and is sensitive to the needs of the children, women and families participating. It includes people (living in the zone where the programmes are, SOS Friends, specific donors) and neighbourhood organisations (boards, grass root organisations) or services (schools, health posts, churches), both private and public. This community knows and supports the aims of the child abandonment prevention programmes and how they function.

3. SOCIETY

The participating and involved community is inserted into a wider society, which the community may become a part of if society is guided towards providing timely help. Society is made up of people, civil groups, organisations, institutions and companies that recognise the benefit of working on the second strategic initiative of our organisation, as contributing to raising the quality of life of those participating in the programme improves society as a whole.



Working with the community in different regions of the country includes factors such as cultural practises related to organisation and a sense of community, levels of consolidation of neighbourhoods or zones, which are seen in the neighbourhood organisations, the experience of each programme and how long it has been running for.

HOW IS THE WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPED?

RESULT 1: Organised communities protagonising child abandonment prevention and defending children's, women's and families' rights

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Facilitate community organisation processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training to apply the joint responsibility strategy. Formation of Family Committees. Opening of Community Homes. Monitoring and follow-up of the participating community organisation processes.
Training of leaders in the subject of children's and women's rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community sensitisation and promotion processes on child abandonment prevention. Training on children's and women's rights. Setting up of networks for the protection and defence of children and women.

RESULT 2: Autonomous communities that exercise social control, moving towards sustainability

SERVICE	SERVICE CONTENTS
Training leaders in citizens' rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training leaders, giving priority to women, on of leadership, gender equity, popular participation, conflict resolution and team work. Monitoring and follow-up of individual and group processes. Promotion of a culture of community work. Improvement of infrastructure, equipment, materials.



Until recently, the SOS Social Centres in Bolivia consolidated their own infrastructure for providing their services to the participants in the programmes. Now the experiences are based on the community's organisation and participation, through the Family Committees that are jointly responsible for the Community Homes, which bring life to the child abandonment prevention model.

HOW IS THE WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPED?

HOW A NEW CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMME IS BORN IN BOLIVIA: THE EXPERIENCE IN CHASQUIPAMPA – LA PAZ

The group of volunteers who set up the School Support centre in the Chasquipampa zone in 1972 decided to give the Centre to SOS Children's Villages, which has been administrated from the SOS Hermann Gmeiner School since 2001 under the name of the Chasquipampa Support House.

The Chasquipampa Support House has developed a pedagogic plan to provide school support to children aged between 4 and 13 studying in different schools in the zone and also in District 19 in the South Zone. The work carried out in the last three years has resulted in important improvements in the academic performance and effective reinsertion into school of the children in the zone.

Working in the zone and having contact with the leaders and neighbours, the families and the children has led to a baseline that shows this population as presenting factors that put at risk the development of the children and needing a wider intervention. Although the South Zone is a residential zone there are still poverty stricken areas where the population lives in an unstable situation. The baseline calculated at the end of 2003 by the SOS School to determine the socioeconomic and cultural situation of the population bears out the poverty indexes, the need for education, health, housing, basic sanitation, employment and other needs that affect the communities' quality of life.

The results of this research also indicate that the inhabitants of these zones are generally migrants from rural Aymará areas who are either illiterate or have a low level of schooling.

The zones that are inhabitable have spread out randomly over the area; there is no sanitation network or basic infrastructure. 60% of the population does not have basic services installed in the home and the public transport system is lacking.

Almost half of the population lives in overcrowded conditions. In many cases a family of 7 lives in one room that serves for cooking, sleeping and living but has no bathroom or kitchen, which puts the family's health at risk, especially that of the children.

The majority of the population works informally, which has meant that mothers are now in the employment market so their children are alone all through the day and sometimes even at the weekend. The older children take care of their younger siblings attending to their meals and childcare.



HOW IS THE WORK WITH THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPED?

BEST PRACTICES

During the social upheavals in February and October in 2003, which was an important landmark for our country, the people of Chasquipampa were an active part of the social mobilisations, which was a clear demonstration of their needs and social dissatisfaction.

The meetings with the leaders, neighbours and mothers have enabled us to prioritise the need to provide attention to protect and attend to the children and mothers in these zones, which was the first step in opening the new programme.

Traditionally the SOS Social Centres started up with an infrastructure with the rooms adapted to providing childcare for children between the ages of 0 to 6. Later on when demand for their services increased Community Homes were opened along with the philosophy of community joint responsibility, which empowered the mothers as those responsible for the education and care for the children in their community and made them active protagonists in the Family Committees in the different areas of work. Over time the Community Homes have become the most important point for disseminating and consolidating the SOS Social Centres abandonment prevention model.

The emerging situation of the families of District 19 in the South Zone, spread out from each other with little public transport to take the children and their families to a Social Centre, made us look at the possibility of opening a Community Home in each zone to facilitate access and provide quality, timely attention for the children with the support of the Family Committees, the Neighbourhood Boards and other organisations.

Within the framework of the experience of the Social Centres, it was decided to open the first Coordination Centre, which would be the central linking point for the development and growth of the new programme, making it possible to transfer the child abandonment prevention model, whose basic principles are maternity in the community and the organisation of Family Committees, to the community. The new programme's activities began at the end of May, 2004 with the opening of three Community Homes in the Arenal, Wilacota and Unni zones (the municipality of Palca) and a Community Centre in Chasquipampa, to cover a total of 80 children.

Once agreements had been made with the neighbours the first steps were taken to organise the Family Committees and the selection of community mothers. In the following months other communities requested that Homes be opened in their zones. This gave way to the opening of seven new Community Homes in the zones of Apaña, Lakacollo, Kupillani, Virgen de Copacabana, El Pedregal, Alto Irvavi and Las Lomas. There is still a lot to do as the outlying zones are clamouring for new Homes for their children.

Amanda Guzmán

**SOS School
- La Paz**

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

Result 1

ORGANISED COMMUNITIES PROTAGONISING CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION AND DEFENDING CHILDREN'S, WOMEN'S AND FAMILIES' RIGHTS

The Family Committees and Community Homes have proliferated throughout the country meaning that the child abandonment prevention programmes are reaching a high level of coverage. The Family Committees pass through three phases on their way to becoming consolidated as organised groups of parents with their own objectives and plans which lead to their independently obtaining results.

FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF A FAMILY COMMITTEE

PHASES and RESULTS		ACTIONS
1	<p>A WEALTH OF OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>Result 1.1.</p> <p>Compatibility between the demand for services from the target population and the offer to provide services from the child abandonment prevention programmes.</p>	<p>Reaching out to the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An organised population that demands services. - Identification of the target population in risk zones by SOS Children's Villages. - Demand for services according to the needs identified in the target population. - Socialisation of the offer to provide child abandonment prevention programmes services.
2	<p>IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY LEADERS</p> <p>Result 2.1.</p> <p>Formation of the Family Committee.</p>	<p>Reaching out to the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Target population identified and selected through an admissions procedure. - General meeting with the participating community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General socialisation of the make-up and functions of the members of the Family Committee. • Socialisation of the concept and the characteristics of the type of leader that becomes part of the Family Committee Board. • Democratic, participative election of the Family Committee leaders. • Family Committee Board takes office.
3	<p>STRENGTHENING LEADERS FOR THE TRANSFER OF THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION MODEL</p>	<p>First step in transferring the child abandonment prevention model to the Family Committee and its Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training on the child abandonment prevention model.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

PHASES and RESULTS		ACTIONS
3	<p>Result 3.1. Family Committee that works in a team and manages its programme.</p> <p>Result 3.2. Leaders strengthened in the operative development of their component.</p> <p>Result 3.3. Leaders trained to insert themselves into taking decisions for their community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training in team work methodologies. - Training in joint responsibility (objectives, activities and results per component). - Participative planning – preparation of the Annual Operative Plan (AOP). <p>Second step in transferring the child abandonment prevention model to the Family Committee and its Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of the functions of each leader with on-site monitoring. • Reinforcement of functions and use of registers. • Conflict resolution. <p>Training of leaders (parallel process):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal training. • Leadership. • Conflict resolution. • Children’s and women’s rights. - Training in citizens’ rights. • Popular Participation Law. • Municipalities Law. • Public policies focussing on children and women.
4	<p>THE FAMILY COMMITTEES’ DEVELOPMENT AND PROTAGONISM</p> <p>Result 4.1. Leaders protagonising community administration.</p> <p>Result 4.2. Organised participating leaders and families taking joint responsibility for the administration of the Community Homes.</p>	<p>Implementation of participative planning or the AOP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board meetings every 15 days. • Agreements and delegation of tasks and responsibilities. • Socialization of progress made and difficulties in each component. • Report on management of financial resources (social control). • Making the Home AOP compatible with the services offered by SOS Children’s Villages. • Preparing the meeting with the Family Committee (participating families). - Meeting of the Board and Family Committee (parents) once a month in the Community Homes. • Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting and follow-up of the agreements. • Following the agenda prepared by the Board. Analysis of the follow-up and progress of the activities per component. Socialization and analysis of the monthly accounts report. Analysis of problems and needs. List of decisions made.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

PHASES and RESULTS		ACTIONS
5	<p>PARTICIPATIVE EVALUATION</p> <p>Result 5.1.</p> <p>Joint learning.</p> <p>Result 5.2.</p> <p>Shared feedback that strengthens the administration.</p> <p>Result 5.3.</p> <p>Taking over and protagonising the child abandonment prevention programme.</p>	<p>Meeting among the leaders of the Family Committees to evaluate the processes and exchange experiences for joint learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Exchange of experiences.• Exchange of positive and negative experiences (successes and failures).• Analysis of positive experiences and exchange of best practices.• Analysis of negative experiences.• Collective community search for solutions. <p>- Evaluation of processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work teams.• Application of joint responsibility strategy.• Collective community problem and need solving.• Community autonomy in the Community Homes.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

BEST PRACTICES

HOW A FAMILY COMMITTEE GROWS WHEN IT IS ORGANISED

A group of parents from the 3 de Mayo neighbourhood went to the SOS Social Centre to look for somewhere where their children could be looked after and fed. They were told that they should form a group, which later was called the 3 de Mayo Family Committee. At first the group was not convinced that it could form a solid, self-help organisation. Some people did not turn up for the meetings and there was a lot of negative attitudes towards looking for joint proposals all because they did not believe that they could fulfil their dreams working together in an organised group.

In spite of all this the parents looked for somewhere where they could safely leave their children. The SOS Social Centre provided the basic equipment, which was supplemented by the families. Once everything was ready two Community Homes were opened for 30 children below the age of 6.

By the second phase the Family Committee was no longer afraid or negative because the members understood the importance of working in a unified team, planning their training according to their needs. This Committee was consolidated as an organised group through leisure activities such as birthday parties for the mothers, national holidays, special events, partially paid for by the SOS Social Centre. One important activity for the parents was raising money to buy Christmas presents for their children. This showed them how to meet regularly and work towards a clear objective. The parents' social control of the Community Homes began in this phase. The community mothers showed transparency in handling the finances, seeking the best care for their children.

In the third phase, the 3 de Mayo Family Committee was strengthened as an organisation, taking independent decisions and being jointly responsible for the development of their families. The members carried out follow-up visits and the leaders advised those families with problems.

The 3 de Mayo Family Committee went to Social Services to request help to open a neighbourhood dining hall where they could attend to children between the ages of 6 and 12. These children are not being looked after by their parents who go out to work. The request was turned down and so the Committee turned to the SOS Social Centre. As this was a Committee becoming independent, the programme asked the parents to match the funds. They already had US\$500 to equip the new Home and pay the community mothers so they asked the programme to pay for the dry and fresh food supplies.

The 3 de Mayo Family Committee currently coordinates its activities with the Neighbourhood Board and all of the Family Committees in the neighbourhood. The parents, although they are not homeowners, stay for years in the neighbourhood because they feel supported by and a part of their Family Committee.

María Santos de Alfaro

SOS Social Centre - Tarija

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

Empowering the community leads to an active attitude that results in better well-being of the children and families.

THE POWER OF ORGANISATION

To celebrate the arrival of spring the parents, helped by the leaders of the Child Development Area, organised different games for the children to spend some time with them in the week leading up to this important day here in Bolivia.

Each Community Home was allocated different games and the parents had to find the equipment necessary or make it. The snacks for the children were also their responsibility.

Sunday 19 September was a sunny day and we met at the local football pitch. There was a huge paper dinosaur that the people had to go through to enter the pitch. There was music and Betty was the compere who had everyone doing the conga. The games were held and probably the most impressive was the pool of confetti that the women had brought from print shops. And so the day passed by with shouts of joy and happiness and we will never forget the great time we had by cooperating and working together.

SOS Social Centre
- Tarija

BEST PRACTICES

The joint responsibility model invites the parents on the Family Committees to become involved in solving their common needs. One of the main interests is to protect the children but this becomes the springboard for empowerment which will lead to looking for better living standards for all of the members of the community. The Family Committees have managed to form a link with other community organisations such as Neighbourhood Boards (Grass Root Organisations). These organisations have a legal right to allocate the resources that they receive from the Municipal Governments.

To make progress on the levels of participation and empowering, the community guarantees the sustained functioning of the abandonment prevention programmes, by using resources provided by the state. Parents are ensuring that the state fulfils its role to protect the interests of its citizens.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

THE PARTICIPATION OF THE **NEIGHBOURHOOD BOARDS** IN ACHIEVING **SUSTAINABILITY OF THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMME**

Starting up and implementing the child abandonment prevention programme in the city of Potosí led us to see that the active and joint participation of the community in the prevention of child abandonment was fundamental to making all levels sustainable, with the financial aspect as a priority.

WHY IS FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY A PRIORITY?

The local context was problematic: the PAN programme, one of our greatest strategic allies and financial counterparts was about to close, the municipal offices totally refused to attend to the issue of dealing with children in Community Centres or “Nursery Schools”, the Prefecture was indifferent to the subject... The SOS Social Centre began to work and needed a counterpart to implement the child abandonment prevention programme in the community.

Faced with this problem our first reaction was to plan a strategy that would enable us to guarantee, from the community, the financial sustainability needed to have the Community Homes function and stay functioning. This strategy consisted of developing different stages:

1. Quick research into grass root organisations in the catchment areas of the programme, which would enable us to locate our zones of intervention in districts, identify neighbourhood boards and the leaders that represent the community, register their name, address, meeting dates, when they plan their AOPs, telephone numbers, and then locate them on maps of the zones.
2. Review the study report with the facilitators.
3. Train the team of SOS staff and facilitators in the Popular Participation Law, to become closer to the community.
4. Train the Family Committees in the Popular Participation Law to have the Neighbourhood Boards participating more actively, which would enable them to request that an amount be budgeted for the Community Homes when planning their AOPs.
5. Contact the leaders of the District Meetings and the Neighbourhood Boards to know the exact dates of the AOP planning meetings and let them know the importance of the participation of the Family Committees and the facilitators at these meeting, as well as requesting that they include our participation as an organisation on the list of meetings. The District Meetings are meetings of between 3 and 10 Neighbourhood Boards.
6. Participate in the meetings of each Neighbourhood Board to explain the objectives of and services provided by the child abandonment prevention programme to strengthen



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

the reasons why the Family Committees request a counterpart budget for the Community Homes from the resources allocated from the Popular Participation Law.

7. Generate interest from the Neighbourhood Boards in passing this budget at the District Meeting level.
8. Present the request from the leaders of the Neighbourhood and Family Committees for its approval at the District Meetings, with broad participation in each of the meetings of members of the Family Committees and facilitators.
9. Monitor the approval of the AOP budgets at the District level. There were many differences in the processes as some Neighbourhood Boards gave priority to paving their streets rather than to childcare, requesting that this be postponed until the following year. However, many Neighbourhood Boards supported the passing of the budget requested, to different amounts, according to the allocation from the Municipal Offices within the overall budget of the District.

The experience of involving the community when seeking financial sustainability yielded results, with the counterpart budget approved for the Community homes in four of the eight districts where the programme intervenes (San Cristóbal, San Benito, Satélite and San Clemente). 13 Community Homes will benefit when this comes into effect. The second step is to negotiate, along with the Family Committees and the Neighbourhood Boards, the amounts approved in the different districts with the Municipal Offices.

We believe that this experience has been quite positive as it has enabled us to widely promote the programme in the participating community, mainly reaching the group of neighbourhood leaders. On the other hand, we have achieved our objective of approving budgets for the functioning of the Community Homes. Nevertheless, probably the most valuable has been that we have learnt the steps that need to be followed to achieve greater participation, involvement and empowering of the community.

Therefore, with the experience gained we hope to start the process in the community earlier on and in a more coordinated way so that this year we can have the budget passed through the Neighbourhood Boards for 100% of the financing of the Community Homes.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

The contents of the child abandonment prevention programme are being disseminated with the expansion of the programmes and their actions to the community participating and involved. SOS Children's Villages, recognised as an organisation that takes care of children who have lost their families because of different circumstances, manages to broadcast the aims of the second strategic initiative over a wide base. We are still not progressing as much as would like but experience shows us that we are making good use of the spaces and key moments to do it. The organised community, with the monitoring of SOS Social Centre facilitators, prioritises support for the most vulnerable families.

A UNITED EFFORT

On the 19 of July, at a meeting of her Family Committee, Florentina Tito requested a stipend for one of her children as she was having some financial problems. It was explained that there were only 3 available per month and that they had already been given; she would have to wait until the following month.

On the 26 of July, by chance we went to the "12 de octubre" Centre and saw that they were missing a community mother. We were told that she had gone to the hospital with a mother who was very ill. This mother was the same Florentina who had visited us the week before. I got a call later to say that she had died. The Committee sprang into action because the woman was very poor; they went to the media and all round the neighbourhood to get money together to cover all the expenses. One of the mothers took charge of the two children who were now orphans, obviously with the support of all the people on the Committee.

On the 27th we went to the woman's house with a member of staff from the Children and Adolescent's Ombudsman's Office and the social worker from SOS Children's Villages to find out what was happening with the children. We looked through all of the woman's belongings that could help us and that was how we found out that she had been married and that her husband had left with the three elder children. We found some random telephone numbers and started ringing them to get some information. The social worker managed to talk to a sister of the husband and she promised to get us in touch with him.

During all of this we asked for gas and some dry and fresh foods to help the mother who was looking after the children. She was taking them to school and looking after them until it was decided what to do with them.

It took a while to get in touch with the father as he was far away. He said that he was the father and that he wanted to be with the children. It took a month for the SOS Children's Village Office in La Paz to decide whether the family was morally and economically stable enough to take care of the children. When at last it was decided that they could go to their father we saw that it was quite expensive to get them to him as their father couldn't get to Tarija. After a few failed attempts the social worker took them and delivered them with some difficulty because the Ombudsman's office should have sent a report and hadn't. But after all this the children are now living with the father and family that they had never known. Now they're protected and living in a stable family.

Debbie Barriga – Facilitator

SOS Social Centre - Tarija

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

BEST PRACTICES

TOGETHER WE CAN DO IT

400 Bolivianos was all that one mother needed to begin medical treatment but this was an impossible amount for a mother with eight children who receives less than this per month as a kitchen assistant. Faced with this situation, the Family Committees of the SOS Social Centre Santa Cruz organised a fund-raising dinner in October 2004. It was very successful thanks to the dedication, effort and perseverance of the organisers, who managed to raise three times the amount and could help other families in need.

Through this experience the Family Committees, under the slogan of “Together We Can Do It”, decided to include an annual fund-raising dinner in their yearly activities to support mothers with serious health problems.

SOS Social Centre
- Santa Cruz

PARTICIPATION OF THE WOMEN IN THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES IN COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

The women participating in the programmes visibly integrate themselves into community activities and organisations. (Table 18)

They participate mainly in the church, the neighbourhood board and the school board. (Table 19)

If the results of the surveys are compared, they most frequently participate on the boards where there are other women participating. (Table 20)

Source: Proactiva Impact Evaluation Report 2004 – See tables in Annex 2



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

Result 2

AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITIES THAT EXERCISE SOCIAL CONTROL, MOVING TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

If it is an achievement to have the Family Committees gradually being set up and functioning, it is important to take the women's participation into account. Traditionally the community organisations in Bolivia have been made up of men who wield the power to decide the future of their family and their community's development.

The empowered women begin to see themselves as leaders. They realise that actively participating does influence their own well-being and that of their families and friends. They are trained in the SOS Social Centres and are successful in rising to the challenges given to them. The programmes should increase their leadership training even more and include new topics and strategies.

SOME DATA ON **WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND RIGHTS** IN BOLIVIA

Mayors in Bolivia 87% men 13% women
Of the 252 female councillors only 9% have become mayoress.

Source: Vice Ministry of Popular Participation, 2001

- The peasant organisations in Bolivia are dominated by men because of cultural practices and the fact that only 20% of landowners are women. (Before 1960 only 1.2%).
- Generally women only inherit land but even this is not always the case as men are favoured in common law and in many cases the women do not have personal identification documents (birth certificates and ID cards, marriage and death certificates) to support their claim.

Source: Bolivia, 5 years after Beijing, Report 2000, VAGGF

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

I AM A LEADER AND A MOTHER

Bertha Mojica, mother of two, has been actively participating in her Family Committee for the last three years. Having participated in the Personal Development and Community Organisation and Participation programmes has helped her to improve. “Speak without fear, be sure of myself, speak with a clear objective and get what I want” is her slogan after being trained. “These courses have helped me be part of my neighbourhood board.”

Bertha stands out because of her good relationships with the other mothers in the programmes, “getting on with the other mothers, being like a family and helping each other, sharing problems and trying to find a way of solving them together strengthens me and motivates me to continue in this group.”

SOS Social Centre
- Santa Cruz

TESTIMONIES

Some of the female leaders actively participate in other grass root organisations such as the neighbourhood boards, school boards, church groups, etc.

One of the results of the Family Committees is that they look after the physical and functional improvements to the Community Homes and around where they are located. They are involved in community work. The parents, according to their possibilities, give their time, effort and some possessions to the places where their children will stay during the day.

MOTHERS WORKING LIKE ANTS

They had to leave the house where the Community Home was and the Family Committee worried, had to look for a house that had at least some of the conditions necessary to set up a Home. One morning, after various meetings with all of the mothers, they found a house and decided to move. They planned to make some improvements and had some money put aside. The mothers spent all day sorting out the main room and two days later moved all their things in. It was lovely to see them working like ants, carrying the stuff on their backs. There were still other improvements to be made but we had to think about them. The commitment and perseverance of the mothers so that the Home could function was amazing, they were so happy setting out their goals for the future.

SOS Social Centre
- Oruro

BEST PRACTICES

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

The Family Committee boards monitor, motivate and supervise the functioning of the abandonment prevention programmes. They are the link between the families and the SOS Social Centre staff and guarantee the focuses and services provided.

It is essential to build an environment of trust and joint responsibility among all of those involved in the processes and results. To do this the activities for integration, recreation, fund-raising and others need to be held constantly and as a routine. In each region the national and regional dates are used as times to consolidate a community committed to those who need their help the most. An example of cultural adaptation can be seen in the city of El Alto.

THE APHAPI OR COMMUNITY MEAL



The community meal is an ancient tradition in the Andean cultures, mainly the Aymará culture. It is a sociocultural practice that takes place at events such as visits, meetings, work, family, group, community parties, assemblies and times when different communities get together.

It is better known as a space for the community to exchange food, everyone puts in the food that they have brought from their house and then everyone spends time eating, and talking. No one leaves without having eaten cheese, fish, meat, potatoes, corn, plantain and cassava at the apthapi; everyone takes part, even those who have come from other communities or abroad.

After the food has been shared there is a time to share much deeper social messages. The apthapi is an expression of solidarity with others as a symbol of social relations and exchange. The Aymará people do not do this at any time but rather when they seek to proclaim the unity of a group. It is a collective, voluntary endeavour.

The symbolic, cultural endeavour of the apthapi is recovered also in the meetings, such as workshops, among the families participating in the SOS Social Centre. It is a communal way of life. This experience generated opinion in different social levels because of the broad coverage it was given by the media, both on the radio and television, in a visit to the programme.

Genaro Condori

**SOS Social Centre
- El Alto**

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

HUMANITARIAN AID PROGRAMMES

or EMERGENCY PROGRAMMES

Over the last few years, SOS Children's Villages has helped families and children affected by natural disasters such as the fires in Guarayos, the earthquakes in Totorá and Aiquile, the landslide in Chima and the flooding of the River Pirafí in Santa Cruz. The support is given for a certain period and the participation of the community and its representatives is fundamental to achieving good results.

As an example: in March 2003, the Bolivian people were moved by the disaster in Chima. Two teams of SOS staff went to the zone to do the following:

The first SOS Immediate Response team

1. Delivered donations from the organisation – clothes, food and medicines – to the victims.
2. Researched the situation of ten children who had been orphaned. These children are now part of a permanent substitute family in the La Paz Village.
3. Actively took part in the Emergency Operative Committee commission made up of different organisations and institutions such as UNICEF, DNI, World Vision and Civil Defence. This commission was to look out for the welfare of the children and ensure that the donations were properly distributed.

The second team was called Integral Protection and Attention for Children. This team focussed on three other lines of action based on the experience of the child abandonment prevention programmes:

1. Identifying and administrating spaces where the children could be protected and cared for integrally. They found three infrastructures – one municipal and two from the ILO. These were adapted to begin work along the lines of Community Centres with 180 children.
2. Determining who should participate in these Community Centres; children below the age of 6, children of those who had been widowed by the disaster, children of gravel scratchers, those who had lost their homes or refugees. Siblings below the age of 10 could also participate. Programmes on health, nutrition, preschool education were started with the participants along with psychological rehabilitation for the trauma that they had suffered.
3. Managing the sustainability of these childcare and protection programmes, through PAN and the Municipal Government of Tipuani's commitment to carry on the support.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

A MUNICIPAL DISTRICT DISPOSED TO PROTECTING ITS CHILDREN

PROTECTED CHILDREN. INTEGRATED FAMILIES. A COMMUNITY IN ACTION

There are various SOS programmes in the zone of Mallasa, to the south of the city of La Paz. While coordinating with organised members of the community and more so with the members of the local government the idea came up to make the District a Cultural Ecotourism Circuit. On the 27 May 2005 a Municipal ordinance was approved and passed that declared Mallasa as a Tourist Friendly District and Children's Protector, establishing the general objective of "systematically contributing to promoting, defending and demanding the full exercise of and respect for the children's and adolescents' rights in the La Paz Municipality whether it be permanently or occasionally, enabling their integral development in an environment of love, respect and safety."

The experience in Mallasa can be a model to be extended to other zones in the same city or country.

District:

District 20, sub district 6, Sub municipality of Mallasa of the city of La Paz, is a delimited geographical zone where people live and work alongside organisations and companies working to benefit the community.

Tourism:

Because of the climate, landscapes, and tourism and recreational facilities, the district became a Cultural Ecotourism Circuit in 2003. The neighbours understand the importance of tourism as a source of employment, income and to improve their quality of life.

Friend and Protector:

The district, through all of the committed and involved actors, seeks to promote, defend and systematically contribute to promoting, defending and demanding the full exercise of and respect for the children's and adolescents' rights to enable their integral development in an environment of love, respect and safety.

Of Children:

Children and adolescents are understood as those citizens below the age of 18 who live in the zone or go there to use the health, education, leisure, legal services, etc.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN RESULTS OF WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITIES THAT PARTICIPATE?

A Steering Committee designed a proposal for actions and results, which is currently being executed, under the guidelines of the United Nations Declaration on Children's Rights.

DISSEMINATION AND DEFENSE OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

- Wide broadcasting of children's rights to schools, their families, community leaders, functionaries, neighbours in general, emphasising no discrimination, education in values, peace, fraternity and tolerance.
- Organisation of a support network to defend children's rights to have all of the actors understanding the objectives of a municipal district disposed to protecting its children.
- Solidarity campaigns among the neighbours and children, especially in schools.
- Orientation for parents in the schools their children attend.
- Dissemination of good treatment among the families and prevention of domestic violence.

PROTECTION AND EDUCATION

- Child Centres and Community Homes working to provide integral attention to children below the age of 6.
- Integral education for children in the zone's primary schools.
- Schooling for children outside the education system or who have dropped out, with the support of the Ombudsman's Office.
- Integration of handicapped children into the schools in the zone.
- Specialist support for handicapped children through the Ombudsman's Office.
- Technical training with an emphasis on young people.

FREE TIME, RECREATION AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

- Offer of sociocultural programmes to productively occupy children and adolescents' free-time.
- Construction of a new football pitch with the support of the FIFA.
- Installation of a cable car to be used by the children and visitors to the district.
- Free entry for the children to the Mallasa Park and the Zoo.

LEGAL SUPPORT

- Permanent, free documentation for the children with legal advice for their family members.
- Attention for cases of domestic violence, especially aimed at children, through the Ombudsman's Office and with counselling for family members.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- Paediatric and dental care for the children.
- Preventative health campaigns (vaccination, vitamins, fluoride, promoting breast feeding, etc.).
- Promoting the SUMI for healthcare for children below the age of 5 and their mothers.
- Educating parents in health and nutrition for children and the family.

SAFETY

- Signage in the streets and public areas.
- Improve pedestrian safety for the children.
- Protection for children entering and leaving school.

ATTENTION TO CHILDREN AT RISK OF BEING ABANDONED BY THEIR FAMILY

- Taking children who need permanent substitute families into the SOS Children's Villages.
- SOS Children's Villages child abandonment prevention programmes working to protect children at social risk, strengthening their mothers and families and supporting the development of their community.
- Organisation of Family Committees to take joint responsibility with the family for childcare.

STRENGTHENING THE MOTHERS AND THE FAMILIES

- Literacy for adults.
- Technical work training in SOS Children's Villages programmes.
- Promoting innovative initiatives related to tourism in the Valley of the Moon.
- Setting up networks for female employment counsellors, in gender and family.
- Creation of employment agencies and employment networks.

EFFECTS OF THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES ON THE SOS STAFF

One of the most important characteristics of the staff on the child abandonment prevention programmes is their own development under the concept of joint responsibility with the participants in the programme. They criticise the concept of paternalism, which does not lead to a sustained improvement in the participating families' situation. The programme teams believe that integral work yields better results.

Beyond the theory child abandonment prevention, family strengthening and community development communities implies more practical work. This is the difference between SOS Children's Villages and other institutions that seek political support. The results of the work can be felt in the daily life of the children and the women. Something that stimulates the staff to continue working is seeing the development of the very poor people and groups in the community.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEAMS IN THE SOS SOCIAL CENTRES

- Over 80% are women.
- 60% of the staff have been with the programme for over two years.
- 20% have been working for over ten years and have seen the development of their programme and been part of its conceptual, philosophical and operative construction.
- Their training and performance in the programme is a critical part of their work experience.
- They show a strong commitment to the proposal and the practices of child abandonment prevention.

Source: Proactiva Impact Evaluation Report 2004

Number of community mothers and facilitators SOS Social Centres – 2004

SOCIAL CENTRE	NUMBER OF COMMUNITY MOTHERS	NUMBER OF FACILITATORS
Cochabamba	131	5
Tarija	227	8
Santa Cruz	155	5
Oruro	76	3
Sucre	83	3
Potosí	90	3
El Alto	101	2
La Paz	25	1
TOTALS	888	30

EFFECTS OF THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES ON THE SOS STAFF

FROM PARTICIPATING MOTHER TO COMMUNITY HOMES FACILITATOR



I came into the SOS Social Centre in Cochabamba in 2001 and they assigned me to Family Committee N° 1. When I attended the second committee meeting I decided to take charge of a group of 15 mothers. For 4 years I was a leader in the Community Organisation and Participation Area, I was trained in children's and women's rights and I went to all of the workshops on empowering women.

I have a degree in Business Administration. I'd always dreamed of working in an office, dressing elegantly in a company or commercial business but that changed little by little. My vision of life isn't the same anymore. First I volunteered and started learning about the economic administration system needed for the upkeep of the Community Homes. Then I replaced a facilitator who had specific tasks and that's when I realised that working with families is something you can't measure... Suddenly it's not all about money but rather about being able to change people's quality of life.

Often people wonder why I decided to be a facilitator if that's not what I studied and I tell them, "Administration is a wide field where they teach us to take on new challenges, where working in what you don't know can be a chance to prove yourself."

Now I have the chance to play a part in changing people's lives, it's a commitment to achieving the results that are expected in this work that's so hard, with no fixed working hours, without a recipe or a manual that teaches us to guide people. It is hard but the reward comes when you see the change in the families and that is the most valuable thing in this world.

The facilitator's responsibility is huge because by doing a good assessment of the leaders of each committee, you can measure how the families participating in the programme are getting on. We're a link between the SOS Social Centre team and the community. We're the part that makes the child abandonment prevention programme work. For the families to get the correct information and understand the programme depends on us, the facilitators.

The satisfaction we get from being facilitators is being recognised by the families as part of this process of change that they go through to improve their quality of life and themselves. Another satisfaction is that, as part of the staff, we are constantly being trained to do our job better.

The challenges for me as a facilitator are: understand better the vision that Hermann Gmeiner had for the SOS Children's Villages, integrate myself more with the SOS staff to be able to talk their language now that I have experience of being a leader, and get all the knowledge I need about the child abandonment prevention programme.

Lidia Quispe – facilitator

SOS Social Centre - Cochabamba

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

EFFECTS OF THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES ON THE SOS STAFF

The training has strengthened the attitude of the staff towards and responsibility for specific functions. 30 people monitor the functioning of over 300 Community Homes, coordinating the technical teams in the Social Centres, the community mothers and Family Committee leaders. Each facilitator is the disseminator of the contents, focuses and strategies to develop the four programme components, motivating the active and protagonistic participation of the parents in satisfying their needs.

The SOS child abandonment prevention programme staff are constantly being trained to improve their skills for working with children and adults at social risk.

One of the processes that needs to be improved and put into practice is registering the progress made and difficulties met every day; writing down experiences and systematising processes. The rapid growth of cover of the programmes means that we need clear baselines, processes and goals or results based on indicators in the different areas of human and social development.

The teams interviewed in the last impact evaluation show that one weakness is not having specialists to tackle the issues that arise. Some facilitators reported that the sheer volume of responsibilities did not allow them to work in depth with some families who needed more attention or to follow them up when they were referred to other organisations or specific institutions.

The coordination and exchange between the SOS staff teams from different affiliates could help to strengthen the association and should be promoted.

THE COMMUNITY MOTHERS

The community mothers are those mothers of the children attending the Community Homes, who are chosen by their Family Committee to exclusively dedicate themselves to caring for the children every day, for which they sign an agreement. They are elected on the basis of certain qualities that they display, such as their vocation for and patience when working with children. It also depends on their desire to be trained with the support of the SOS Social Centre, to work with them full-time.

They hygienically prepare nourishing food for the children, look after the children's personal hygiene, their safety in the Community Home and, above all, offer their protection and care with affection. A very important affective component is nurtured in the community mothers, as they are the people who give and receive affection from the children.

The community mothers also implement educational programmes that enable the children to develop their talents in a communal and united environment. The families trust them as they hand over the most precious thing they have: their children. In exchange they pay them with monthly quotas for the children's care.

EFFECTS OF THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES ON THE SOS STAFF

YOU CAN BE LIKE ME

“I’m Aída Luz Fernández Caro and I want to tell you something about my life. On the 18th of October 1999 I came to the city of Tarija from Bermejo looking for a better income for my family. Time went by and nothing happened. That was when the trouble with my husband started. Supposedly “he was working”... he disappeared for two or three months. I was desperate because my children and I had nothing, not even anything to eat. This economic and family instability went on for so long that it became normal. And we lived like that for years...

On the 13 of January 2002 I went to the Eulogio Ruiz School to enrol my son. Coming back home another mother told me that nearby was an SOS Children’s Village where they had a Nursery School which took in children from poor families. I immediately thought, “Now I can work and get more money”. After getting that information I decided to enrol my son in the SOS Social Centre. The lady in charge of looking after my child visited my room, asked me some questions about my life and finally accepted him. She offered me support.

I started to work at the same Social Centre doing the cleaning for a while. This gave me the chance to get some money together and regain my strength. Then I got an offer to work as a community mother in the Cariñositos Home. I accepted and learnt many things; I went to training sessions to improve my childcare skills in line with the principles of the institution. This also helped me as a mother and a citizen of this region as I found out about more to do with the reality of the families here, and especially of the children. That’s when I realised that I wasn’t the only one in the world with the hundreds of problems I had.

Right at the beginning of June 2004, the Social Centre needed community mothers to look after the children. The Family Committee was selecting the candidates. I was so surprised and grateful to God, to SOS Children’s Villages, to the mothers, my friends here, my children, well to everyone around me when I was chosen.

Thank you SOS Social Centre Tarija and all of you who helped me get where I am today, with my group of children who I’m responsible for. I won’t let you down. I really want to learn and continue being trained to be able to give the children more.

I would like to say that I now see the world from a different perspective, more transparently. I’m more careful about how I talk to the children, with respect, love and politely. I should say not only them but any child because now I know they have rights and that once I was a little girl too.”

Aída Caro – Mother

**SOS Social Centre
- Tarija**

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONIES



**Where we are
heading:
some
challenges
and
commitments**

Part 3

FROM SOS SOCIAL CENTRES TO FAMILY AND COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMMES TO PREVENT CHILD ABANDONMENT



Because of the dozens of women coming to the SOS Children's Villages to leave their children after losing all hope, over 20 years ago the concept of child abandonment prevention was born in SOS Bolivia. It is a very simple concept: **support women so that they can protect their children.**

Of course many other organisations had already thought of this concept but it seemed necessary to take on the idea as it is strong and is a natural response to the risk of being abandoned that thousands of children in Bolivia and Latin America face. And so in the 1980s "**abandonment prevention**" was born in the SOS Social Centres.

This idea has developed, first within the institution, then in a more natural setting, speaking from a social point of view. In the 1990s we placed a lot of emphasis on strengthening "**the institution**", the **SOS Social Centre**; we structured it with closed strategies, institutional systems, etc., which, although they were fine at the time, did not seem to be enough as we moved into the 21st century.

In 2000, **SOS Kinderdorf International launched a Mission, a Vision and Values** that managed to align the whole international organisation, with one of these programmes being the **SOS Social Centre Programmes**. But this was not all, society also charged us with a Mission and this type of programme took another step forward and changed its basis. First it was based on the family as the way of protecting children. Second it ceased being an installation or institution and became a programme with a level of cover. And third to seek support from the community and society that we need so much.

This idea that was born and evolved mainly in SOS Bolivia has been spread around Latin America and many countries are following their steps or have made significant improvements to the original Bolivian concept. Tens of

FROM SOS SOCIAL CENTRES TO FAMILY AND COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMMES TO PREVENT CHILD ABANDONMENT

thousands of Latin American children are being helped by this response to the difficulties and risks that they face.

This is why this publication aims at being a contribution so that hundreds of people who are developing the child abandonment prevention concept based on family and community strengthening can improve their work, develop it and improve the services they offer to the families participating. A publication that gathers together all the good achieved and the problems we have faced from the mouth of those who have been through the programmes and have come out changed, a publication that reflects our gratitude to all of the members of staff who have given and achieved so much.

This is not the end but rather a transition from one stage to another: one stage has finished with fabulous results, great growth with over 9,000 children being cared for in Bolivia and many staff satisfied with their progress. And so I would like to take this opportunity to thank our staff for all their efforts and achievements, and Heinrich Müller, who gave us his ideas and strength to make the values, social and pedagogic concepts materialise. Our National Board of Directors for giving us guidance and good policies. The Regional Office for its technical support and invaluable concepts that strengthened our work. The SOS Social Centres staff who knew how to be the creative and hardworking managers their programmes need and again all of the staff and teams working in these programmes.

Jerry Rafael Bustillos
National Director of SOS Children's Villages - Bolivia
A member of the organisation for 25 years

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

1. GROWTH IN COVER

- Increase the number of children attended to in our child abandonment prevention programmes.
- Focus our attention on populations at risk, also in rural areas.
- Develop plans for gradual growth, set up spaces where the processes can be consolidated.

2. STRENGTHEN OURSELVES AS AN ORGANISATION

- Have an organisational model that can sustain the increase in coverage.
- Have designed the structure that allows growth to be complementary, integrally attending to child abandonment prevention.
- Have a standard system to monitor processes and results, feedback and efficient control within the programmes' services.
- Reach a balanced growth rate with a good relationship between cover and human resources.
- Balance the structures and functions so that the staff do not feel overworked.
- Have a staffing structure that is sufficient and prepared to guarantee the quality of the services and achieve results.
- Have a team of qualified, well-trained staff committed to the programme.
- Maintain ourselves serious and trustworthy through good organisation and discipline.
- Have a functional data base useful for taking decisions.
- Develop an organisational culture based on results not activities.
- Permanently exchange experiences among the programmes in the different branches to improve our organisation's practices.
- Permanently exchange experiences with other organisations.

3. KEEP UP TO DATE WITH PUBLIC OPINION

- Be a point of reference as a key organisation supporting children and families at social risk.
- Build ourselves up as an organisation that is recognised and identified as one that promotes, disseminates and defends children's and women's rights.
- Position ourselves as an organisation that works on preventing child abandonment, as well as having a long-term childcare programme.
- Be recognised for our work on child abandonment prevention with children, women, families and communities at risk.
- Project an image of being open to and providing for financial, human and material needs.
- Project an image of being a transparent, solid and serious organisation which achieves results or impacts with our work.
- Have SOS Friends who make donations for the child abandonment prevention programmes.

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

- Find volunteers for the child abandonment prevention programmes, in the areas of child and adult education, health, loans, community organisation, systematisation, etc.

4. SUPPORT PEDAGOGIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

- Have a validated and systematised integral intervention methodology for child abandonment prevention.
- Integrate ourselves into social and scientific sectors to develop child abandonment prevention.
- Be an organisation recognised for managing and implementing innovative pedagogic and social concepts.
- Lead the work of social networks monitoring and supporting them in topics relating to the components of the child abandonment prevention programmes.
- Generate and publish studies and research recognised and endorsed by scientific pedagogic institutions.
- Be a space for applied research useful for writing policy and other studies.
- Have a social marketing research unit to make adjustments in our services.
- Constantly be analysing the national reality as a context for research that gives feedback on our practices.
- Be a source of support in rural and urban zones (municipal districts) so that other organisations can carry out their work effectively.
- Be a space for technicians and university students to carry out research, practical work and internships.
- Provide time to certain members of staff so that they systematise their work experiences.

5. PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- Support improvements to the conditions and quality of life of the families through the child abandonment prevention programmes, having clear baselines and goals that we wish to achieve.
- Be a reference point in each location for the dissemination and actions for human rights, especially those of women and children.
- Be recognised for our focus on transformation and as facilitators of this process.
- Respond to the needs of families at social risk.
- Promote the communities participating in the programmes to be the protagonists of solving their problems, by being organised, independent and sustainable.
- Have an influence on reflecting on and putting into practice quality and clear criteria that improve the children, families and women's living conditions.
- Generate leaders, mainly women, with community interests.
- Position the child abandonment prevention model in the community involved, making it known, understood and supported.

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

- Achieve mutual support from the community involved and the participants.

6. SUSTAIN A SOLID SOCIETY WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE STATE

- Influence, as an organisation, in the public policies that benefit children below the age of 6, women and families.
- Be seen and valued as strategic allies to enforce policies and strategies to attend to children, families and communities at social risk through the Municipal Governments and other Bolivian State institutions.
- Participate in the execution of public policies, achieving far-reaching agreements which allocate resources to developing the child abandonment prevention programmes.
- Access financiers through having the Bolivian state as a solid counterpart.
- Try to have the Bolivian state finance most of our programmes' expenses.
- Take maximum advantage of the state services for the children, women and families participating (Ombudsman Offices, Municipal Offices, Integral Legal Services, the Universal Mother Child Insurance, housing plans, etc.).

7. SET UP STRONG ALLIANCES WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS OR INSTITUTIONS

- Find ways of working together and establish common objectives with other similar organisations or institutions, showing ourselves to be an open and flexible organisation.
- Coordinate (mediate) services and actions that benefit the participants and economise efforts and money for the programmes.
- Find financial and human resources to develop the child abandonment prevention programmes, in areas such as child education, health and nutrition, employment training, micro credits, production of materials, psychological and legal assessments, etc.
- Share specific results with allied organisations and institutions.
- Learn from the expertise of other organisations in different areas both conceptual and operative.

8. STRENGTHEN OUR SOS STAFF

- Be a sensitive and humane organisation interested in the individual processes and situations of each SOS staff member, safeguarding their physical, mental, affective and spiritual well-being.
- Recognise the efforts of the staff quickly and in writing.
- Develop a sense of satisfaction in the SOS staff for having participated in the development of other people and groups of people in need.

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

- Respect and support the families of the SOS Staff ensuring a balance between the private and the work spheres.
- Recognise leadership as specific qualities that enrich the work teams.
- Promote permanent training of the SOS Staff on the focuses and strategies necessary to develop skills related to child abandonment prevention and their work with children, adults and groups at social risk.
- Strengthen each SOS Staff member's sense of working for change and trusting the group capacity to change situations, uprooting remains of paternalistic practices and attitudes.
- Stimulate spaces for the staff to get together and give feedback, renewing their commitment to the organisation and the programme participants.

9. SUPPORT THE SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES (SOS KDI) ORGANISATION

- Strengthen the autonomy of the SOS Children's Villages National Association from the child abandonment prevention programmes.
- Contribute to fulfilling the millennium development objectives, which our organisation is committed to at the global level.
- Consolidate the technical and scientific transparent approach to the child abandonment prevention programmes, which can be used as a model to be replicated and disseminated to other countries.
- Have SOS Staff experts in different areas to disseminate the contents and ways of child abandonment prevention.



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Municipal districts and zones where the Child Abandonment Prevention Programmes operate in Bolivia

SOME INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANISATIONS THAT SUPPORT OUR PROGRAMMES IN BOLIVIA

PAN Programme for Attention to Children below the age of 6

Finances wages for the community mothers and dry foodstuffs (children below the age of 6)

SEDEGES Departmental Social Services - Prefectures

Finances wages for the community mothers and dry foodstuffs for the Community Homes (children below the age of 6). Pays the facilitators.

SEDES Departmental Health Services

Universal Mother Child Insurance Programme. Check-ups for the healthy child, healthcare for the sick child. Vaccinations. Deworming. Fluoride treatment. Campaign against Vitamin A blindness. Campaign against anaemia H.

SEDUCAS Departmental Education Services

Wages for formal education teachers. Education reform material and training. Official support for the curriculum and qualifications.

Departmental Electoral Courts

Documentation of children and family members.

Municipal Education Offices

School breakfast. Small budget to purchase materials and carry out refurbishments. Pay water and electricity bills.

DILOS Local Health Office in Tarija

Healthcare for children in Community Homes. Authorisation for the SOS Social Centre Tarija to work with the SUMI

Manitos Programme in El Alto

Training by facilitators. Provides food, grants and materials for children.

Municipal Children and Adolescents' Ombudsman's Offices

Referral of cases (psychologist, social worker, lawyer). Training children, staff, and parents.

Integral Legal Services

Referral of cases. Training staff, parents.

Family Protection Brigade

Referral of cases of domestic violence, legal counselling and conflict resolution.

Ombudsman's Office

Follow-up of family cases.

Integrated Community Justice Centre - Vice Ministry of Justice

Follow-up of family cases.

Universities, Departments of Dentistry, Biochemistry, Medicine, Law, Economics, Psychology, Social Work, Sociology, Education, Social Communications, IT, Agronomy

Juan Misael Saracho (Tarija)

Mayor de San Andrés (La Paz)

Mayor de San Simón (Cochabamba)

Autónoma Gabriel René Moreno (Santa Cruz)

Evangélica Boliviana (Santa Cruz)

Mayor San Francisco Xavier (Sucre)

Univalle (Cochabamba y Sucre)

Support from students in internships, in research work, teaching (e.g. IT), health training, and health campaigns.

SOME INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANISATIONS THAT SUPPORT OUR PROGRAMMES IN BOLIVIA

Elizabeth Setton School of Nursing

Health training. Support for health campaigns.

COMBASE Bolivian Commission for Evangelical Social Action

Vaccinations. Deworming. Fluoride treatment. Campaign against Vitamin A blindness. Campaign against anaemia H. healthcare for sick children.

Andean Rural Health Board in El Alto

Check-ups for healthy children.

Albina Patiño Paediatric Centre

Hospital Viedma

Hospital Japonés

Hospital La Paz

Low cost healthcare in specialised areas, complementary examinations and surgery.

PASOC Pastoral Social in Santa Cruz

Esperanza Bolivia in Tarija

Donation of essential medicines.

Gen y vida

Family laboratories.

CIES The Marie Stopes Research, Education, Sexual and Reproductive Health Services Centre

Training in sexual and reproductive health for adolescents and mothers. Healthcare for women's illnesses, smear tests.

CRINN Integral Nutrition Recovery Centre for Children

Training in nutrition for families.

SEAMOS

Training for educators and community mothers.

Juana Azurduy

Training for children on their rights.

ECAM Team for Alternative Communication with Women

Training and legal support for women.

CEDEMyPE Small and Medium Business Development Centre

Work training for women.

Mennonite Central Committee

Small business training. Incentivating small businesses.

ISALP Potosí Legal Guidance Services

Legal advice and training for families.

ACAI Santa Cruz Association for the Handicapped

Diagnosis and treatment for children with behavioural and learning difficulties.

Infante

Integral protection and attention for women and families who are the victims of domestic abuse.

SOME INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANISATIONS THAT SUPPORT OUR PROGRAMMES IN BOLIVIA

Women's Legal Office

Legal assistance for family welfare paperwork and crimes against women.

Casa de la Mujer

Legal and family advice.

Poverty Relief programme Foundation

Training in community participation and organisation.

Kolping

Training in nutrition for educators, community mothers and families. Training in artisan techniques.

Peace Corps

Provides volunteers to train children, young people and adults in small businesses.

Norwegian Mission Alliance

Training and guidance for families.

Instituto Radiofónico Fe y Alegría - Santa Cruz

Literacy for mothers and members of their family.

Alfalit in Sucre

Literacy for mothers.

Radio Atipiri in El Alto

Broadcasting of prevention programmes to the community.

PIEB Strategic Research Programme in Bolivia

Support in research and diagnoses.

SERMEP Technical Education Institute

Support for auxiliary nurses.

IPTK Tomás Katari Technical Institute

Medical, psychological and legal support. Training in small businesses. Strengthening leaders in public policies. Literacy skills.

SOF Family Guidance Services

Psychological support and guidance for women and families.

Violence against Women Network

SOS Children's Villages is an active member.



SOME INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANISATIONS THAT SUPPORT OUR PROGRAMMES IN BOLIVIA

OUR AGREEMENT WITH THE PROGRAMME FOR ATTENTION TO CHILDREN BELOW THE AGE OF 6 (PAN)

In 1995 a strategic alliance between SOS Children's Villages and the Integral Child Development Project (PIDI) was formed. This project facilitated the recently set up Community Homes by covering some of the costs of training the community mothers, paying them a "monthly stipend", the education programmes and following up their execution, weekly menus for the children, portions of dry foodstuffs and equipping the kitchen and classrooms. The State, with the support of the World Bank, showed its commitment to its most precious resource; small children.

Our organisation covered all of the other material needs required for the Homes to function, such as fresh foods to complete the children's diet, cleaning materials and some educational materials. However, the relationship was established based on the confidence that in these Homes there would be pedagogic monitoring and the parents' organisation as well as transparency in the administration.

PIDI disappeared and was replaced by the Programme for Attention to Children below the age of 6 (PAN). This was decentralised with the Departmental or Prefectural Governments taking responsibility for it. Each SOS Social Centre set up local agreements based on the national agreement.

Over the last few years PAN has transferred many of its childcare centres to the SOS Social Centres. This has enabled us to significantly increase coverage and by the end of 2004 we were attending to over 8,000 children in the Community Homes each day.



TABLES FROM THE PROACTIVA 2004 IMPACT EVALUATION

TABLE 1 - Participation of the families in SC and CH programme activities (%)

ACTIVITIES	SOCIAL CENTRES		COMMUNITY HOMES		TOTAL
	%	No.	%	No.	
None	8.3	9	13.8	4	13
Personal development	25.0	27	27.6	8	35
Apprenticeship training workshops	56.5	61	51.7	15	76
Recreational	10.2	11	6.9	2	13
TOTAL	100	108	100	29	137

TABLE 2 - Families' opinions of the programme, per SC and CH (%)

ACTIVITIES	SOCIAL CENTRES		COMMUNITY HOMES		TOTAL
	%	No.	%	No.	
Support for working parents	29.1	25	30.8	8	33
Support education and feeding children	17.4	15	15.4	4	19
Support for the most vulnerable of the community	34.9	30	50.0	13	43
Others			3.8	1	1
No response	18.6	16			16
TOTAL	100	86	100	26	111

TABLE 3 - Type of housing of the families

HOUSING	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
Own	26	23.2	8	16.3
Rented	54	48.2	25	51.0
Long-term lease	17	15.2	5	10.2
Lives in extended family's home	8	7.1	7	14.3
Lives in place of work			2	4.1
Other	1	0.9		
No response	6	5.4	2	4.1
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLES FROM THE PROACTIVA 2004 IMPACT EVALUATION

TABLE 4 - Number of rooms used by the family

HOUSING	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
1	66	58.9	35	71.4
2	30	26.8	6	12.2
3	7	6.3	2	4.1
4	3	2.7		
5	1	0.9		
No response	5	4.5	6	12.2
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLE 5 - Space dedicated to cooking

SEPARATE AREA FOR COOKING	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
Own, independent	63	56.3	26	53.1
Shared	22	19.6	15	30.6
None	26	23.2	8	16.3
No response	1	0.9		
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLE 6 - Bathroom used by the family

BATHROOM	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
Own, independent	32	28.6	11	22.4
Shared	63	56.3	30	61.2
Pit	1	0.9	6	12.2
Other	6	4.6	1	2.0
No response	10	8.9	1	2.0
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLES FROM THE PROACTIVA 2004 IMPACT EVALUATION

TABLE 7 - Services in the house

SERVICES	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
Potable water				
Yes	103	92.0	43	87.8
No	9	8.0	6	12.2
TOTAL	112	100	49	100
Electricity supply				
Yes	107	95.5	45	91.8
No	5	4.5	4	8.1
TOTAL	112	100	49	100
Sewage supply				
Yes	55	49.1	22	44.9
No	57	50.9	27	55.1
TOTAL	112	100	49	100
Telephone				
Yes	33	29.5	8	16.3
No	79	70.5	41	83.7
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLE 8 - Women's ages

AGES	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
17 to 20	1	0.9	2	4.1
21 to 25	13	11.6	13	26.5
26 to 30	34	30.4	20	40.8
31 to 35	31	27.7	8	16.3
36 to 40	22	19.6	2	4.1
41 to 45	8	7.1	2	4.1
46 to 65	2	1.8	2	4.1

TABLES FROM THE PROACTIVA 2004 IMPACT EVALUATION

TABLE 9 - Where the women were born

WHERE BORN	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
In this city	30	26.8	25	51.0
In another city	66	58.9	19	38.8
In the countryside	16	14.3	5	10.2
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLE 10 - Marital status of the women

MARITAL STATUS	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
Single	24	21.4	9	18.4
Married/Cohabiting	71	63.4	37	75.5
Divorced or separated	15	13.4	3	6.1
Widowed	2	1.8		
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLE 11 - Level of women's schooling

SCHOOLING IN YEARS	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
None	4	3.6	4	8.2
Primary school grades passed	46	41.1	14	28.6
Secondary school grades passed	45	40.2	22	44.9
Tertiary grades passed	13	11.6	9	18.4
Years in other studies	3	2.7		
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLES FROM THE PROACTIVA 2004 IMPACT EVALUATION

TABLE 12 - Number of children per woman

NUMBER OF CHILDREN	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
1	16	14.3	16	37.7
2	25	22.3	14	28.6
3	29	25.9	10	20.4
4	17	15.2	2	4.1
5	12	10.7	4	8.2
6	7	6.3	1	2.0
7	3	2.7	1	2.0
8	2	1.8		
12	1	0.9	1	2.0
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLE 13 - Mothers' occupations

MOTHER'S OCCUPATION	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
Housewife	16	14.3	20	40.8
Household worker	12	10.7	4	8.2
Seller	31	27.7	11	22.4
Cleaner	19	17.0	6	12.2
Artisan	2	1.8	4	8.2
Educator or promoter	11	9.8		
Laundress			3	6.1
Other*	5	5.4	3	6.1
No response	16	14.3	5	10.2
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

*The other jobs frequently mentioned are: flower arrangers, auxiliary nurse, auxiliary seller, cook, trader, temporary work, graphic designer, seamstress, labourer, secretary, pavement layer, road worker, knitter, "anything I can", shoe maker.

TABLES FROM THE PROACTIVA 2004 IMPACT EVALUATION

TABLE 14 - Monthly income of the mothers

INCOME OF THE MOTHERS (IN BOLIVIANOS – BS)	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
50-200	10	8.9	8	16.3
201-400	49	43.8	17	34.7
401-600	21	18.8		
601-800	8	7.1		
801-1000	7	6.3		
1001-1700	2	1.8	1	2.0
No income	10	4.5		
No response	15	13.4	23	46.9
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLE 15 - Experimental Group: Mothers' income according to occupation (%)

MOTHER'S OCCUPATION	MOTHERS' INCOME (BS)					
	50 - 200	201-400	401-600	601-800	801-1000	TOTAL
Housewife	2.4	1.2	0	0	0	3.6
Household worker	1.2	9.6	3.6	0	0	14.5
Seller	2.4	22.9	8.4	1.2	2.4	37.3
Artisan	1.2	0	1.2	0	0	2.4
Educator or promoter	0	8.4	3.6	1.2	0	13.3
Cleaner	2.4	10.8	6.0	2.4	1.2	22.9
Other	1.2	1.2	1.2	0	2.4	6.0
TOTAL	10.8	54.2	24.1	4.8	6.0	100

TABLES FROM THE PROACTIVA 2004 IMPACT EVALUATION

TABLE 16 - Occupation of husband or partner

PARTNER'S OCCUPATION	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
Driver	19	17.0	6	12.2
Construction worker	12	10.7	7	14.3
Seller	2	1.8	2	4.1
Educator or promoter	2	1.8		
Casual work	4	3.6	4	8.2
Unemployed	1	0.9	2	4.1
No Response	63	56.3	24	49.0
Other	9	8.0	4	8.2
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

The other temporary or permanent work of the partners of the mothers interviewed are: porter, locksmith, taxi controller, electrician, employee, waiter, mechanic, messenger, plumber, policeman, teacher, night watchman, welder, technician, topographer, print shop assistant, factory work, shoemaker.

TABLE 17 - Monthly income of husband or partner

PARTNER'S INCOME (IN BOLIVIANOS – BS)	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
100-200	3	2.7		
201-400	11	9.8	8	16.3
401-600	20	17.9	11	22.4
601-800	12	10.7	9	18.4
801-1000	9	8.0	3	6.1
1001-1500	9	8.0	3	6.1
1501-2500	4	3.6		
No Response	44	39.3	15	30.6
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLES FROM THE PROACTIVA 2004 IMPACT EVALUATION

TABLE 18 - Women who are members of a community organisation

IF THE WOMAN PARTICIPATES IN A COMMUNITY ORGANISATION	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
Yes	49	43.8	12	24.5
No	62	55.4	36	73.5
No response	1	.9	1	2.0
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLE 19 - Type of community organisation which the women participate in

TYPE OF ORGANISATION	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
Church	20	17.9	7	14.3
School board	11	9.8	2	4.1
Neighbourhood board	9	8.0	2	4.1
None	29	25.9	8	16.3
Other	3	2.7	1	2.0
No Response	43	35.7	29	59.2
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

TABLE 20 - Level of participation of the women in the community organisations

LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP		CONTROL GROUP	
	Number	%	Number	%
Board member	13	11.6	2	4.1
Actively participates	30	26.8	9	18.4
Attends occasionally	7	6.3	1	2.0
No Response	62	55.4	37	75.5
TOTAL	112	100	49	100

MUNICIPAL DISTRICTS AND ZONES WHERE THE CHILD ABANDONMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMMES OPERATE IN BOLIVIA

COCHABAMBA

North Zone

South Zone

Rural Area

District 5 and 6 Tiquipaya

Districts 5, 7, 8, 9 and 14

Aiquile and Totora

District 2 Cercado

TARIJA

7 de septiembre

3 de mayo Bajo

Villa Busch

San Luis

San Bernardo

Panamericano

Obrajes

Luis Pizarro

Los Chapacos

Florida I

Avaroa

Tabladita II

20 de enero

4to Centenario

Tabladita

San José

San Antonio Bajo

Palmarcito

Narciso Campero

Luis Espinal

Libertad

Defensores del Chaco

Aranjuez

Senac

6 de Agosto

57 Viviendas

Simón Bolívar

San Jorge

San Antonio

Oscar Zamora

Morros Blancos

Luis de Fuentes

Las Pascuas

Constructor

Andaluz

12 de octubre

3 de mayo Alto

San Marcos

San Blas

Pedro Antonio Flores

Oscar Alfaro

Méndez Arcos

Lourdes

Florida II

Benjo Cruz

Alto Senac

SANTA CRUZ

Districts 8, 10 and 12

ORURO

District 2

District 3

District 4

District 5

Rural Area

District 6

Chancadora

Miraflores

Vinto

Circunvalation

Villa Challacollo

Ilequelequi

Paz

Challapata

Sapo

San Pedro

Vichuloma

Este

Itos

Sancayuni

Caracollo

Mineros

Huajara

Cementerio

Jachuyu

Sepulturas

SUCRE

Patacón

Barranca

Bajo Tukupaya

Palmar 2

San Luis

Karapunku

Mesa Verde

Horno Ckasa

Villa Margarita

Alto Sucre

Santa Fe

Estados Unidos

Villa Alegría

Llinfi

20 de octubre

Surapata

Villa Armonía

La Hoyada

Lajastambo

Huayrapata

Fortaleza

Rollo

Alto Tukupaya

POTOSÍ

District 3 San Juan

District 4 San Cristóbal

District 7 San Pedro

District 8 San Benito

District 9 Las Delicias

District 10 Satélite

District 11 San Clemente

District 12 Villa Copacabana

Santa Rosa

Campamento Pailaviri

San Pedro

Villa Busch

Villa Esperanza

Plan 40

Alonso de Ibáñez

Villa Venezuela

San Cristóbal

San Anselmo

Huanchacalla

Cantumarca

Villa Buena Vista

Cachirrancho

Pari Orcko

Villa Armonía

Villa Nazareth

EL ALTO

Districts 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8

LA PAZ

District 19

Chasquipampa

SOS Children's Villages is an organisation which is internationally recognised for our work with vulnerable populations, especially with children who have been abandoned or at risk of losing their families.

This publication has gathered together testimonies and experiences from the SOS programmes in our country, from the participants, staff and boards who together have developed a practical, participative joint responsibility proposal over the last 20 years to support Community Family Strengthening, which is crucial for child abandonment prevention. The results of the last impact evaluation of the SOS Social Centres in Bolivia are also to be found here.

We are convinced that the achievements can be sustained and progress made on the challenges we face if we are a social movement united through the same vision.

“EACH CHILD BELONGING TO A FAMILY AND GROWING UP SURROUNDED BY LOVE, RESPECT AND SAFETY”.



SOS Children's Villages - Bolivia