ANNUAL REPORT

2014

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SECTION ONE

ANNUAL REPORT
1.1 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES OF SOS CHILDREN’S VILLAGE IN ANGOLA IN 2014

1.1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN THE COUNTRY

Oil production contributes about 85% of Angolan GDP. The high economic growth rate over the years driven by high international prices for its oil allowed the government to take steps to improve living conditions in the country. National poverty has been reduced from 68% in 2001 to around 37% in 2014. There were efforts to improve educational sector. Despite the challenges of destroyed infrastructures, Angola managed to triple the number of children in primary education from 2 to 6 million from 2002 to 2014. Unfortunately after mid-2014 the Angola's economy started to drastically slow down due to the oil prices collapse. The short term measures implemented by the government included a cut-down on public expenditures which affected seriously the social sector programmes. Challenges remained, especially turning economic growth into jobs to overcome the 46% unemployment rate. In addition to economic challenges is the country’s mismanagement of resources which vastly contributes to huge inequalities. Angola still ranks 148th out of 187 countries in the Human Development Index (UNDP 2014). Poverty incidence is three times higher in rural areas (58%) than in urban areas (19%). Only 55% of the population has access to clean drinking water in a country lacking a comprehensive social safety network. The share of the education budget devoted to primary schools (about 29%) is considered to be very low. Gender parity in education is relatively high with a 0.81 ratio of girls to boys but remains below the sub-Saharan average of 0.91. The excellent progress in access to primary education is however marred by a low survival rate at primary level. According to UNICEF (2013) only a little over 30% of school children achieve primary education, which is extremely low compared with the African average of 63%. Malaria continues to be the killing disease accounting for an estimated 35 percent of mortality in children under the age of five, 25 percent of maternal mortality, and 60 percent of hospital admissions for children under five.

The circumstances in which young children in Angola may find themselves at risk of losing parental or in need of an alternative care situation include, among others, the following: the death of one or both parents; abandonment (usually at, or shortly following, birth); the child’s own initiative to leave home and start “independent” living in the streets.

In response, the SOS Children’s Villages in Angola continue to preferably seek permanent family-based solutions for children who have lost parental care and work hand in hand with the community and key partners to improve conditions within vulnerable households and thus prevent parents from neglect, abandonment and/or abuse towards children.
1.1.2 NATIONAL ASSOCIATION’S RESPONSE TO THE CONDITIONS IN THE COUNTRY

Family Based Care

A total number of 386 beneficiaries (335 children and 47 youths) were assisted within our national family based care in 2014 as detailed in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Locations</th>
<th>Children within the National Family Based Care</th>
<th>Youth within the National Family Based Care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huambo</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubango</td>
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<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benguela</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal 1</strong></td>
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<td><strong>159</strong></td>
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<td>Program Locations</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>203</strong></td>
<td><strong>183</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table1: National FBC beneficiaries in 2014

Having attained the average number of 9 children per SOS family in 2013, the Member Association shifted its focus this year from reaching numbers of children to be more engaged in improving its service quality and delivery as well as exploring alternative ways for care and integration of children within the programme. A local assessment tool designed to measure the quality of family based care and identify training needs was introduced. The tool consists of quality standards carefully selected from the child care and child protection policy documents and is meant to be scored by the programme supervisors or used as a self-assessment tool by core care coworkers. The defined quality indicators are easy-to-understand as they help assess how well a family meets the basic needs in three areas namely, (i) safe and healthy environment, (ii) attention to survival and development needs and (iii) mother and child environment. Key findings from this assessment include:

- Child protection knowledge among mothers and children is adequate and systems in place show a minimal level of rights violations. However, mothers in general lack alternative ways to respond to undesirable/inappropriate behavior.
- Attention to survival needs is consistent and children often have their individual needs met within the context of lower middle class family households.
- SOS mothers need to further develop their knowledge and skills on their child’s social and emotional development in order to deal with a traumatized child.
The programme has aggressively started exploring alternative family based care ways for children within the community. After a long period of assessment and trial, SOS Angola has finally formalised its first foster care initiative involving a well-off foster family candidate who, with no expenses compensation from our side, was granted the responsibility of the day-to-day care of one of our young adolescent from the Lubango programme. In a context where foster care is still not a formal practice and where family courts and protection agencies are non-existent, the legal decision on this case was taken with the involvement of our immediate government social welfare partner. The youth is currently experiencing great development opportunities outside Lubango but continues to maintain close contact with his SOS family, including his retired SOS mother where he spends part of his school holidays. On the other hand, the returning of 7 children to their families of origin this year consolidated our involvement in promoting kinship in our programme as another childcare resource for children without care of birth parents. This is actually considered as a preferred option as it draws on already existing informal cultural practices and maintains the children's connections with their families. Unfortunately, capacity challenges are currently limiting adequate supportive services for the child and caregivers within this initiative.

Single parenting, substance use and unemployment are some of the critical issues affecting the Angolan youth today. Important programme interventions helped preparing the youth to face challenges. Activities to prevent alcohol and substance abuse in youth were introduced nationally to help shape youths’ perceptions about the risks of addition. Drama, debates and testimonies helped youth participants understand that decisions they make about alcohol and drugs will influence their health, studies, relationships, job or career, and even their freedom. From the workshops young people perceived alcohol and substance use as harmful, and therefore promised to avoid negative peer pressure and take more responsibility for their life, health and safety. In what immature pregnancy is concerned, its incidence in the programme has consistently decreased from 5 cases in 2008 to 1 case in 2014 due to massive sexual education and family planning campaigns aimed particularly at preventing teen pregnancies.

Computer labs equipped with internet access were made available in most of programme locations to empower children and young people with the education needed to survive in an information-based economy. In terms of academic and vocational support, 17 youth attended tertiary education in various academic levels and specialties while 6 others participated and completed various relevant vocational training courses. These educated youth are now being prepared for how to market themselves and to be aware of potential job openings to increases the likelihood of being employed.

**Family Strengthening (FS)**

1,066 children beneficiaries were serviced through various family strengthening interventions nationally. The vast majority of programme families have their capacity to take care of children reduced due to poverty. Women and children, much more receptive to the consequences of poverty, suffer every day from the related problems. Programme growth in beneficiary numbers remained unfrozen in two programme locations where sustainable local funding sources were not possible to be secured. The confirmed international earmarked funding for growth in Huambo location allowed the programme to reach the planned number of 400 children for 2014. Despite the limited increase in beneficiary numbers nationally the normal inflow of new beneficiaries assisted under the current frozen budget was possible due to the normal outflow of self-reliant families. 85 families were exited from the national programme for having achieved significant self-sufficiency levels which eliminated key factors placing children at risk of abandonment. As reported, the said families acquired enough knowledge that enabled them to provide adequate childcare and secure stable sources of income, enabling the caregivers to provide at least 3 meals a day for the family as well as assist children with the basic education material and health assistance needed. Small informal business developed from the microcredit initiative, formal employment and marriage with a responsible and working partner are cited as the main factors that allowed families to become financially autonomous.
As a child protection organization we felt legally obligated to spread awareness of the child’s rights and protection to all programme children, including those from families of origin, in an attempt to increase their awareness about their own rights, their duties and help them respect the rights of others. Knowing that children learn better by doing things in practical and in a relaxed environment, a child’s right and protection art workshop was strategically included, centering on helping programme children, who never thought they had rights and duties. After child friendly discussions, children were asked to express their understanding of rights violations and child’s duties through drawings and how it affects their healthy development. From the drawings exhibition, it stood out the need for more support on education and play. Likewise, child protection mechanisms in the community need to be reinforced to protect children from physical abuse in the households, as understood from the drawing expressions.

For 2014, SOS Angola set to raise U$ 400,000 through 200 committed friends and key fund development activities. By 2020 we should be catering for more than 60% of our national budget and remain highly competitive among NGOs in the fundraising market. The below graph accounts for the amount of $1,348,757 (AOA 129,480,672) of the entire years’ worth of revenue which is broken down by the type of contribution.

![Figure 1: proportion (in USD) of donations from three major FR market segments](image)

Following are some highlights of achievements and challenges associated with the national fund development in the country.

**Key Achievements:**
- The implementation of collection boxes generated U$ 1,478,00 after 6 months of implementation.
- Running costs child sponsorship was the most bought product among individuals.
- The sponsorship of family houses was the most bought product among corporates.
- The most effective fundraising channel continued to be programme tour with incorporated presentations. This was followed by events, appeals directly addressing identified social responsibility areas in researched companies in Angola.
**Major Challenges**

- The turnover in this category of staff is very high due to the lack of adequate budget to attract and retain qualified fundraisers.
- The extremely low investment does not enable aggressive cultivation campaigns before asking.
- A truly giving culture among the Angolan population is not yet established. It is also not so easy to get the government delivering on promises.
- There is a tremendous lack of FR/PR internal capacity. There is currently no staff specifically dedicated to fundraising and.
- SOS Angola is yet to conduct a professional market research to determine the real fundraising potential in the country and inform the development of 3-5 FR strategy. The main challenges around this initiative are related to the very high fees involved in the engagement of a professional consultant in the field ($40,000-60,000).

All attempts to establish a fundraising unit in Luanda, the Angolan capital, a location believed to hold the highest potential for fund development, have failed. Underlying the lack of success are the extremely high living costs there and our low salary competitiveness to attract and retain qualified and high performing staff in this category. To overcome difficulties, SOS Angola is maximizing the use of the existing staff and capitalizing on the current achievements. Fundraising was made part of all key co-workers' portfolio (and more specifically to our sponsorship coordinators/assistant in the national office as well as for sponsorship secretaries and village directors at programme location level). A business plan was developed and is coordinated by a FR leader, supported by the National Director. Donor information and communication is managed by our sponsorship software (SPS for international and local sponsors) and through information captured in excel spread sheets.

**Key activities for 2016 include the following:**

- Lobbying with the government for all School and Kindergarten teachers salaries to be fully subsidized by the government. Save U$ 2,000,000 from the national budget. Rationale: the government is currently our main funding partner, subsidizing some of our school teachers’ salaries. Education facilities are to be exited from international funding by 2016. A strong partnership with the government in this regard will ensure that our interests in providing quality of education through the schools are safeguarded, with no financial involvement from our side.
- Start using collection boxes with appeals and commitment proposals attached to it, aiming to raise recruit sporadic and committed giving. Raise U$ 250,000. Rationale: there are currently no major competitors in this area. Our appeals and proposals can reach huge numbers of people in strategic places where significant amounts of moneys also circulate.
- Give SOS programme presentations (including programme tours) to 10 top corporate in the country for capital and unrestricted project funding. Raise U$ 300,000. Rationale: corporate social responsibility is starting to immerge in the country. Big corporates are looking for credible organizations and projects that align with their funding policies.
- Start adequate cultivating activities to convert key sporadic donors into committed givers with higher values.
- Enhance the organisation visibility in the country by implementing key public relation strategies.
Staff recruitment: SOS Angola controlled a total workforce of 299 employees out of a total number of 301 employees needed from our designed staff pattern for different categories in particular units and departments to respond to the current functional and strategic organizational aspirations. Various vacant posts were advertised in different locations resulting in 19 appointments in 2014 from which 3 were sourced internally while 16 others recruited from the external labour market. 2 posts remain vacant namely the one of Finance Coordinator and Fund Development Coordinator due to our inability to attract and retain best candidates for positions such as managerial, fund development and social workers.

Training & Development: Our activities in this area were mainly concerned with building skills to effectively perform the existing jobs. The ongoing assessment of training needs allowed the NA to invest in series of training programmes both in Angola and regionally for its junior and senior employees. A locally implemented two-year SOS Mother Basic Training AFME Curriculum for all mothers and aunties was launched. Employees also benefitted from in-house training in form of specific departmental workshops in crucial programming areas and on the organisation’s brand awareness. In additional, key staff members benefitted from regionally organised training programmes in the critical areas of fund development (1 co-worker), programme development (1 co-workers), FBC monitoring and evaluation database (2 co-workers), compensation system (4 co-workers), finance management (2 co-workers), advanced English course (2 co-workers). Although less emphasis is placed on the development of skills for future, 69% of co-workers already have a learning and development plan.

Performance Management: In order to achieve set goals and objectives, the NA has aggressively started to establish and evaluate individual’s job performance. Performance management workshop conducted with all National Management Team in the existing three programme locations and in the national office also helped leaders to setup smart performance indicators and learn how to conduct effective performance talks and provide constructive feedback. As a result, formal performance reviews were carried out twice in the year, June and December, by line managers. After appraisal talks, training and development needs were assessed. There is realisation however that feedback on performance needs to be more regular and more informal.

Terminations and retention strategies: following is the number of employee departures and key reasons in 2014

![Figure 2: Number of staff departures in 2014]
Attracting and retaining high performance employee continues to be a challenge in the NA, due to the country’s tremendously high cost of living and where the government (re to salaries for graduate teacher) remains more competitive. The USD 150,000 annual surplus granted in 2013 as first-phase support to salary increase in the National Association coupled with the compensation system introduced in 2014 helped boosting the co-workers’ motivation. In addition, Adds-ONs in terms of transport allowances and the existing environment that provides opportunities for personal and professional growth also represent our strong recognition of our co-workers as the main assets and organisation’s source of development.

Governance: Despite the enormous challenges to establish functional governance structures, our Member Association continues determined to the development of strong and locally rooted national associations. Over the past eight years SOS Angola has been struggling to establish a committee of individuals with supervisory powers. A preliminary Advisory Committee with eight members was set up. This committee has unfortunately never evolved into a formal governing Board. Some members simply abandoned while others are for various reasons very limited in their involvement. In 2014 we saw the committee coming very close to the shut-down phase with only one member, the deputy president, being currently active in advisory role. as seen from the table below that illustrates the status of the SOS Angola advisory committee.

From our interactions with other international NGOs and the corporate operating in Angola, we learnt about difficulties they also face to establish effective governance structures through functional Boards. This could be explained from the low culture of voluntarism that we currently witness in the country. In spite of the challenge, the NA is still committed to continue working towards the establishment of a formal governing Board and will request assistance in the process of revitalising and developing our Advisory Committee.
TIME SCHEDULE OF MAJOR EVENTS FOR 2015

JANUARY

FEBRUARY  National Coordinators’ meeting
            Beginning of new school year

MARCH  Performance appraisal of National Coordinators and Village Directors
        National Director Visit to Benguela and Huambo
        National Director’s self-appraisal and draft work plan to the RD
        CVI-Rep and National Director Visit to Lubango, Benguela and Huambo

APRIL  Easter village celebrations
        2014 Audit Process
        Submission of N C’s and VD’s quarterly reports to the National Director
        1st Strategic Planning Review
        National Coordinators’ meeting

MAY  National Directors’ Conference in Ethiopia
        Participation in the cross-regional sharing workshop in Brazil
        National Fundraising Workshop

JUNE  2nd Quarterly Report deadline
        Lubango location development workshop

JULY  National management team meeting
        Management and Leadership Development programme
        National Coordinators’ meeting

SEPTEMBER  3rd Quarterly Report deadline
            Submission of N C’s and VD’s quarterly reports to the National Director
            VIP Norway visit to Huambo CV
            NA Plans and Budgets to Regional Office

OCTOBER  National Director Visit to Benguela and Huambo
          National Association Planning Process
          Child & Youth Development Team workshop

NOVEMBER  Performance review sessions with the national leadership staff
          National Coordinators’ meeting

DECEMBER  End of year statistics to RO Deadline
           Submission of N C’s and VD’s quarterly reports to the National Director
           Sponsorship Facility Reports and Child Christmas Cards deadline
SECTION THREE

FACILITY REPORTS
116 children were serviced through our permanent SOS family based care intervention in 2014. With 13 family houses, the village operated with less 14 beneficiaries from its predefined maximum capacity of 130 children. This was due to concerns over quality of care within our averaged 10-children SOS families and for the need to start exploring alternative family based care ways in the community before children are considered for admission in the village. The existing number of children in the village also represents a slight decline of 5 beneficiaries compared to the previous year due to the normal transition of young adolescents to the SOS youth facility as well as for the reintegration/reunification process of children that unexpectedly occurs. Positive circumstances around a recently admitted 1-year old child led to his successful reunification with relatives who proved to have the willingness and the protections capacity to care for the child. On the other hand, the village reports the case of two teenagers from different SOS family houses who became involved in an immature pregnancy. On the youths’ best interest and respecting their willingness to start an adult independent life together, the SOS Children's Village started mobilising the necessary support in this agreed upon direction. Supported by the boy’s recently surfaced extended and well-off relatives, a comfortable house was rented and commitments were made for a continuous assistance to the newly formed couple. The SOS family continued assisting the girl's pregnancy development with medical check-ups and counselling while also supporting the young man with academic and employment skills needed to become self-sufficient. The girl delivered a healthy baby boy and the couple remained united.

The development of children and mothers was supported through various interventions. Extra academic classes offered to children made it possible for the achievement of 77% passing rate among school children. With the goal of building confidence and social skills, ballet classes were introduced in the village and became part of the Psico-social programme. Under the guidance of two professional volunteers from Brazil, girls experienced dance activities that made difference in their development. Apart from having fun, girls believe their regular dancing activities also helped maintaining strong bones, improving posture and muscle strength. Children and young adolescents also enjoyed the benefits of having a particular computer, internet and library centre in the village. A well-equipped facility comprising a modern computer laboratory financed by a local insurance company allowed children to have a privileged space where individual project work and research could be carried out.

**SOS YOUTH FACILITIES, LUBANGO**

The SOS Children's Village programme got engaged in fruitful discussions over the current transition practice of moving adolescents from family houses into separated youth facilities. As a result, a decision was taken to drastically slow down this process thus allowing the SOS family to remain united, making it also possible for SOS mothers to participate more actively in the youth development process, with the support of our core care staff. In any case, the youth facility was not yet disengaged and 35 youth (17 girls and 18 boys) were serviced during the reporting period.

Issues such as early pregnancy and unemployment continue to affect our programme youth. A 20-year old boy impregnated a 16-years old girl and this prompted the acceleration of his adulthood plans. The values developed made him to take responsibility for the young mother and start a family life in a modest facility rented in the community. Important vocational skills he acquired from a 6-months training he attended with a professional training provider allowed him to secure a job in one prominent local construction company to support his young family. Likewise, the SOS family values were lived when our 21-year old university young lady became engaged and married a responsible young man from the community. Apart from the educational support received, our girl also found a stable job in one of our corporate partner's business in town. Following the couple decision, a small but cheerful civil ceremony performed by a government official was held to unite the young couple in marriage. In terms of labour market
and academic enrolment, 3 youths were given the opportunity to attend vocational training courses as crucial element to link their competences with employers’ identified needs, hoping to get them soon moving into productive and sustainable jobs. 13 young people were supported with their tertiary education resulting in 3 completing college degrees in 2014.

SOS KINDERGARTEN, LUBANGO

There is a tremendous gap in the country in terms of early education services for the incredibly high population aged 0 to 6 years old. In what pre-school education is concerned, we noticed a growing awareness among community members about the need for the development of their young children before they enter formal school education. While recognizing the necessity of this specific education for all children of 3-6 years old, accessibly continues to be a major issue as poorer households cannot afford private pre-primary school even though it is available locally. Despite the challenge to reach many children irrespective of their socio-economic background, the SOS Kindergarten population continues to be dominated by fee-paying children (70%) with only 6 coming from the SOS Children’s Village and 9 from families that are part of SOS family strengthening intervention in the community. The limited number of children on pre-school age living in the village and distance between the kindergarten and the community where our families of origin are located are cited as the main impediment for higher numbers of programme children to be enrolled. It should be noted however of services we rendered to 25 children from the surrounding community as part of the existing scholarship programme offered to children from poorer households.

In order to provide a good quality of preschool education all the teachers attended an in-service training programme facilitated by qualified trainers on education. That’s because preschool teachers working with 3- and 4-year-old children require a special set of skills. As part of the same quality we strive to offer, the Kindergarten facilities continue to be kept safe, healthy and with suitable environments for children. In addition, involving parents in their child’s learning and development grew significantly this year with series of teachers’ visits to the most vulnerable households, including families in the SOS children’s Village. This family engagement initiative recognize parents as the child’s first and most important teacher, and support parents in this role mainly in teaching basic activities they can implement or supervise at home.

SOS HERMANN GMEINER PRIMARY SCHOOL, LUBANGO

The Herman Gmeiner Primary School in Lubango continues to be the facility that mostly integrates the SOS Children’s Village with the wider community. Various types of income families can be found at school. From a total population of 801 serviced in 2014, 569 (71%) are from the category of so-called “feepaying” beneficiaries. 105 children from the SOS children’s Village and 53 from the SOS family strengthening intervention form the 20% of SOS programme beneficiaries. Besides, 74 (9%) remaining children were assisted under the agreed upon scholarship programme for the most deprived households from the surrounding community.

Community integration is enhanced further by the various extra-curricular activities implemented. For a better understanding of career possibilities in the province students had to opportunity to pay a visit to local firefighting and road traffic brigades. Traffic regulators gave students a long session around the state-wide road safety education program of transport. The experience at the firefighting training facility was particularly exciting as children were provided with a detailed tour of their fire engines as well as the facilities that simulate building fires. After the tour, the children enjoyed smacks kindly offered. A visit to a local children’s hospital was also organized for students to develop a culture of solidarity and to form meaningful connections with difficulties people face around them. A campaign for the collection of hygienic consumable items was launched in the school for donation. Accompanied by a designated teacher, students
had first-hand hospital experience to witness the overcrowded wards, many children on plastic mattresses on the floor and got substantial information around the prevailing diseases, child mortality and doctor’s shortage. Students believe this to have been a life changing experience. They felt moved but satisfied for helping others with the collected donation.

The 83.5% passing rate achieved during the year remain consistent with the average 80% achieved over the last 10 years. Extra academic support offered to slow learners and special acceleration programmes offered to children with academic age gap are cited as the underlying reasons for the positive achievement.

**SOS CLINIC, LUBANGO**

4,234 health consultations and treatment services were provided during the year. The most common diseases and treatments were on cases of malaria, acute respiratory and diarrheal diseases, injuries, conjunctivitis, high blood pressure and urinary infections. These services are provided by two specially trained nurse practitioners supported by a physician who visits the clinic twice a week to support with particular diagnosis and treatment. On the prevention side, active surveillance involving home visits in the SOS Children Village and in the SOS education facilities was carried out. The visits helped detecting and correcting one case of neglected skin diseases in one SOS family house and of poor hygiene practice in some classrooms in the School. SOS mothers and caregivers from communities where the SOS family strengthening intervention is located were assembled in a family caregiver workshop organized by the SOS clinic. The workshop was designed to increase family member's knowledge of basic health topics and to introduce them to basic caregiving skills needed to care for their children’s health difficulties at home.

The clinic facilitated the process for three children to access specialized care service available in the neighbouring Namibia country. In addition, facilitation was also requires for one programme youth who undergone a small and successful surgery to remove a not cancerous but troublesome scalp lipoma.

In terms of government support, the local health authorities continue to cover the salary costs of one SOS nurse and donate substantial quantities essential medicine and various medical consumable items. This effort enabled the Clinic to render subsidized services to the most deprived community members.

**FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME, LUBANGO**

The programme continues to work with a frozen number of 577 beneficiaries. Despite the prevailing need in local communities affect by high poverty levels that place at risk, growth was once again not permitted due to the current funding uncertainty. Therefore, the programme managed the continuous outflow and inflow of new beneficiaries on the agreed upon limits while pursuing with efforts to strengthen the quality of programme services. A positive outcome during the reporting period was the exit of 9 families as self-reliant. As informed, remarriage after widowhood and the achievement of a stable a source of regular income helped families to move out of the circumstances that posed risk for child abandonment. One of the successfully exited families is headed by Mrs Daniel. She was studying grade 8 when her husband passed away on a car accident leaving her unemployed with 2 children to look after and with no alternative ways to pay her bills. She was struggling to get birth certificates for her children and was living in a rented house that she could not afford. She was admitted into the programme in July 2010 and the family had to be placed in the food parcels handout intervention to attend to the children’s immediate survival need. The caregiver also had to receive consecutive counselling sessions from the visiting volunteers given the enormous emotional pressure she was under. Advocacy activities allowed the children to secure birth certificates in the local registry office and be placed...
in a government school in the proximity. Soon her entrepreneur abilities became evident when she proposed the programme to finance a retailer business of selling different consumable items in the local informal market. She was granted an interest free microcredit of Akz 10,000 (US $100). The business grew and helped to pay immediate bills. Mrs. Daniel started to dream bigger and begun using part of the income to travel to the neighbouring Namibia country to buy quality beddings for sell to specific retailer business people and to end consumer’s clients. Profits also allowed her to buy a piece of land to build a house and therefore get rid of the difficult and always increasing rents she was subject to. With programme assistance in roof sheets, windows, doors and cement, Mrs. Daniel was finally able to build a modest but comfortable 2-bedroom house. Despite the challenging nature of her business she can easily provide 3 daily hot meals for her children and manages to keep them at school and cater for their needs in school material and uniform. In addition, she managed to enrol in an adult education programme offered by a local private school and successfully completed grade 12.

Community rooting through the establishment of a well capacitated community based organization continues to progress smoothly. A workshop, facilitated by an external consultant and supported by two prominent local community development and childcare organizations (CF_ Children Fund and ASD_Solidarity Action and Development) was organized as additional support to empower our local CBO. The workshop focused in equipping participants with tools needed to successfully improve the quality of services started in their community and acquire skills and learned ways on how to increasingly reduce external dependence. The practical workshop component also involved AJOMA to prepare an action plan around its administrative restructuring, as well as on key projects and partners identification. As immediate gains, the CBO has started a restructuring process that led to the election of a new management structure and has also started engaging volunteers within the community to supervise family beneficiaries living in their neighbourhood.

**SOS CHILDREN’S VILLAGE, BENGUELA**

This is the ninth year of the village existence. With worries and joy the village is witnessing the transition from childhood to adulthood of 85 adolescents among 104 children serviced in 2014. Academic support and employment skills acquisition continues to be the key development support rendered. All children in school age are enrolled to formal education and received extra school support in form of individual tutorial sessions as mean to help them cope with the academic demands. This partially explains the positive passing rate of 85% achieved among family based care school children in 2014. To help children cope with adolescence, the village organised critical discussions on issues related to pressures from peers, depression, and sexuality. In addition, and as part of the career orientation programme, 2 girl adolescents have shown deep interest for education and want to become teachers in the future. The girls were therefore given the opportunity to participate in an apprentice program in the SOS Kindergarten to gain useful insights into educational activities by getting them involved in the actual work.

Our SOS mothers continued to be very committed to their own personal and professional development. 4 mothers enrolled an adult education programme and successfully concluded grade 12. These educated mothers are now looking for an opportunity to further their studies. All mothers continue to participate in a regionally recognized 2-year childcare training programme that carries a professional qualification and is set to develop our mother’s childcare skills further. On the other hand, the International Women’s Day, 8 March, presented the village with another occasion for children to express their love for their SOS mothers. Activities and ideas initiated in the School and Kindergarten helped children let mothers know how special they are. Children made Mother’s Day crafts and pretty printables and colouring pages which left mother very emotional.
Unfortunately not all children without parental care in the province have the same privilege of enjoying their childhood in a caring family environment with their survival and development needs supported by a group of professional co-workers. The extreme poverty continues to be the chief cause of parental loss in the province. Due to the maximum beneficiary capacity already achieved in the village, the programme management is currently engaged in discussions with the local national and international partners for other forms of childcare to be explored and introduced to cater for the children in need of a family environment.

**SOS YOUTH FACILITIES, Benguela**

This is the first year of the youth facility existence. Children have grown up and many have entered a challenging phases of their development that prompted the management to explore ways in which youth development activities could be initiated in a separated youth facility. 10 boys and 6 girls of around 15 year and older qualified to leave family houses to start a semi-independent living programme inside the village aimed to prepare them for self-sufficiency. No construction was required as youth could be accommodated in two converted staff houses. Activities in 2014 revolved around guiding daily living skills, money management, decision making, building self-esteem, financial assistance with academic or vocational schools, educational resources and employment. The youth seemed worried but excited about this new experience in their lives.

Many of the youth, especially girls, thought they would suddenly lose the protection of their SOS mothers to the care of an employed youth care co-worker in the youth facility. These fears were eased with the correct information received and with the current relation they still maintain with the SOS family the youth are from. The SOS mothers continue to lead and support the youth development and the youth continue to participate in the family’s affairs such as assist the younger brothers and sisters at home and they continuously get pieces of good advice and counselling from their mothers. The idea of managing a living allowance and experience a certain degree of independence was particularly exciting for the youth. However, youth were continuously reminded of the youth programme as a transition to and independent adult life outside the Village. This created a good sense of responsibility that prompted the youth to even suggest relevant vocational training courses to attend as additional to their normal school attendance. Under this particular initiative, Miguel Antonio, a 19 years old youngster, benefitted from a car mechanic and electricity course in Benguela. This together with a sponsored driving course allowed him to secure a job in one prominent company in the transportation business. Miguel also gained further in-service training in the Luanda, the capital of Angola, which made him illegible to a regular salary above the minimum wage effective in our organisation. He is proud of this achievement, has started purchasing significant investment items and is cooperating with the SOS village team for his integration in the coming months.

**SOS KINDERGARTEN, Benguela**

106 children received a meaningful pre-school education in the SOS Kindergarten this year. Most of the children continue to come from the wider community with only 9 coming from the SOS Children's Village and 10 from the family strengthening programme intervention. The 9 children from the SOS family based care are the only children on pre-school age in the village while distance and transportation difficulties in the community are cited as the main underlying reason for the limited number of programme children in the Kindergarten. As part of the education capacity building for the community, the programme is seeking to lobby for pre-school programmes to be implemented in communities we operate where our programme children could easily access them.
Children in Angola are not required by law to attend a kindergarten. The insufficient number of such facilities in the province makes most of the parents to wait for their children to begin attending school until they are 6 years and start first grade. Knowing about the important of this programme to students’ success, the SOS Kindergarten is striving to provide children with a play based education that allows them to adjust to school as well as their success in later years. This year, special attention was paid to equipping teachers with the skills needed to prepare the 5-years-olds children, the transition to school group. Useful games were learnt and introduced to build strong literacy and numeracy skills on children.

The festive carnival season in Angola was also lived in the kindergarten in the month of February. It involved a parade festival with masquerades. A small party and games with a lot of fun and lively entertainment was also organised. Children learnt how to do face painting for the perfect carnival disguise and made carnival craft bookmarks for their family and friends.

SOS HERMANN GMEINER PRIMARY SCHOOL, BENGUELA

At the end of the academic year, statistics referred to 794 children serviced by the HG School programme, being 171 children from the SOS programme in the location (112 from the Family Based Care and 59 from the Family Strengthening) and 623 from the wider community (from which 12% are deprived children from the surrounding community). There was a positive gender balance in the school which, despite the inexistence of a specific programme to promote the development of the girl child, shows a significant mind change in the community by sending girls to school. There was also no major disparity in academic performance between boys and girls at school given the extra academic support offered to all students and for an apparent relatively more balanced distribution of the domestic tasks in households. Unlike previous years, no case of teenage pregnancy affecting girl’s academic perform was registered in the school. The overall 83% passing rate this year is very much consistent with the average 80% achievement in the past 8 years.

Cooking classes, excursions and outings for career orientation formed part of the main extracurricular activities implemented. Two groups of 12 children each graduated from cooking classes. From the course students learnt about creating healthy and tasty recipes, food safety, etiquette, menu planning and table setting which are lifelong skills with many benefits in return. One trip visit to the local radio station and to two local beaches in form of cultural and environmental excursions provided students with a range of educational experiences outside the classroom.

The main challenges in the School relates to maintenance and diversification of educational interventions in the school. After 8 years of functioning at levels above maximum capacity of beneficiaries is causing the school to claim for a general maintenance, especially in its ablution block. There is also a realization that the school needs to introduce additional education components to cater for the few children with identified academic age gap and for those in need of an immediate employment skills.

MEDICAL CENTER, BENGUELA

During the year 2014, the Medical Center rendered 26,956 services for 5,562 single beneficiaries. This represents a decline of 672 services in comparison with the previous year.

General consultations, paediatrics, prenatal check-ups, family planning, children vaccination, clinical lab tests and pharmacy are part of the services offered. Programme activities for prevention included morning assemblies with patients on themes related to HIV, vaccination, malaria and hygiene.
In a context characterized by scarce health infrastructures and few physicians, the Medical Center proved to be key for the immediate attention of our programme beneficiary’s health needs. 1,260 health services were rendered to 252 programme beneficiaries with children in the village even benefitting from home visits and facilitation of access to specialized services. In addition, knowing that a motivated, healthy workforce is more likely to perform well, the Center is actively participating in the SOS mothers’ wellbeing programme, assisting particularly with obesity reduction, managing stress and health checks.

In 2014 the Center introduced the administration of the rotavirus and the Pneumococcal vaccine. This is considered as an important step in reducing child mortality as it protects from pneumococcal disease in young children and from rotaviruses, which are the leading cause of severe diarrhoea among infants and young children.

Infrastructure maintenance and strengthening the existing partnership with the government are the challenges faced. A recent external health inspection revealed the need for tiling and ceiling to be placed in all compartments (aspects not catered for during the Village and the Medical Center construction). This represents a significant investment that cannot simply be included in the SOS budget in the current funding uncertainty. On the other hand, the Center continues to struggle to increase on its already achieved 40% finance self-sufficiency due to enormous maintenance, administration and some personnel cost that still weighs in the organization side. The government support is still confined with the payment to some of the nurses and the sporadic donation of medicine.

**FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME, BENGUELA**

The extreme poverty that affects vulnerable households continues to place many children at risk of losing parental care in the province. Orphan children living with single mothers (mainly widows) continue to be the programme main target for prevention of parental care loss. The programme ended the year with 93 children beneficiaries living in 12 families of origin, after successfully exiting 29 strengthened families along the year. This is considered as remarkable achievement as most of exited families are now able to support themselves and therefore keep their children protected. Other positive programme indicators show 95% of current families engaged in self-development activities, with their involvement mainly in small businesses initiated from the interest-free microcredit provided by the programme. In addition, all the children in school age have birth certificates and are enrolled in formal education.

Youth empowerment initiative through vocational training and education brought a new perspective to family strengthening with the identification and capacity of youth as potential bread winners within the vulnerable beneficiary households. Under the initiative, Justino (19) is one if the youngsters that attended a specialized art and craft course implemented by SOS in partnership with a Brazilian company. He became an artist capable of recycling car tires and turn them into sofas, benches, tables, chairs and vases. Justino together with other 2 youths from the SOS village managed to place their work on display in a local fair and could sell many of the items. The youth empowerment initiative also benefitted Alberto (21) and Teodoro (23) with a scholarship in Brazil, pursuing engineering careers fully sponsored by a local federation partner.

In terms of challenges the programme continues to struggle to become fully rooted in the community. A memorandum of understanding was signed with a local faith based organization operating in the community where the programme is established and a capacity building plan needs to be finalized as a key step for programme activities to be implemented through this identified community based partner.
SOS CHILDREN’S VILLAGE, HUAMBO

Issues related to extreme poverty continue to make children lose the care of their parents in Huambo. Malaria continues to be the killing disease followed by respiratory tract infections, road accidents, high blood pressure and HIV deaths among adults. Incarceration of parents due to drastic domestic violence coupled with unwillingness on the side of the extended family to care for the children also make children to be in need of a substitute family.

In 2013 the SOS Children’s Village in Huambo had reached its maximum capacity of 120 children in the family based care intervention (on the average 10 children per SOS family). This number reduced to 115 in 2014 due to family reunification of 5 children. It should be noted that the SOS Children’s Villages are open to consider the returning of children to their biological relatives if this is on the best interest of the children. Therefore, when new developments arise in the children’s circumstances, a process is carefully followed for an informed decision to be taken. In the case of our 5 children, circumstances were thoroughly investigated by our SOS team members and our social welfare partners in Huambo who confirmed the eligibility and capacity of the relatives to provide childcare. The process involved a consultation with the children (aged 2-12) and in all cases children did not show any strong reluctance to go back to their family of origin. The smoothness in the process was partially attributed to the time children spent with these biological family members during their school holidays and weekends and in the counselling sessions implemented for both the children and the SOS mothers.

Although some reported cases of children in need of parental care are still under investigation, the management did not rush into complete the 5 existing vacancies. The national emphasis for our family based care is currently on strengthening the core of our services through extensive assessments in the care we provide to children in the family houses and on the overall support so that children can continue developing to their full potential. In this regard, 2 family houses (among the existing 12 families in the village) were rated below average in terms of quality of services to children for factors related to SOS mother absenteeism, follow-up on children education and hygiene, just to mention some. The necessary correction measures were put into place for these particular families to reach the desired quality as it is already evident in all the other family homes. In what other support services for children is concerned, there has been positive developments in exposing children to academic knowledge acquisition and build strong life skills. A library and computer centre with access to internet was established in the village’s community building. Children from the village and from the family strengthening can now read various book for leisure and can, in a guided way, explore internet for knowledge in general and to find alternative ways to solve their academic difficulties. In addition, children in the village were also given the opportunity to gain relevant information and skills for life through video sessions on themes related to sex and sexuality as well as peers pressure. Movies exhibitions are generally followed by intensive discussions where children’s views are collected and the commitments made recorded.

The family food production initiative has been very successful in the village this year with SOS families harvesting significant quantities of maize, beans and potatoes. Most of the SOS mothers in Huambo have experience in traditional farming and have always tried to grow something in the village. In 2013 the management decided to support their initiative further by allocating a specific farming area and provide the tools and seeds needed for agriculture. In 2014, mothers and children got involved again in the communal food garden activity. The favourable rainy conditions helped with the watering, making the SOS family to became very proud of their production achievement. As reported, the initiative has been beneficial not only in terms of the healthy food consumption in the family houses but also for the opportunity to enhance communication between mother and child and for the exercise to work towards a common goal.
In terms of challenges, there are still no clear signs that the municipality water and electricity supply will soon reach Cambiote community and the area where the SOS village is established. The government continue to refer to “shot-term” plans to have the issue resolved given “their main institutional interests in the area”. As alternative, we continue to depend exclusively on the high-productive borehole and on the existing 42 KVA generator for electricity. The newly drilled borehole allowed adequate water supply to the SOS families during the entire year. In what the power supply is concerned, a partnership was established with Toyota Company in Huambo which now became responsible for the generator maintenance and for diesel donation (1,600 litres a month).

**SOS KINDERGARTEN, HUAMBO**

120 children were serviced with pre-school educational services in the Kindergarten. From which, 12 are SOS family based care beneficiaries and 30 are from our community intervention to strengthen families of origin as detailed in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholarship Children</th>
<th>Family Strengthening Children</th>
<th>Children from the SOS Family Based Care</th>
<th>Community Fee Paying Children</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M F Total</td>
<td>M F Total</td>
<td>M F Total</td>
<td>M F Total</td>
<td>M F Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 00 02</td>
<td>16 14 30</td>
<td>05 07 12</td>
<td>37 39 76</td>
<td>60 60 120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Music classes were introduced in the kindergarten curriculum, as part of efforts to create a diversified learning environment for children. A part-time teacher was hired and started out by clapping rhythms of well-known songs with the children. Clicking tongues, rhythm sticks and knocking on their desks were also part of the initial activities. The teacher promised to try soon some fun vocalizations in addition to singing kid favourites. The purchase of musical instruments will be necessary to support the initiative further.

A TV and a video set was purchased for the introduction of educational video sessions to students. A range of educational material categorized by age was also purchased. Watching educational preschool videos in a fun setting made it easier for teachers to teach preschool science, language and songs, among others.

The Kindergarten continues to be challenged with the creation of a pool of standby teachers who would be immediately engaged as temporary staff during the maternity and sick leaves that is currently very prevalent among the teachers. Attempts to start an apprentice programme with potential community members have failed due to some apparent lack of volunteerism culture and for the immediate income needs among potential candidates. As informed, the 3-month on the job peer training without remuneration, coupled with the standby status after the training is not particularly attractive for the youth’ income needs.

In terms of Kindergarten management and pedagogical support, the SOS Programme in Huambo is trying out a system where all the administrative tasks (fees control, logistics…) is removed from the Kindergarten principal and placed upon the Village Administration thus enabling the principal to be more engaged as a teacher (replacing the class teacher when necessary), teacher trainer (developing other teachers and apprentices) and education supervisor (also facilitating parents’ support in education issues). The initiative is not necessary well accepted by all parts involved but is definitely a field to explore. Huambo will be supported in the initiative as a pilot for further generalisation nationally in the future.
THE SOS-CAMBIOTE SCHOOL, HUAMBO

In 2014 the school reaffirmed its mandate of reaching the most vulnerable children with a relevant education of good quality. Its adequate facilities and affordability, coupled with the existing committed and trained staff and its diversified education programme is attracting massive numbers of children from the wider surrounding community, including those from communities beyond 10km of range. The demand pressure and flexibilities resulted in the opening of two shifts (morning and afternoon) with services being rendered to a total number of 967 students in 2014 (38.7 students on average distributed through 25 groups). As the enrolment pressure from community grows, the SOS children’s village in Huambo saw the need to engage in discussion with relevant education authorities for adequate community responses to be explored for those needy children (including programme beneficiaries) that could not secure a place in the Cambiote School due to capacity, admission criteria and distance. Under the recently approved act for shared government participation in education, the local government showed willingness to embark on a long-term relation with SOS in which investment and running costs could be covered by the government while leaving the school management to SOS. On this perspective, discussions over school capacity led to a government commitment to allocate significant investment funds for the school to be expanded next year.

In terms of facilities, the school continues to look very well preserved despite challenges with excessive beneficiary numbers. As for affordability, education continues to be free with self-sufficiency at 69% due to government intervention is payment teacher’s salaries. In what the relevance is concerned, education provided is in some way connected to problems students face in their daily life and also prepare them to face different contexts in the future. As an example, a school acceleration programme (attend two grades in the same year) was introduced to tackle the increased number of academically challenged students who missed the appropriate school enrollment age. A computer literacy course helps students acquiring basic principles of Word processing and Excel and also enhanced the development of analytical and critical thinking on learners. This year, the School introduced music lessons and singing as part of its extra-curriculum programme, hoping to improve children’s verbal skills, memory and self-expression. Children who participate in the school choir also have the opportunity to be exposed to experiences which positively influence their social, emotional life and the chance to produce more expressive and sophisticated music with their singing voices. Students are very enthusiastic with the idea of performing in concerts and showing off their talents in the future.

FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME, HUAMBO

396 children beneficiaries were serviced through various family strengthening activities in the location. It should be noted that this is the only intervention were growth in beneficiary numbers was consented due to the funding commitment from our international partners in Norway. In terms of vulnerable families within the programme, the table below indicates single parents living in extreme poverty as the largest number of families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of families</th>
<th>No. of families</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>MF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single mothers and widows</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child headed families</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandparent headed</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronically heal parent</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphans living with vulnerable extended family member</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>112</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As realized, the highest number of poor people in the country is concentrated in the central highlands where Huambo province is located. Agricultural production is the mainstay of families. In order to tackle key factors that place children at risk, the programme concentrated efforts in improving families’ access to health, education, land and small businesses, nutrition and adequate housing. It has been realized that drinking water access and sanitation needs to be added as critical support intervention.

After the beginning of family strengthening activities in 2008, the programme is now starting to celebrate significant success with family capacity building. 17 families successfully exited the programme under the locally defined criteria for self-reliance. All strengthened families have moved out of the extreme poverty condition and were able to secure a stable income source, mainly around owning small businesses, subsistence agriculture and formal employment. Free education that children receive from the government also helped ensuring children’s continuous development. The programme has however set a timeframe of 6 months follow-up to monitor stability within the exited families.

The programme regrets the collapse of the partnership with the local Association in Cambiote that acted as a Community Based partner Organization over the years. Constant conflicts around the CBO’s political interests in the programme coupled with unrealistic expectations from SOS are the underlying reason for separation. This represents a major drawback for programme rooting in the community and plunges the family strengthening into an SOS run intervention. What’s worse, the programme continues to struggle to form a support network for sustainability. In order to continue the monitoring of family development plans and child protections in families, the programme reinforced the engagement of few volunteers from exited families who, together with our field officer conducted regular home visits.