

June, 2021 N° 002

# MUDAHERANWA

The Undefeated



SOS CHILDREN'S  
VILLAGES





# VISION, MISSION AND VALUES



## OUR VISION

Every child belongs to a family and grows with love, respect and security.



## OUR MISSION

We build families for children in need, we help them shape their own futures and we share in the development of their communities.



## OUR VALUES

- Courage : We take action
- Commitment : We keep our promises
- Trust : We believe in each other
- Accountability : We are reliable partners





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# FOREWORD



**Jean Bosco Kwizera,**  
National Director,  
SOS Children's Villages  
Rwanda

Dear Partners, Friends and Readers,

The COVID-19 pandemic and its economic and social impact have disrupted many aspects of life in society. People of different ages living in the SOS Children's Villages Rwanda and in the community we support are experiencing its effects in different ways.

SOS Children's Villages Rwanda is taking action to protect and support children, youth and families to face the global challenge.

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, SOS Children's Villages Rwanda, an International non-governmental development organization working in Rwanda since 1979, is taking action to protect and support children, youth and families to face the global challenge.

With four SOS Children's Villages in the districts of Gasabo, Kayonza, Gicumbi and Nyamagabe providing family-based care to children who lost parental care or who are at risk of losing it, SOS Children's Villages Rwanda is equipped with a robust team of mothers, aunts, social workers and program teams specialized in child care and protection, education, mental health, family strengthening and advocacy.

In addition, SOS Children's Villages Rwanda works to strengthen families by providing a gatekeeping program to prevent family separation and family breakdown. Youth programs aiming at empowering the youth are also part of our key interventions to contribute to the social development of the most deprived.

This year, we are continuing to strengthen our cooperation with others across our society in new ways to reach our common goals and continue supporting the Government of Rwanda's efforts towards child care and protection.

In line with the SOS Children's Villages International 2030 strategy, we will ensure that many more children have a loving home and equal chances to succeed in life. Our aim is to lead the world's most effective child care movement to make sure that "no child should grow up alone".

The Magazine *Mudaheranwa* (the Undefeated) has been developed to communicate processes, progress and success stories by unpacking our experience, programs and project achievements.

*Enjoy your reading!*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping loops and lines.

**Jean Bosco Kwizera**  
National Director  
SOS Children's Villages  
Rwanda

# COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE



Young people enrolled into the SOS Children's Villages Rwanda programs in Kayonza and Nyamagabe districts are ready to supplement government efforts to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

## YOUTH VOLUNTEERS HELPING FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, SOS children's Villages Rwanda actively supported the community and mobilized youth to mitigate the spread.

Dressed in luminous yellow vests, young people enrolled into the SOS Children's Villages Rwanda programs in Kayonza and Nyamagabe districts committed to supplement government efforts to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 60 youths were trained on large crowd management, ethics and on how best contribute to the public order to educate people about health guidelines

to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stationed on streets, market entrances, bus parks and bus stops, the young adults actively engage with passengers to inform about COVID-19 preventive and protective measures as per guidelines and protocols outlined by health authorities such as wearing properly a face mask, washing hands regularly with soap and clean water and respect social distancing.



# SOS MOTHERS' TOP PRIORITY: The children's health



**N**ikuze Adrolate is an experienced SOS Children's Villages Mother who spent 28 years at SOS Children's Village Gikongoro caring for children who lost parental care.

Nikuze lives with her children in a family house and established strong bonds with her children like a biological mother. She was selected by SOS Children's Villages Rwanda after successfully completing a comprehensive six-month training on child protection for children who had lost parental care.

After the Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994, she cared for many children with a broken heart as they lost their parents and relatives. Now most

of them are fathers and mothers. As of today, Nikuze cared for a total of 43 children, girls and boys, during her 28 years of service at SOS Children's Village Gikongoro.

Since last year March 2020, COVID-19 affected the daily life at the SOS Children's Village. Schools closed their doors for seven months, affecting an unprecedented number of children under her care. Many social activities interrupted to limit unnecessary contact and exposure with others.

Nikuze made sure all COVID-19 mitigation measures were in place to keep her children and the village safe. She worked more hours than usual because children stayed home.

Nikuze engaged her children in leisure, sports and handicraft activities. She ensured that they followed education programs broadcasted on local television and radio, and had the children revise their school lessons.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, Nikuze attended psychosocial support group meetings. Nikuze put in place following schedule for her children: After waking-up, children went for a shower, breakfast, and then they reviewed their lessons until noon. They took lunch and went for a nap until 3 pm. Afterwards they engaged in leisure, sports and handicraft activities.

# A DAY AT THE VILLAGE DURING COVID-19



**L**orenzo Shema, 5 years old, lives at the SOS Children's Village Byumba (Gicumbi) and is the youngest of all children under SOS care. Lorenzo was sad when he heard that he had to stay home because schools closed their doors to avoid the spread of COVID-19.

Now that he is obliged to stay home every day, his SOS Mother supports him and his siblings as much as she can to cope with this difficult time. She engaged him in many household activities and taught him many new skills. Passionate to carry out his day-to-day schedule, he actively supports his mother with mopping, doing the laundry, catering, drawing and making liquid soap among others. "I used to play with my friends who live outside of the village and go to school with us. Since the

COVID-19 outbreak, we did not go to school for almost a year.

Lorenzo's SOS mother also explained to the children the scope of the Coronavirus pandemic, how it affects lives at the global scale, and how every child is responsible to apply measures to mitigate the spread of the pandemic. "[...] when we go outside of the house, we wash our hands with soap and clean water to avoid the spread of COVID-19... Many of our social activities have been temporally interrupted in order to limit unnecessary close contacts with others," Lorenzo says.

Lorenzo explained how he enjoys every minute spent with his SOS Mother because she not only became his parent, but is also his most cherished teacher. "My mother taught me how to draw, I

really enjoy it. I am good at drawing cars, chicken and dogs. I also want to learn how to cook meals and improve doing my bed properly", he added. "I do not have a chance to play with my friends from outside the village. My mother and siblings help me to cope with the situation but I wish life could get back to normal...", he explained with distress. After waking-up, he takes a shower, breakfast, and reviews his studies up to noon. He takes lunch and then goes for a nap until 3 pm. Afterwards he practices his newly acquired skills. Lorenzo was admitted at the SOS Children's Village Byumba (Gicumbi) in 2017, after he was found with no one to take care of him.



## MY LIFE STORY: “I GREW UP AT SOS CHILDREN’S VILLAGE GIKONGORO, NOW I AM A SUCCESSFUL IT SOFTWARE DEVELOPER”

Nzabaregerimana Emmanuel supporting a student in the ‘Girls in code’ training.

### MY EARLY DAYS AT SOS CHILDREN’S VILLAGE GIKONGORO

**E**mmanuel Nzabaregerimana was a toddler during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsis. He was picked from the dead in the former Gikongoro prefecture Murambi in the midst of the tragedy where thousands of innocent people, including his parents, were gruesomely murdered. Back in 1999, a poor old woman brought him to SOS Children’s Village Gikongoro (Nyamagabe).

“After the genocide, I was picked by an old woman who took care of me until I joined SOS Children’s Villages Rwanda. As her living conditions were

worsening, she decided to take me to the SOS Children’s Village Gikongoro believing they would take better care of me than she was able to,” explained the 25-year-old young man. Nzabaregerimana vividly remembers the care of aunt Winifride Mwubahamana, a SOS mother who took care of him and other children. He considers her as a real parent and mother. He does not remember his biological parents as he was too young when they passed away. He even does not know where he comes from and his age was estimated when he joined SOS Children’s Village Gikongoro.

“Although I was mature enough to start primary school, I started in nursery 2. It was a good decision from my educators as it helped me to start a smooth education journey,” notes Nzabaregerimana. He completed his primary with ease and went to College Adventiste de Gitwe for both Ordinary and Advanced level and graduated with a secondary school certificate in Computer Sciences.



Nzabaregerimana got a scholarship from SOS Children's Villages Rwanda and joined the University of Rwanda Huye Campus where he enrolled in Business Information Technology (BIT). In college he started pondering about what he could do to become a change maker in the society. "One day, I met a foreigner who encouraged me to think big and create my own business instead of waiting for someone to employ me. When I told him that I had no financial capital, he responded that I only need a good idea to become self-employed," he said. He then encouraged three class mates to create an IT company with him that could provide solutions to the challenges the country was facing. In 2016, they created Information Data Analysis (IDA) Technology Ltd to come up with innovative IT solutions and platforms. The company registered legally in April 2017. Nzabaregerimana became the Head of the company.

## The journey towards software development

Since 2017, Information Data Analysis (IDA) Technology Ltd developed many software systems. 'Rwanda housemaids' was the first web-based application they developed. The application currently has over 200 housemaids registered in its database and is available both in a mobile and USSD format. Housemaids register themselves to seek for jobs and employers use the application to hire them. 'Girls in code' created in 2017 is a five-month training in coding for any interested girl who completed a secondary degree and has access to a computer. As of now, 66 girls are registered in the training and six already successfully graduated. Another is the School Management System which facilitates on-

line access to academic reports, parent's notifications, registration, and management. The software was sold to SOS Children's Village Gikongoro school and to additional five schools. The church Management Information System (MIS) is used already by some churches such as Presbyterian Churches (EPR Rwanda) and currently tested by the Zion Temple and ADEPR. The company most recently developed an Information Management System for Skol and also provides back up SMS services for ceremonies. Nzabaregerimana estimates his turnover in 2020 at Rwf 5 million with a plan to double the coming year.

## Personal achievement

"I earn at least Rwf 500,000 each month, most of the time even more depending on the business. Last year, I renovated my house in Nyamagabe district and invested in animal husbandry, I rear over 20 pigs and five goats. I know that I already achieved a lot however my ambitions go far beyond what I have achieved today", explained Nzabaregerimana.

## Future plans

Nzabaregerimana's vision for his company is to become the leading IT development service provider in country and the region. He forecasts the 'Girls in Code Project' to be expanded to the East African Community countries in the next few months. Currently, the company is engaging with officials in Zambia to start business. Their biggest challenge however, he said, is that Rwandans

don't trust local software services. "They prefer to buy from other countries like South Africa and India but we are determined to prove that our services are worthwhile," he said. Another challenge is that the company still lacks financial capacity to expand broadly their activities but he hopes all will go well as time goes by.

## Emmanuel's thoughts about SOS Children's Villages Rwanda

It is not easy to raise a child. Nzabaregerimana believes that his life would have been different if he hadn't been supported by SOS Children's Villages Rwanda.

"I am grateful for all SOS Children's Villages Rwanda has done for me, it is not easy to raise a child and they gave all they had to make me who I am today," he said. "Without SOS Children's Villages Rwanda, my life would be different, maybe I would have become a street child or a poor person who wouldn't even be

able to feed himself," Nzabaregerimana explained. He said that SOS Children's Villages Rwanda instilled in him a strong desire to help others especially those who are vulnerable. "Even today, I can feel how vulnerable children are, I do my best to support them, be it psychologically or financially. For instance, I pay school fees for one child who is in secondary school and make sure he gets everything like his peers," he concluded.

# TOOLKITS FOR YOUNG TVET GRADUATES



**Y**outh make up over one-third of the Rwandan population. Empowering youth is therefore a priority for SOS Children's Villages Rwanda.

The BiWe Project implemented by SOS Children's Villages Rwanda has put measures in place to eradicate unemployment in Kayonza, Gasabo and Gicumbi districts. 81 young people in Kayonza and Gicumbi districts received start-up tool-kits after graduating in the trades of tailoring and welding. Francoise Mutoneshe, SOS Children's Villages Rwanda BiWe Project Coordinator, said: "We encouraged the youth enrolled into the trades of tailoring and welding to join cooperatives and all of them complied with our request".

Dushimimana Emmanuel, a welding graduate who received a toolkit explained: "I joined the BiWe project after dropping out of school for two years. My family relative who was

supposed to pay my school fees was sentenced to five years prison. I was very sad that I had to interrupt my studies. Thanks to the BiWe project, I gained a lot of experience. The toolkits we received by SOS Children's Villages Rwanda will be the key to our success."

Lea Mukabyiringiro, a young girl enrolled into the BiWe project is grateful for the toolkit she received: "When I graduated from secondary school, my scores were not good enough to get a government scholarship. " I was grateful that I could enroll into the BiWe Project in welding. I believe that this is our chance to fulfil our dreams and lead us to a better future", she explained.

Mbasha David, Division Manager at Kayonza district, appreciates the toolkit distribution organized by SOS Children's Villages Rwanda. "SOS Children's Villages Rwanda is one of our favorite partners. Since many years they support our district to

eradicate poverty by helping children and young people. Two youth cooperatives were initiated thanks to the support from SOS Children's Villages Rwanda", David explained.

SOS Children's Villages Rwanda through the BiWe Project contributed to the National Strategic Transformation Agenda (NTS1) that aims to create 214,000 decent and productive jobs annually.

The dual program financed by the German educational organization BildungsWerk (BiWe) implements a dual program which equips vulnerable youth living in the community with both theory and advanced technical skills. The program enhances the chances of trainees to be directly hired by the companies or get self-employed upon graduation.



# SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAM

The Family Strengthening Program in Nyamagabe supports 1,051 children and young people from 200 families. Each family enrolls into the program for a period of 3 to 5 years before graduation. The community empowerment program aims to strengthening the safety nets for vulnerable children and their families within the community.

## A VULNERABLE FAMILY BECOMING RESILIENT



Mukamuganga and her family working at the tree nursery.

Lucie Mukamuganga and her husband Augustin Ntezimana, both 48 years old, have six children, three boys, and three girls: Rosine Ingabire 25 years, Iradukunda Mugisha Enock 21 years, Diane Muyizere 18 years, Alain Moise Niyomwungeri 16 years, Emmanuel Cyuzuzo Cyiza 13 years and Queen Blessing Igikundi 3 years old. They live in Ngiryi Cell, Gasaka Sector, Nyamagabe District in the Southern province of Rwanda.

Before entering the Family Strengthening Program, the family was stuck in deep poverty. They bare-

ly were able to afford a single meal a day. Their children did not attend school as their parents were not able to afford their schooling needs. The hope for the future was shattered and sometimes they believed that dwelling in poverty is their fate. Meeting SOS Children's Villages Rwanda was a lifesaver for the family.

In 2015, the family enrolled into the SOS Family Strengthening Program, following the criteria set by the program through SOS Children's Village Gikongoro. The Family Strengthening Program supports vulnerable families with financial

education, income generating activities to become self-sustained.

Although Lucie was already part of a Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) in her community she joined the Family Strengthening Program's saving group and saved Rwf 200 a week together with other members of the group.



The family received other behavior change education messages on best hygiene practices, positive parenting and child rights. Furthermore, the family participated in a rotational cow distribution scheme which allowed them to possess a cow, getting milk for their children and manure to increase their agriculture produce. This led to a new life full of hope and ambition.

Even if it was not easy to get Rwf 200 each week, Lucie was committed to actively participate in the saving meetings and did her best to comply with the VSLA policy. "It took a year to get Rwf 10,000 from the savings, it is the biggest amount I was ever able to acquire in my life. I immediately started a small business of selling potatoes, beans and fruits", she recalled.

During the cycle 2016-2017, she increased her weekly savings from Rwf 200 to Rwf 500, and she encouraged her husband to join the VSLA as well. The family earned a total of Rwf 367,500 after only one year.

"Before, we had no regular income as we did not own land, we had nothing! We used to survive by the mercy of God. But after joining the

Family Strengthening Program, we realized that we have to work hard for a better life and for the interest of our children," Lucie noted.

This program gave us hope for the future. Since the beginning, we took loans from our saving group and invested into a small business. As a result, our income increased and we were able to pay school fees and school materials for all our children. Some of our children who were still enrolled in primary school got a chance to be admitted at the SOS School. This was like a miracle for us", Lucie says. The more progress they made in business and continuous savings, the better their life was becoming. Today Lucie's family is able to afford three meals per day, their businesses are flourishing, and their children are performing well at school. The first-born is pursuing a University degree, the second born is in secondary (S5), the third born is in secondary (S2), two are still in primary school and the last born is in nursery school. The financial capacity has significantly improved and is stable and they are committed to continue their business for the interest of the children even though COVID-19

became a challenge for them.

The Coordinator of the program at SOS Children Village Gikongoro, Theresie Uwizeyimana, appreciates the progress of the family. She said that the family understood very well the importance of saving. They both worked together, husband and wife, to overcome their poverty. "We support vulnerable families to mitigate the root cause of the poverty instead of giving them direct support. We teach them how to save small capital through their village saving associations," she added.

"Budget constraints are the main challenges the program is facing. "The budget allocated to the Family Strengthening Program is very limited as opposed to the target group. Family Strengthening Program interventions are limited to only one sector for three to five years, although much more children need support in the entire district. It would be great if the Family Strengthening Program could intervene in an entire district over a certain period of time," she explained.



# A CHILD-HEADED HOUSEHOLD SUPPORTED BY THE FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAM



Murenzi Fabrice (in the red t-shirt) is raising his siblings.

In 2012, seven children were left on their own after a tragic family incident on the hillside of Sumba village, Ngiryi cell, Gasaka Sector, Nyamagabe District.

During a dispute between both parents, an unexpected murder occurred inflicted by the husband which led to the immediate death of his wife.

Right away the father was sentenced for twenty-five years prison and the seven children were left alone. Murenzi Fabrice born in 1992 was left with an overwhelming responsibility of taking care of all his siblings.

The six siblings are Hakiza Claude (born in 1997), Dushime Marie Angélique (born in 2001), Mushime Marie Beatha (born in 2003 has a physical disability), Kageruka Jean (born in 2005), Akayezu Marie Donatha (born in 2000) and Kazungu Gaston (born in 1991 with a mental impairment).

"Until today, this incidence is unbelievable for all of us", explained Fabrice. We faced a very harsh life with no hope to get ever out of this situation. Even eating once a day was often not possible. Neighbors would very few times support us with some food and we had to beg around to find something to eat. We

did not have means to go to school. It was simply terrible", he explained.

The local authorities from Gasaka sector formulated a demand to the SOS Children's Villages Rwanda to admit the child headed household into the SOS Family Strengthening Program. There was an urgent need to heal the inner wounds through the SOS mental health and psychosocial support program.



The SOS Family Strengthening Program provided them in the beginning with temporary food as an emergency response activity. The children were brought back to school, and the household participated in a rotational cow distribution scheme which allowed them to possess a cow and getting milk.

Today, the seven children recovered. They eat three meals per day and have access to health services. The Family Strengthening Program enrolled them in a VSLA. In the first cycle in 2016-2017, they earned 100,000 Rwf which doubled to 200,000 Rwf in the next cycle 2017-2018, and which further increased in the third cycle 2019-2020 to 232,000 Rwf. Fabrice invested all this money in income generating activities, specifically agriculture activities, he refurbished their house, surrounded it by a fence and connected it to electricity to allow his siblings to do

their homework even in the evening.

Murenzi explained how they all were heavily depressed in the beginning because of the incidence that happened at their home. "During the narrative therapy sessions, we shared our thoughts and slowly started to gain courage to embrace life again", he explained.

The siblings developed compassion for others. Currently, they are caring for an abandoned child who lives at their home and sometimes they support the vulnerable in their village with some food items. Fabrice talked about his anger. Thanks to the narrative therapy, he learned how to accept his feelings and started listening to his siblings. He and his siblings even started visiting their father in Jali prison, which they definitely would not have done prior the narrative sessions.

Fabrice graduated from secondary S6 in 2014 and since then does temporary jobs to care and provide financially for his siblings. Three of his siblings are currently in secondary school whereas the two youngest are still in primary. They all would like to attend university which is not easy as the education support in the Family Strengthening Program is limited to secondary school and the cost for university fees is very high compared to the household's income.

Meanwhile Fabrice would like to attend a driving school to get a driving license. A driving license would help him get a driver job during week days and with the income he could enroll to university during weekends. The family is also planning to open a shop and Claude who is currently in Secondary S6 would be the manager.





# THE FUTURE OF SOS HERMAN GMEINER PRIMARY SCHOOL KIGALI



Students in P6 resumed school after over seven months of suspension to avoid the spread of COVID-19.

Following a request from the City of Kigali, SOS Herman Gmeiner Primary School facility located on a four-hectare land in Kacyiru sector has been expropriated in October 2020 to expand Rwanda's state of the art Kigali Golf course Club on an expansive stretch of greenery in the city.

The SOS Herman Gmeiner Primary School Kigali was built back in 1997 to address the educational gap observed nearby the SOS Children's Village Kigali locality to allow children under SOS Family Care and the surrounding community benefit of high-quality standard education. The school, known for its extensive academic excellence and secure and caring environment enabled children over decades experience success and achieve their full potential.

Prior to the COVID-19 school closure, the SOS Herman Gmeiner Pri-

mary School Kigali accommodated around 402 students in 15 classes out of which 63 children were under SOS Children's Villages Family Care while 339 students attended from the surrounding community.

Along with the planned expropriation and raise of quality schools at SOS Children's Village Kigali location's close proximity, SOS Herman Gmeiner Primary School Kigali is planning to withdraw from school management

In the meantime, SOS Children's Villages Rwanda signed an agreement with the Association of Baptist Churches in Rwanda to rent 14 classrooms on their premises located nearby SOS Children's Village Kigali.

Following the Rwandan Ministry of Education's calendar issued in October 2020, Primary Five and Six resumed their second term

studies on November 2<sup>nd</sup> after over seven months of suspension since March 2020 amid concerns over the spread of COVID-19.

On November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, Primary Four students resumed second term studies until January 2021 when the second lockdown occurred. Students of Primary One to Primary Three resumed after the second school lockdown in Kigali on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.



The School Principal appreciates the interim facility on the premises of the Association of Baptist Churches. “The compound is quite spacious and clean with green areas covered with grass. The classroom floors are all covered with modern tiles and many clean bathrooms are available for the children. We all feel very safe and comfortable here”, he explained.

The Herman Gmeiner Primary School Kigali bought new chairs and table to equip the 14 classrooms which are now operational.

Herman Gmeiner Primary School Kigali has put in place all the required COVID-19 prevention and control measures on the compound and availed free sanitizer, facemasks,

10 modern COVID-19 prevention tap and wash facilities and soaps. Other measures include keeping the premises clean, enforcing social distancing measures, cleaning classrooms and grounds and spraying disinfectant around facilities to reduce the risk of infections.

The facility consists of 14 classrooms, a girl’s room, COVID-19 girls and boys isolation rooms and teachers’ room.

During the COVID-19 seven-month school closure, SOS Hermann Gmeiner Primary School Kigali continued to pay salaries to their teachers.

According to Habimana, all students who attend school are doing

well and are working hard to catch up their lessons. “The students and their parents were not affected by the relocation of the school as we had communicated the plan far in advance”, he explained.

The Herman Gmeiner Primary School Kigali property will be relocated on an extensive 3.1-hectare land plot in Gisozi sector availed by the City of Kigali. On this property, SOS Children’s Village Kigali will invest into construction works of a new school.



# SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES RWANDA SIGNED A PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH TERRA SPORTS ACADEMY LTD TO BUILD AND OPERATE A SPORTS FACILITY



Jean Gakwaya, SOS Children's Villages Rwanda Chairman of the Board of Directors with Khadar Abdullah Abdi, Managing Director of Terra Sports Academy Ltd. After signature of the partnership agreement.

**S**OS Children's Villages Rwanda signed a partnership agreement with Terra Sports Academy Ltd to build and operate a sports facility and recreational outlet that promotes children and youth talents on one of SOS Children's Villages premises.

Terra Sports Academy Ltd reached out to SOS Children's Village Rwanda 15 months ago following an idea to initiate a sports facility to promote young Rwandan talents.

"We are grateful to start a partnership with Terra Sports Academy which will benefit and support children as this is our business. The project will go beyond supporting SOS children as the facility will be

open to the broad community," explained Jean Gakwaya, SOS Children's Villages Rwanda Chairman of the Board of Directors and Legal Representative. Khadar Abdullah Abdi, Managing Director of Terra Sports Academy Ltd feels privileged to partner with SOS Children's Village Rwanda and look forward to embrace additional projects on SOS Children's Villages premises. SOS Children's Village Rwanda will continue to support him in the administrative processes and future partnerships in the country.



# A 6-MONTH TRAINING OF TRAINERS FOR A COMMUNITY-BASED STREET CHILDREN RE-INTEGRATION MODEL

SOS Children's Villages Rwanda has been requested by the Ministry of Local Government as its long-term partner specialized in alternative care to implement a sustainable community-based rehabilitation model to re-integrate children living on the street into their families as part of its gatekeeping mechanisms and programmatic interventions to prevent family separation and foster children reintegration.

As per the resolution of a meeting chaired by the Minister of State in charge of Social Affairs in the Ministry of Local Government, held on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 with the National Rehabilitation Service (NRS) and private rehabilitation centers, children will be transitioned directly from those centers into their respective families without transitioning through SOS Children's Villages or other rehabilitation centers. This is in line with the de-institutionalization policy under the national child care reform strategy. The state Minister tasked SOS Children's Villages Rwanda and NRS to prepare a psychological support training of trainers meant for parents reunited with their children.

SOS Children's Village Rwanda in partnership with the National University of Rwanda and four other

local partners (Uyisenga n'Imanzi-Gasabo, CECYDAR-Kicukiro, SACCA-Kayonza and INTIGANDA-Huye) is providing a six-month training of trainers for instructors which will go along with a need's assessment of the community-based rehabilitation project. The training of trainers' program is offered by the Fairstart Foundation, a SOS Children's Villages partner specialized in foster care training. The program will be supplemented by other home-grown methodologies to fit and respond to the local context.

After the child rehabilitation in the community, family reintegration and preservation interventions are implemented, which are time intensive and include professional accompaniment and long-term follow up of the child and his parent. As for now, the 12 trained instructors will work in the community with both the child and the parents to address issues which may hinder the process of reintegration and preservation. They will get support supervision from 8 supervisors from the University of Rwanda and SOS Children's Villages Rwanda. Experiences, promising practices and lessons learnt will be gathered along with the needs assessment to serve as an evidence base to inform advocacy and future scale-up projects.

During an introductory meeting organized by SOS Children's Villages Rwanda back in October 2020, in presence of representatives from the University of Rwanda, the National Rehabilitation Service and four selected private rehabilitation centers namely UNM, SACCA, CECYDAR and INTIGANDA, participants shared their community experience integrating children living on the street back into their homes.

There are numerous reasons why children resort to life on the street, among them are poverty, breakdown of family relationships due to conflict, orphanhood, alcoholism or a single parent being a sex worker. Those children have no follow-up at home and hence lose or are at risk of losing parental care. It has now been observed that these children fall in the target group of SOS Children's village Rwanda as defined in the SOS Care Promise and SOS Children's Villages Rwanda gatekeeping guidelines. Once on the streets, a primary coping mechanism is drug use and many children solicit sex as a way to make ends meet. An additional target group are children who are accompanying their mother to beg on the street.



The Acting Director General of the National Rehabilitation Service (NRS), Gilbert Gumira, addressing his remarks to the participants of the training. From left to right: Gilbert Gumira, Acting Director General of the National Rehabilitation Service (NRS), Jean Gakwaya, SOS Children's Villages Rwanda Chairman of the Board of Directors, participants of the training.

# ADROLATA NIKUZE :

## Helmut Kutin Award 2021 Winner



Adrolata a stronger and more resilient mother

**A**drolata struggles to put into words the love she feels for her children. She has worked as an SOS Children's Villages mother at Gikongoro Village (Nyamagabe) for 29 years and raised 53 children. She recently won the Helmut Kutin Award 2021 for going beyond her duties to make a lasting impact in the lives of children and young people.

Adrolata's inspiration to care for vulnerable children came from her parents. They fed and clothed poor children in her neighborhood, which made her think about their lives. This passion drove Adrolata to adopt two children and dedicate her life to changing the lives of disadvantaged children.

During the tragedy of the genocide against Tutsi in 1994, Adrolata fled with 10 children of her SOS family and exiled to neighboring DR Congo. "I decided to go with my children and keep them safe. We lived

in difficult conditions and suffered together in a refugee camp. After four months, we returned home and I went on being their mother." This tough experience made Adrolata a stronger and more resilient mother.

One child she raised was speech impaired from childhood. Adrolata cared for him and met his every need; he now has graduated from university and is a musician. "Children come to the village with no hope for the future but later on mature and find themselves.

"Watching my children growing up, studying, overcoming challenges to live independently and start their own families is my forever happiness," explained Adrolata. "I was raised in the SOS Children's Village Gikongoro because I was abandoned. I had serious health issues such as speech impairment. I could not speak when I started nursery school in 1996. I was raised by Nikuze and am grate-

ful that I can speak thanks to her. I started to speak when I was in primary 3. Nikuze has changed my life to the extent that I even compose songs," Eric said. Uwimana recalls how Nikuze cared for children in a refugee camp in difficult conditions. "I have completed my university education in land surveying. I do part-time jobs in Chinese construction firms. I recently married this year. I am a man with dignity thanks to Nikuze. I am happy that she got a recognition award for her devotion to childcare. It is our pride," he said.

In 2007, Nikuze managed to trace Uwimana's family.

"Nikuze traced my family and linked me to the relatives of my mother and my father in 2007," he said. Eric is advising parents to care for all children including children with disabilities.



# LILIANE GREW UP AT THE SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE BYUMBA (Gicumbi)



Today she is holding a masters degree and running a fashion shop downtown Kigali

Liliane Gasana's parents were among the toll of over one million people who lost their lives in the early days of the Genocide against the Tutsi. Liliane went through the tragic events, when she was only 10 years old. A catholic nun found her and brought her to the then SOS Children's Village Rwanda's emergency program established in Ngarama (former Byumba Prefecture), which later in 1997 became SOS Children's Village Byumba.

"At SOS Children's Village, I was blessed with a new family and a SOS Children's Villages mother, which replaced my entire family", she explained. Today, Liliane is a mother of three children and recalls very well how SOS Children's Village Byumba (Gicumbi) was established to take care of her and hundreds of children who had the same past or even those who went through worse experiences. Liliane says that SOS Children's Village Byumba was established at the right time, when many children had lost their hope for life due to the horrific events during the Genocide against Tutsi.

We all came from different parts of the country and shared the same wounds as we were all victims of the Genocide against Tutsi, separated from our parents. Some of us had physical and emotional wounds others deep trauma that were difficult to heal. It was not easy for us to

catch up with life again", she said.

"We were about 500 children in the program. SOS Children's Village Byumba (Gicumbi) did what our parents would have done. They gave us everything children would get from their own parents, even if most of us had lost both parents, they filled the void we had from losing our biological parents", she remembered.

She went on explaining that she and her peers quickly integrated into the SOS Children's Villages Byumba (Gicumbi) in which they found comfort and grew up in a safe and caring environment. "We had a family with mothers and aunts who gave us good care and even the Village Director is considered as our father",

"Before going to school, our mother encouraged us to be focused at school. This made me a strong woman and helped me do well in primary, high school and university", she added.

After completing her Masters degree at Oklahoma Christian University in Project Management, she started her own fashion shop downtown Kigali. Liliane dedicates all her success to her caretakers at SOS Children's Villages from whom she got the starting point into her brilliant future. "added.

# FROM THE STREETS TO A LOVING HOME



"For me SOS Children's Villages is a unique opportunity to live in a family," explained Gaston who used to live on the streets.

One of the videos that hit the social media channels in 2020 was the one of a six years old young boy, Gaston, who fell into the River Yanze, a tributary of River Nyabarongo. In the video, the young boy was in the midst of a flooded stream, trying to hold himself on a rock. Many people were standing at the shores glazing at what would happen with him. Then suddenly, Bunani, a 27-year-old man, rescued the boy with a ladder, which he scaled to get into the river, straddled the boy on his back then climbed up the bridge to the applause of the onlookers. Many Rwandans circulated this video on social media platforms to commend Bunani for his act of heroism.

After three days, the National Commission of Children (NCC) in collaboration with SOS Children's Villages Rwanda admitted Gaston to SOS Children's Village Kayonza in the Eastern Province of Rwanda. This happened after an assessment of both parties that found out that the child had no one to take care of him. "I was surprised to be admitted to SOS Children's Villages. For me it is a unique opportunity to live in family," he said. "On my first day here, my mother fed me with roasted fish. It was the first time in my life that I ate fish. Then I slept in a nice bed instead of sleeping on the ground of the streets of Kigali the way I used to," he recalled.

"I suffered starting from a very young age until I joined SOS Children's Village Kayonza. I used to beg and live on the streets. I went through different transit centres where the authorities were searching for my family but in vain. Gaston is dreaming to become a soldier one day, committed to protect his country.

Ingabire Vestine, his SOS Children's Villages mother who cares for him said that he was in a very bad condition when he arrived. "He would always sleep in the sitting room instead of going into the bedroom like the other children from the family. It took me a lot of efforts to change his behaviour", she explained.

Since January 2019, the National Rehabilitation Centre (NRS) entered into an agreement with SOS Children's Villages Rwanda to receive abandoned children and those who lost parental care. Most of these children experienced traumatic lives as they have been separated from their biological families and been exposed to a very harsh life in the streets.

Upon their admission, trained SOS Children's Villages mothers and aunts take care of children through an established care plan including intensive mental health and psychosocial support sessions implemented by the OBEL funded mental health and psychosocial support program.

SOS Children's Villages cares for children who used to live on the streets with a six-month stabilisation program then intensive three-month follow-up. These interventions are carried out by a project team which include two clinical psychology volunteers. The interventions consist of an individual assessment of the child, individual psychological follow-up sessions, psychosocial group conversations that involve child friendly games, activities, regular follow-up and case management meetings with SOS Children's Villages mother, aunts and social workers.



# TAILORING FACE MASKS DURING



Charlotte Mutuyimana, 27 years, lives in Mabare cell, Rukomo sector, Gicumbi district in the Northern Province of Rwanda.

The family of Charlotte joined SOS Children's Villages Rwanda in 2018 through the Family Strengthening Program implemented in Rukomo sector.

Through this program, Charlotte got an opportunity to enroll in technical and vocational education and training (TVET). She selected the trade of tailoring.

"We have been admitted to the Family Strengthening program because our family was very poor. We were only able to afford one meal per day, my parents were not

able to pay school fees and school materials," explained Charlotte. Charlotte decided to learn tailoring with the aim to start a small business after her studies. "I decided to learn tailoring because I wanted to do something that would help me to earn money. This is why I also joined the village saving and lending association (VSLA) to start some savings for my future business." Charlotte started saving Rwf 200 the first year and took a loan after saving several months. "I took a loan of Rwf 100,000 to purchase a tailoring machine and started a tailoring business in Rukomo center, three kilometres from home. I increased my saving share from Rwf 200 to Rwf 500. When the Government of Rwanda encouraged its citizens to wear masks to prevent COVID-19

transmission, I started tailoring face masks. Each day, I earn Rwf 6,000."

Charlotte was able to earn a lot of money out of this new demand. Thanks to her new income, she bought a land plot worth Rwf 600,000. Since two months, she is married and lives with her husband in their own house.

"Women have a great strength of mind. A man may have greater physical strength, but when it comes to mental strength, he is no match to a woman", explained Charlotte.

Even today she is receiving many orders from citizens of Rukomo sector to tailor face masks.

# SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES CELEBRATED THE DAY OF AFRICAN CHILD AT ISIBO UBUTWARI IN NYAMAGABE DISTRICT



Children's growth monitoring session during the celebrations of the Day of African Child.



The National Director of SOS Children's Villages Rwanda, Jean Bosco Kwizera, during the celebrations of the Day of the African Child sensitizing mothers on the importance of nutrition for good health and development during early years of life for children.

On June 16, 2021, SOS Children's Villages Rwanda joined the Government of Rwanda and the African Union Member States to mark the Day of the African Child under the theme: "Isibo, as a pivot to the child development "Isibo, Igi-cumbi cy'Imikurire Myiza y'Umwana".

The celebrations were held in presence of the Permanent Secretary of MIGEPROF Assumpta Ingabire, the Governor of Southern Province Alice Kayitesi, the Mayor of Nyamagabe Bonaventure Uwamahoro and SOS Children's Villages Rwanda National Director Jean Bosco Kwizera at the Isibo Ubutwari, in Mukungu Cell, Kitabi Sector, Nyamagabe District, and Southern Province of Rwanda

The district of Nyamagabe in collaboration with SOS Children's Villages Rwanda financial support organized a growth monitoring session and cooking demonstration for 25 children and

their parents during the celebrations. SOS Children's Villages Rwanda also supported the community who attended the event with provision of food to support their children's nutrition. 150 kg rice, 150 kg of sugar, 300 kg of fortified porridge, 360 milk packs, 60 soap bars and 3 matts were distributed.

During the event, SOS Children's Villages Rwanda National Director sensitized the attending community in an interactive way about the importance of nutrition for good health and development during children's early years of life. "Preparing healthy food for our children doesn't require much costs, because there are foods grown at the household. Before selling eggs and vegetables, we should make sure our children consume them first," he explained.

"Child development includes good health and early learning. Working together on this will help us fighting malnutrition in all its forms which

hampers the development of our children. Parents however play a critical role in the child's nutrition", explained SOS National Director Jean Bosco Kwizera. He added that SOS Children's Villages Rwanda will continue to work with Local Government entities to improve the wellbeing of children from vulnerable families.

The Governor of Southern Province Alice Kayitesi, encouraged parents to feed their children with the foods they grow themselves to eradicate malnutrition which can lead to stunting in young children. "In our families we often already have vegetables, eggs and milk. These foods are rich in vitamins and proteins that are vital to a child's growth," she explained. The Governor of the Southern Province thanked SOS Children's Villages Rwanda for being a reliable partner in supporting vulnerable children.



# BANQUE POPULAIRE DU RWANDA (BPR) DONATED RWF 6,000,000



The SOS Children's Villages Rwanda National Director Jean Bosco Kwizera received a cash donation from BPR

On June 18, 2021, Banque Populaire du Rwanda Plc (BPR) donated Rwf 6,000,000 to SOS Children's Villages Rwanda to support its efforts in raising vulnerable children.

Jean-Bosco Kwizera, the National Director of SOS Children's Villages Rwanda commended the bank for the donation saying it will boost efforts to raise vulnerable children.

"We welcome and are very grateful for the generous donation from BPR because it is an additional support to raise vulnerable children. We always welcome funding from both abroad and in-country.

The Managing Director of Banque Populaire du Rwanda Plc, Maurice Toroitch explained that supporting vulnerable people in the communities is part of the bank's Corporate Social Responsibility strat-

egy to give back to the community. "The most important reason why we decided to make a contribution to SOS Children's Villages Rwanda is that we see a close connection between the purposes of SOS Children's Villages Rwanda and the purpose of BPR as a bank. We are both made up to provide support. SOS Children's Villages Rwanda provides support to vulnerable children from the community. The purpose of BPR is to provide financial support to communities to become sustainable and prosperous," he said.

The Managing Director of BPR added that by providing financial support to SOS Children's Villages, BPR is giving hand to the efforts to the vulnerable children and families stressing, "We depend on a community that is able to provide for business now and in the future. That is BPR's purpose." Since 2017, SOS Children's Vil-

lages Rwanda established local fundraising and local sponsorship that encourage corporates, government entities and civil society organizations to support children living under SOS Children's Villages Rwanda care.

Currently, SOS Children's Villages in Rwanda cares for 274 children and 315 youths living in the four villages in Nyamagabe, Gasabo, Gicumbi and Kayonza. Over 7,100 beneficiaries and 1,179 families are enrolled into the Family Strengthening Programme aiming to support vulnerable families living in the community in their capacity to protect and care for children in four districts.

# SUPPORTING 800 DISPLACED CHILDREN AT BUSASAMANA TRANSIT CAMP



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SOS Children’s Villages Rwanda supported 800 displaced children at Busasamana transit camp. The Busasamana transit camp, located near the Congolese border was opened to accommodate displaced people from Goma, DRC and Rwanda, who fled the eruption of Nyiragongo volcano on May 21.

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Through SOS Children’s Villages fundraising efforts, African Improved Foods Ltd generously donated 1,712 kg of porridge flour to support 800 displaced children at Busasamana transit camp.



SOS Children’s Villages Rwanda attending a meeting at Busasamana transit camp to discuss emergency interventions with representatives of the National Child Development Agency (NCDA), Save the Children, Plan International, Adra Rwanda and UN agencies.



Diogene Karega, Advocacy and Child Safeguarding Advisor, representing SOS Children’s Villages at Busasamana transit camp is handing over 2,000 milk packs donated by SOS Children’s Villages. In addition to 8 cartons of petroleum jelly donated by Sufo Rwanda Industries Ltd and life jackets worth Rwf 200,000 which have been purchased from a donation from Sonatubes Ltd.



# SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES RWANDA

## DONATIONS



Members of the Ivorian Students Association visited SOS Children Village Kigali with Christmas gifts for children.

Our deepest gratitude goes to our partners, corporates and individuals for their generous donations contributed to SOS Children's Villages Rwanda. Your donations made a genuine difference in the life of a child. We deeply thank our individual givers and following organizations for their continued support:

Ivorian Students Association in Rwanda, Top Sec, StarTimes Rwanda, ISON BPO, Africa Improved Foods Ltd, Sulfo Rwanda Industries Ltd, Sonatubes Ltd and GL Investments Ltd.



# SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES RWANDA DONATIONS



GL Investments Ltd donated 50 bags of Indian Parboiled Rice, 5 bags of sugar and 20 liters of cooking oil to SOS Children's Village Kigali.

“ Since my very young age, I heard about SOS Children's Villages and how they support children who lost parental care. Supporting vulnerable children who have no one that take care of them is shaping the future of the country. I always found it a noble cause to support ”

**Huseifa Badu Ahmedali**

*Managing Director of GL Investments Ltd.*



## DIRECT DEPOSIT/ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFER

Account Name: SOS CV RWANDA TRUST

Account Number: 400418314910177

Bank Name: BANQUE POPULAIRE DU RWANDA

SWIFT CODE: BPRWRWRW

Mobile Money: \*182\*8\*1\*025544#





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