



# Excellence Chronicles

Good Practices &  
Success Stories

First Quarter  
2024

50  
years



SOS CHILDREN'S  
VILLAGES  
ETHIOPIA

# Introduction

As a member of SOS Children's Villages International, SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia was established in response to the devastating 1973 famine. Since its inception, SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia has been dedicated to providing essential childcare, protection, family strengthening, health, and education services to children who have lost parental care or are at risk of losing it. Additionally, the organization has played a crucial role in delivering life-saving humanitarian aid to individuals affected by conflict and drought, with a particular focus on supporting women and children.

SOS Children's Villages operates in seven regional states across Ethiopia, including Tigray, Addis Ababa, Amhara, Harari, Oromia, SNNP, and Somali. Through its comprehensive programs and services, SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia continues to make a significant impact on the lives of vulnerable children and families, ensuring they have the support and resources they need to thrive.

For the past 50 years, SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia has been dedicated to providing high-quality care for children and young people. Throughout our interventions, we have consistently communicated our impacts, achievements, and challenges to both internal and external stakeholders through the publication of annual reports, showcasing good practices, and sharing success stories.

As part of our ongoing unwavering commitment to transparency and accountability, our **Success Whisperers** team members from program development and quality assurance, brand and communications, sponsorship, and program implementation have compiled the success stories and good practices of the first quarter of the year 2024. These stories serve as a powerful testament to the impact and effectiveness of our work, highlighting the positive changes and improvements brought about by our projects and initiatives.

We firmly believe that by sharing these inspiring good practices and success stories, stakeholders like yourself can be motivated to get involved and support our cause, while also building trust and credibility in our organization and even can help strengthen our relationships and attract even more support.

Together, we can continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of children and young people in Ethiopia. Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to our shared mission.

*Please note that names on the stories are changed for the sake of data privacy.*

# Good Practice

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# Harvesting the Rewards: Negotiation & Stakeholder Engagement for Sustainable Solutions

Despite obstacles, the strong relationships and trust built with government agencies and partners have been instrumental in the success of Kere SaCCO. By maintaining focus on these areas, the institution can continue to thrive and serve its community effectively. One key aspect that sets Kere SaCCO apart is their efficient management practices. Despite budget constraints, the organization successfully negotiated to have a bookkeeper provided by the cooperative agency and secured the services of an accountant at no cost through discussions with government stakeholders.

Kere SaCCO has been providing financial services to target groups for seven years, thanks to support from the ECoS-CaR project which included training, technical assistance, and funding injections. Continuous efforts are needed to enhance management capacities and secure sources of funding for Kere SaCCO's sustainability. Establishing connections with secondary cooperatives and SaCCO unions could further support vulnerable households. Challenges such as budget limitations and management literacy have been addressed through ongoing awareness campaigns, technical support, and engagement with stakeholders.

The main beneficiaries of Kere SaCCO's services are caregivers and young participants in the ECoS-CaR III Project. Government agencies, cooperative offices, and other partners have played a crucial role in supporting the success of Kere SaCCO. The approach taken to strengthen Kere SaCCO's institutional capacity involved forming a savings group, raising awareness, facilitating legal processes, providing resources, and offering financial and technical assistance.

While budget constraints posed challenges, successful negotiations led to the acquisition of a full-time accountant and office space. The support from government offices, the Kebele administration, and other stakeholders has greatly contributed to the improvement in financial and institutional management at Kere SaCCO. The association is on a positive trajectory towards further progress and self-sustainability.

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*Training Session to Kere SaCCO  
Management and members*

# Success Stories

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# From Struggle to Prosperity: Mr. Kebede's Transformation through Sheep Rearing

Mr. Kebede, aged 42, resides in kebele 04 of Debre Tabor Town. He is married with three children and is actively involved in the sheep-rearing business as one of the project participants along with his family.

Two years ago, Kebede and his family lived without any means of livelihood to meet their daily basic needs. Despite working as a daily labourer, his income was insufficient to cover their daily expenses. Furthermore, he struggled to afford his children's education expenses, including school supplies and basic necessities.

SOS Children's Villages initiated a project in Debre Tabor City, funded by Helmsley Charitable Trust, aimed at assisting vulnerable school children and their caregivers. The project's goal is to enhance the skills and livelihood of caregivers through vocational training and financial assistance. Ato Kebede and his son Yishak, a fifth-grade student, have been chosen to take part in the program due to their vulnerable situation.



*Kebede feeding his pride possession, his sheep*

As per his request, the project provided training on sheep rearing to him and others, as well as four sheep to start engaging in the activity to improve the quality of life for their families. He has seen positive results from the sheep rearing initiative he began last year, earning 48,000 ETB so far from selling 8 lambs and using the profits to build a new 2-roomed apartment within his home compound.

Mr. Kebede now rents out 2 dormitories for extra income and has acquired 7 more sheep to increase his economic stability. He is a member of Atse Minilik SaCCO, saving ETB 50 per month and has taken out two loans of 15,000 and 30,000 to grow his business. His monthly earnings now average 9,600 ETB.

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# Adapting and excelling: The Inspiring Rise of Bekele

Bekele, a grade 11 student from a rural area outside Bahir Dar, faced obstacles in receiving a traditional education due to his visual impairments. He attended a church school and then an elementary school that lacked resources to support him. Despite these challenges, his interest in studying law persisted.

The individual relocated to Bahir Dar for better opportunities and education, and has found a welcoming school environment with visually impaired students and supportive teachers. However, the high cost of living in the city has made it challenging for him to afford essentials like food, rent, and school supplies, impacting his academic success.

SOS Children's Villages started the TOFI project to assist 500 individuals with disabilities, including students like Bekele. Thanks to the project's support package, Bekele has been able to focus on his education and has achieved top positions in his class. Despite challenges in transitioning to high school, Bekele continued to excel, even obtaining textbooks from TOFI when there was a shortage at school. Last year, he ranked first in his class and achieved the third-highest grade in the school.

Bekele, a grade 11 student, aspires to become a lawyer to help his family and community. He also plans to study political science and educate uneducated individuals, especially farmers, about their rights and economic growth.

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*Bekele sharing his experiences at a ceremony held in the presence of different stakeholders*

# A harvest forged in resilience: Daye's fruitful story

Daye is a 40-year-old father living in Hawassa City, Finchewa Kebele. He was happily married and had two children. He is a successful farmer, and his wife also contributed to the household. Sadly, his wife passed away two years ago, leaving Daye to take care of their children alone. At the time of her death, their sons were 11 and 7 years old.

After facing financial and emotional challenges, he struggled to provide for and raise his children. He worked hard to rebuild his strength and resume farming on his 0.25-hectare plot, renting a water pump monthly for irrigation. Despite producing cash crops like green chili, much of his income goes towards rental and fuel costs. The rising cost of living and expensive school supplies add to his difficulties, but he continues to support his children despite the ongoing struggles.

After wondering how he could better support his family, he was selected to participate in the SOS Children's Villages ABCD project phase II, which involved collaboration with community organizations, volunteers, and local authorities. He received various trainings on topics like parenting, child safeguarding, and nutrition, as well as support in the form of scholastic materials and agricultural resources. As a result, he was able to successfully harvest and sell his first round of green chili, with expectations of continued success in future harvests.

Daye is thankful for the support he received from SOS Children's Villages, which helped him overcome difficult times and achieve success. He now saves money in a local SaCCO and plans to provide a better life for his children, who have aspirations to become a doctor and a social justice advocate. Daye wants to focus on his cash crop production, own a vehicle for transportation, and eventually own a house in the city

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*Daye in his farm collecting the fruit of his labor*

Students in Dalo Secondary School's  
ICT class



## Powering Up Potential: Dalo Secondary School's Digital Transformation

Dalo Secondary School, a target school for the Nekemte EduCare project, has been offering education to the local community for a long time but is lacking necessary infrastructure. This has had a negative impact on student academic performance, despite pleas for help from the community to the government and other organizations. With no response, student results have been decreasing annually. The EduCare project aims to address this issue by working with the school committees to identify and address the school's needs.

One significant issue identified was the limited access to technology that can improve students' independent learning, focus, and understanding. As a result, students at the school are lagging behind their peers who have access to this technology.

The project responded to the situation by creating an ICT room with computers and equipment, using funds from the project and resources from the school's revenue and Wollega University.

As a result of the Educare project, school students are now using ICT services and have benefited from the construction of a library, provision of chairs, and installation of water tanks. The project also involved equipping an ICT center with computers and covering construction costs with school revenue. Similar improvements are being made in other schools in Nekemte town based on their specific needs. Overall, the project has helped enhance the quality of education in government schools through collaboration with school stakeholders.

Ermias, the Director of Dalo Secondary School, thanked the organization for building the ICT Center, which has improved the quality of education by providing students with access to computers and reference books. Prior to the project, students lacked these resources for enhancing their computer skills and studying.

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# Growing Futures: The Youth Cultivate Success with Green Project

SOS Children's Village Jimma involves children and young people in various activities aimed at developing their skills and talents, helping them become their best selves. The program provides numerous opportunities for this group to prepare them for a brighter future.

Accordingly, two young boys from SOS Children's Village Jimma have recently achieved a remarkable success by winning a project initiated by ESAF YOUTH POWER 2022. They wrote their own proposal on a green project. Kidus and Dawit, aged 18 and 21 respectively, are the most active, respected, and well-mannered young boys in the village. They excel in academics, with Dawit recently starting university for higher education. As a result, he has delegated one of his brothers to work on cultivating vegetables with Kidus.

The boys are actively involved in village club works and eagerly participate in the activities. Additionally, they are part of a group of children in their village who have embraced a new initiative in the ICT4D project, advancing to an advanced level in computer science lessons.

Furthermore, the recent proposal aims to motivate children to engage in entrepreneurship in the fields of agriculture and environmental protection. Luckily, their proposal was well-received and has been awarded 75,000 ETB.

Currently, the youth in the village are preparing the land to plant vegetables, with the involvement of their siblings. Their caregivers are also providing support to help them achieve their goal. Kidus says that they are thrilled to have won and are planning to prepare a piece of land in their village where they can grow different vegetables that their families and community desire.

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*The youth planting vegetables at the village compound*

# Breaking the Cycle: Almaz's Journey from Poverty to Business Owner

Almaz and her family, including her husband and two young children, were facing hardships before being selected for the ECoS-CaR project. They were unemployed, struggling to escape poverty, and had trouble affording basic necessities like food and rent. To make ends meet, Almaz had to work for neighbors while her husband sought daily labor. They also lacked knowledge about childcare and business, leaving their children without proper care, protection, or educational opportunities.

The project has moved forward with its intervention plan after registering the family as a participant. The selection process included identifying the family for the program and forming a steering committee at the Kebele level with representatives from different stakeholders.



*Almaz feeding the goats she is raising for her business*

A committee made up of various community members, including the Kebele administration, elders, religious leaders, and women and children affairs, received training on how to select participants for the project according to SOS Children's Villages policy. They then chose W/ro Almaz and her family to participate in the project.

Parents received training on positive parenting, child protection, business skills, saving and credit concepts, and nutritious food preparation. They also received two adult female goats and a loan from a partner organization. Follow-up support was provided to the family.

The children were given school supplies over the past two years. Both children are now attending school, and Almaz has launched a new business with a loan from the SaCCO. She has also received training in business skills, entrepreneurship, and saving and credit concepts through the project. Her business involves selling fruits, poultry, and raising goats, which has helped the family afford rent, food, and other essentials while also allowing for ongoing and varied business ventures.

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