

Biannual Newsletter 2025

January - June, 2025



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES

Global context

The world is navigating an era of mounting challenges and transformation. Global conflicts have surged by nearly 40% since 2020, marking the most turbulent decade since the 1970s. Millions of children and families have been displaced, as humanitarian resources increasingly concentrate on the most visible crises. At the same time, the escalating impacts of climate change threaten health, safety, and livelihoods. More than half of the global population is at risk of extreme weather events, with those in poverty facing the harshest consequences.

Inequality continues to widen both within and between nations. Income gaps have reached levels unseen in decades, and rising inflation has deepened insecurity for low-income families worldwide. Meanwhile, global economic growth remains subdued, with uncertainty and reduced public funding challenging the stability of many non-profits. In this complex landscape, the need for strong, child-focused responses and community-based support has never been greater.

Member Association: SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia

Ethiopia continues to face complex and overlapping crises that have left tens of millions of children and young people in vulnerable situations. The effects of conflict in the North, political instability, recurring droughts, and the long shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic have deepened hardship for families across the country. Disease outbreaks and ongoing economic pressures further strain already fragile communities, putting countless children at risk of losing parental care.

Amid these challenges, SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia remains a steadfast source of hope and support. Through its holistic approach to childcare, protection, education, and family strengthening, the organization continues to create safe and nurturing environments for children and youth. Beyond long-term care, we play a vital role in humanitarian response, delivering life-saving assistance to communities affected by drought and conflict, with a special focus on supporting women and children. Operating across eight regional states Tigray, Addis Ababa, Amhara, Harari, Oromia, Sidaama, Somali, and the South Ethiopia Regional State, the organization reaches thousands of children and families each year through innovative and community-based programmes.

With the support of dedicated partners and donors, SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia continues to strengthen families, empower youth, and build resilient communities, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to grow up with love, dignity, and hope for the future.



Partnership

At SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia, we believe that meaningful change happens when people and institutions work together toward a shared purpose. In 2025, we continue to strengthen collaboration with a diverse range of partners, including international organizations, multilateral donors, national and local authorities, embassies, and community-based partners, all united by one mission: to create lasting change in the lives of underserved children, young people, families, and communities.

Our partnerships are built on a common vision, ensuring that every child grows up in a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment. Through strategic alliances with development partners and donors, we design and implement innovative programmes that respond to the unique challenges facing children, young people, and families across Ethiopia.

At the national level, collaboration with government institutions ensures that our initiatives are aligned with policy priorities and that we are helping to strengthen local capacity for sustainable impact. Partnerships with embassies and diplomatic missions further enhance our visibility and advocacy efforts, expanding support for children's rights and long-term development initiatives.

By working hand in hand with our partners, SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia amplifies its impact, fostering resilience within communities and building brighter futures for generations to come. These partnerships embody the true power of collective action in driving progress and protecting the most underserved.

Together, we can achieve greater milestones. Join us, act with purpose, and be part of the change that shapes a better tomorrow.

Mission

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

Values

Courage - We take action.

Commitment - We keep our promises.

Trust - We believe in each other.

Accountability - We are reliable partners.

Vision

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



Children and young people need care, guidance, and someone who believes in them. At SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia, we are committed to making this possible by strengthening families, providing quality care, and empowering young people to build independent, fulfilled lives.



Family and community strengthening

At SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia, our mission to empower families and strengthen communities continues to guide every step we take. In the first half of 2025, we built on our progress by helping families create safe, nurturing environments where children can thrive within their own communities. Through family-centered interventions, we have been able to address different families' unique needs using the family development plan approach, ensuring that our support remains targeted, practical, and impactful.

Economic Empowerment and Family Stability

Economic empowerment remains central to preventing child-family separation. Caregivers received training in entrepreneurship, financial management, and business development, along with access to Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) for savings and small loans. Vocational training equipped parents and caregivers with marketable skills, helping them secure employment or start small businesses that promote long-term financial stability.

Community Collaboration

Working hand in hand with communities, we strengthened the capacity of local structures, including Community-Based Organizations, Community Care Coalitions, and SACCOs, to better support underserved children and families. Through training in financial management, resource mobilization, and fundraising, these partners are now better equipped to deliver sustainable, locally driven support.

Key Achievements:

- **Children and Youth Reached: 12,034** children and young people received care and protection within their families and communities.
- **Project Expansion:** Successful inception phase preparations were undertaken for five projects across existing (ARADA-II, ECoS-CaR-IV, ARPwDs-II) and new locations (Weliso & Harrar). As a result, **5,622** programme participants have been admitted and are ready to begin service provision in the next six months.
- **Access to Essential Services: 10,079** children, youth, and caregivers accessed health, education, and social support services.
- **Caregiver Empowerment: 3,942** caregivers trained in Positive Parenting, Child Protection, and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS).
- **Economic Resilience: 3,108** participants benefited from business and vocational training, improving household income and self-reliance.
- **Community Strengthening: 76** community structures enhanced their capacity to provide sustainable family and child support.

Looking Ahead

Through these collective efforts, we continue to ensure that families remain strong, communities resilient, and every child is given the opportunity to grow up in a loving and supportive environment.

Empowering families and communities to protect and nurture every child's right to belong.





**Quality care, protection,
and opportunity for
every child and youth.**

Alternative care

In the past six months, we have continued to stand alongside children, young people, and families in need of care and protection. Through our child-centered programmes, we supported children in kinship and foster family care, facilitated family reintegration, and strengthened caregivers through training on positive parenting, childcare, and business skills. In line with the national care reform, we also advanced the integration of families into local communities. Our holistic approach ensures that every child's physical, emotional, and educational needs are met. Children and youth received essential services such as food and nutrition, healthcare, education, skills development, and accommodation, alongside age-appropriate life skills and social skills training.

Child rights and safeguarding remain at the heart of our work. Safeguarding risk assessments were conducted across all programme locations, with mitigation plans implemented to ensure safe environments. Awareness sessions also strengthened stakeholder understanding of child protection.

At SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia, our support continues beyond care. We walk alongside young people as they transition into independence through mentorship, social networking, and post-exit aftercare support, helping them build confident and resilient futures.

Our collective impact during the biannual period:

- **Alternative Care Placements:** 195 children and youth were placed in Kinship Care and Foster Family Care.
- **Reintegration:** 240 children and young people were reintegrated with their families of origin through the Children in Street Situation project.
- **Family Integration:** Completed preparatory activities to integrate 7 families across 5 programme locations into communities.
- **Essential Services:** 2994 children, youth, and caregivers received essential services such as food and nutrition, curative and preventive health care, education, skills development, and accommodation.
- **Safeguarding:** Child and youth safeguarding risk assessments were conducted across all programme locations, with mitigation plans developed and implemented.
- **Youth Engagement:** 1275 children and young people benefited from life skills and social skills training and participated in talent development and digital literacy programmes.
- **Capacity Building:** the parenting skills of 526 caregivers were strengthened through positive parenting and childcare training, while 196 were trained in business skills and linked to financial institutions for access to loans.
- **Social Protection:** Awareness creation sessions were held on child rights and protection for 583 key stakeholders.
- **Care Leavers Support:** 178 young people preparing to leave care and those who have already exited received mentorship, social networking, and post-exit support through the leaving care and aftercare programme.

Disability inclusion

At SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia, inclusion is not just a principle, it is a lived reality and a fundamental human right. Over the past six months, we have strengthened our efforts to ensure that children, youth, and families with disabilities are supported, empowered, and included in every aspect of life. From healthcare and education to skills development and livelihood support, our interventions have focused on promoting dignity, equality, and opportunity for all.

Our ongoing commitment remains clear: to build communities where every person, regardless of ability, can participate fully, contribute meaningfully, and thrive with dignity.

Key Achievements:

- **Capacity Building:** Conducted training and discussion sessions with **157** children with disabilities and their caregivers on the legal rights of persons with disabilities and how to claim them.
- **Health and Well-being:** Held preventive health dialogues with **151** caregivers on different health related illnesses. Additionally, 238 individuals with disabilities and their families were supported to access health insurance for improved curative health services.
- **Economic Empowerment:** Provided employment rights and financial management training for **73** youths with disabilities and caregivers, along with business skills training for **42** participants to enhance business planning, financial management, and market strategies.
- **Start-up and Financial Access:** Supported **7** project participants with start-up materials to expand their businesses and **69** participants to join financial institutions such as SACCOs, enabling them to access loans through revolving funds.
- **Essential Support:** Delivered temporary food assistance to **292** underserved individuals with disabilities, ensuring short-term relief and stability.
- **Assistive and Therapeutic Services:** Provided white canes, crutches, and wheelchairs to **3** individuals, while **4** people with mobility challenges received therapy that improved movement. Additionally, **17** children with disabilities were screened and supported with eye drops and sight glasses.
- **Inclusive Education:** Supported **50** students with disabilities with scholastic materials and supplied two schools with assistive and special needs resources, including puzzles, televisions, mattresses, and chairs, to strengthen inclusive learning environments.



Building inclusive communities where everyone can thrive and contribute meaningfully.

Investing in young people as drivers of innovation, leadership, and sustainable livelihoods.

Youth empowerment

When young people are supported, capacitated, and believed in, they become the driving forces of change. Over the past six months, we have pushed forward with diverse youth empowerment programmes designed to equip, support, and capacitate young people from all life's journeys. Through initiatives in vocational training, entrepreneurship development, digital marketing, web development, and employability skill-building, young people were provided with the tools and opportunities to pursue sustainable livelihoods. Alongside this, technical and financial support enabled youth-led businesses to grow, while engagement in global youth initiatives amplified their voices and leadership across broader platforms.

Our collective impact during the biannual period:

- **Skills Development:** Youth were equipped with essential employability, vocational, and entrepreneurship skills, including **623** trained in employability, **809** in vocational training, **717** in entrepreneurship, and **437** in business development services.
- **Digital Skills:** **112** young people completed web development, digital marketing, and graphic design training, expanding opportunities in the digital economy.
- **Employment Linkage:** **201** young people were connected with partners for employability skill development, and **128** were linked directly to employment opportunities.
- **Entrepreneurship Support:** **871** youth received technical and financial assistance to start or expand their own businesses, and **205** were supported to access gig platforms.
- **Youth Engagement:** **40** young people participated in global initiatives such as Youth Power, Youth Link Community, the National Youth Coalition, Talent Pool, and GO-Teach, strengthening youth leadership and global participation.
- **Other Initiatives:** Through the Learnio Advanced Digital Skills Training, **65** youths completed certification in digital marketing and graphic design, preparing them for freelancing and self-employment. Additionally, **26** youths were registered for business skills and cross-border mentorship through the ICDL/ICT4D initiative.



**Youth
Forum
at SACCO**

**"Youth Voices Stronger SACCOs-Leading
Today. Shaping Tomorrow"**

August 23, 2026 Addis Ababa



Humanitarian action

SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia continues to deliver critical humanitarian and recovery interventions across multiple regions, ensuring that crisis-affected communities receive lifesaving and sustainable support. Guided by the Humanitarian–Development–Peace (HDP) Nexus approach, our efforts connect emergency response with long-term recovery, resilience, and peacebuilding. This integrated approach ensures that interventions not only address immediate needs but also lay the foundation for sustainable development and social cohesion.

Strategic reach across crisis-affected regions:

- In Harar and Wollo, our lifesaving assistance reached nearly **38,853** individuals affected by drought, conflict, and harmful traditional practices. Through four core intervention areas, encompassing food security and livelihoods, health, protection, and multi-purpose cash, communities gained access to immediate relief and essential services.
- In Tigray, post-conflict recovery efforts continue to restore livelihoods and strengthen community resilience, reaching **40,336** individuals with support in health, education, protection, and livelihoods.
- Following the 2024 landslide in Geze Gofa, initial emergency response evolved into long-term recovery interventions. These include agricultural recovery, mental health, and psychosocial support, benefiting **4,191** individuals as part of our ongoing commitment to community rehabilitation.
- In Borena, where prolonged drought left thousands in need, **43,419** individuals received comprehensive assistance encompassing protection, health, nutrition, livelihoods, and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) interventions.
- Along the border areas of Oromia, Somali, and Afar, peacebuilding efforts are helping communities long divided by cross-border resource conflicts. A total of **2,264** individuals, representing **15.4%** of the Year 1 target (**19,720**) were reached, laying a strong foundation for accelerated impact in the months ahead.

Every intervention integrates multisectoral approaches, connecting education, health and nutrition, protection and GBV prevention, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), livelihoods, and multipurpose cash assistance.

SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia's humanitarian portfolio is not just about relief; it is about rebuilding lives, restoring social cohesion, and paving pathways to peace. Through integrated programming, community-based peacebuilding, and empowerment of youth and women, we continue to play a leading role in Ethiopia's humanitarian landscape, driving recovery and resilience in the most affected regions.

Providing critical humanitarian aid that restores hope and strengthens communities.



Championing the rights, inclusion, and wellbeing of children and youth through policy, partnerships, and strategic engagement.



Advocacy

In 2025, SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia marked a landmark achievement for the rights and wellbeing of young care leavers with the official launch of the National Minimum Care Leaving Standards, a policy framework that had been three years in the making. From situational analysis and policy gap assessment to extensive technical and financial support, this initiative brought together government partners, care institutions, and young care leavers' associations to ensure their voices guided the process.

Among these notable milestones, our advocacy efforts continued to advance broader child protection and inclusion priorities, and actively championed gender-responsive and inclusive climate policies during the Second Africa Climate Summit. Through these multi-level engagements, we continue to position child and youth wellbeing, gender equality, and environmental justice at the heart of national and regional policy dialogue.

Here are some of the key achievements in detail:

Impacting Policy and Regulatory Frameworks

- **National Minimum Care Leaving Standards:** Officially launched on June 11, 2025, by the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, the standards guide the preparation for leaving care and aftercare support for young people. SOS Children's Villages provided technical assistance, capacity-building, and consultative workshops to ensure that the perspectives of young care leavers informed every stage. The standards now enable government oversight of care institutions, define available social protection services, and promote a dignified transition to independent life.
- **Experience Sharing on Child Law:** SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia facilitated an experience-sharing visit to Kenya, allowing key stakeholders in Ethiopia, including representatives from the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice, and the House of People's Representatives, to learn from Kenya's legislative journey in adopting and implementing its Child Act.

Championing Rights and Inclusion

- **Advocating for Inclusive Climate Action:** SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia advocated for gender-responsive and inclusive climate change and green economy policies at the Second Africa Climate Summit (September 8–10), presenting a policy brief that emphasized the importance of gender equality-focused approaches.
- **Integrating Gender and Inclusion:** Through the Grow Equal: Her Right to a Sustainable Life project, a two-day national consultative workshop was held to strengthen gender and inclusion in climate and green economy policies, bringing together 35 participants from key federal and regional institutions fostering collaboration and shared accountability in inclusive policymaking.

Continuing the Momentum

Building on these achievements, SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia remains steadfast in advocating for policies that protect and empower children and young people. By engaging government agencies, civil society, and communities, we continue to strengthen systems that promote dignity, equality, and opportunity for every child and youth.

Sponsorship

The past six months have been both productive and inspiring as we continue our mission to ensure every child and young person grows up with the care, support, and relationships they need to thrive.

Here is a look at some of the highlights:

International Sponsorship: Strengthening Global Bonds

Our international sponsorship programme continues to foster meaningful connections between children and their sponsors around the world.

- Over **14,500** mid-year letters were prepared and shared from **878** children to their sponsors.
- All parcels and correspondence were carefully documented and delivered, with confirmation letters sent promptly.
- We managed departure notices and consent renewals efficiently and responded to every inquiry from our international office or sponsors without delay.

Local Sponsorship: Growing with Community Support

Local generosity continues to play a vital role in our work. Through a mix of face-to-face outreach, digital campaigns, and community events, we have seen encouraging growth:

- **412** new sponsorships were secured in just six months.
- **98** sponsors joined through exhibitions and local events.
- **48** new sponsors came through digital campaigns.

Today, we proudly count **1,453** active local sponsors, a powerful testament to how communities can come together to create lasting change for children and families.

Corporate Partnerships: Building Meaningful Alliances

Collaboration with the private sector has opened new doors for impact and innovation.

- We reached out to **20** corporations for partnerships and have already seen positive outcomes.
- Secured ETB **500,000** in funding from Oromia Bank.
- Formed new partnerships with Ethio Telecom and Tomoca Coffee.
- The Ethio telecom partnership led to the launch of a Tele birr payment option, making donations, both local and international simple, free, and accessible.

Several companies have also begun supporting child sponsorships, marking the start of what we hope will become long-term, purpose-driven collaborations. Together, we are building stronger systems of care and support for children without, or at risk of losing parental care. Every partnership, every sponsor, and every act of generosity brings us closer to a world where every child belongs and thrives.



*Every act of care today
creates pathways for
children's tomorrow.*



Safety, dignity, and protection are the foundation of every action we take.

Child and youth safeguarding

The first half of 2025 marked continued progress for the Safeguarding Department, with major efforts focused on risk mitigation, prevention, and promoting the safety and dignity of all programme participants. The department's work spanned Child and Youth Safeguarding, Adult Safeguarding, and Asset Protection, reflecting a comprehensive approach to protection.

A key highlight was the comprehensive safeguarding risk assessment conducted across multiple humanitarian and development projects. This in-depth process engaged staff and stakeholders to identify potential risks and develop targeted mitigation plans that are already strengthening project implementation and fostering a culture of proactive safeguarding.

In parallel, the 2025 Child and Youth Safeguarding Audit offered valuable insights into organizational strengths and areas for improvement. Based on the findings, detailed mitigation plans were developed to guide programme locations in enhancing their safeguarding systems.

To reinforce these structural efforts, the department carried out awareness and prevention initiatives, including sessions on the Child and Youth Safeguarding Regulation across several projects. New employees also received onboarding on safeguarding policies, ensuring shared responsibility from the start.

Important groundwork was laid for the upcoming Keeping Children Safe (KCS) audit, while the Code of Conduct was translated into Amharic and adapted for visitors and volunteers. The department also launched the new Anti-Corruption Regulation, with both in-person and online training's reaching staff nationwide.

Looking ahead, the focus will shift toward implementing mitigation plans from recent audits and expanding efforts in Adult Safeguarding and Asset Protection. By staying proactive in assessments and consistent in awareness, SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia continues to build stronger, safer systems that protect and empower everyone.

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**SAFEGUARDING IS NEVER FINISHED!
THERE IS ALWAYS SOMETHING MORE TO DO,
SOME WAY TO IMPROVE**

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Human resources and organizational development

The first half of 2025 marked a period of growth, advancement, and renewed momentum across SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia. With over 692 dedicated employees supporting the charity wing nationwide, the HROD Department led strategic initiatives that strengthened people, systems, and organizational culture, advancing leadership development, wellbeing, and accountability.

Key Achievements:

Strengthening Safeguarding and Governance

- Successfully onboarded a national ombuds person, aligning with federation standards and reinforcing the safeguarding framework while establishing a trusted and independent feedback mechanism for children, young people, and employees.

Organizational Structure and Workforce Management

- Revised the programme location organogram, ensuring greater role clarity, collaboration, and operational efficiency.
- Onboarded **32** new colleagues across locations and projects, adding new expertise and energy to mission delivery.
- Honored the retirement of **7** long-serving staff, celebrating their years of dedicated service.

Building Capacity and Leadership

- Rolled out a comprehensive training and development plan, delivering **27** capacity-building initiatives focused on leadership, humanitarian response, compliance, and local fundraising.
- Continued implementation of the female leadership development program and successors development program, empowering emerging leaders and promoting gender equity in leadership roles.

Promoting Employee Wellbeing and Engagement

- Established a well-being committee and launched mental health awareness campaigns, laying the foundation for expanded well-being initiatives.
- Enhanced employer branding through new testimonial videos and engagement efforts, reinforcing SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia as an employer of choice.

Looking ahead, the HROD team will continue advancing digital transformation, and expanding capacity-building and wellbeing initiatives to cultivate an engaged, capable, and motivated workforce that drives lasting impact for the children and communities we serve.

Driving organizational excellence through empowered people, strong leadership, and a culture of care.

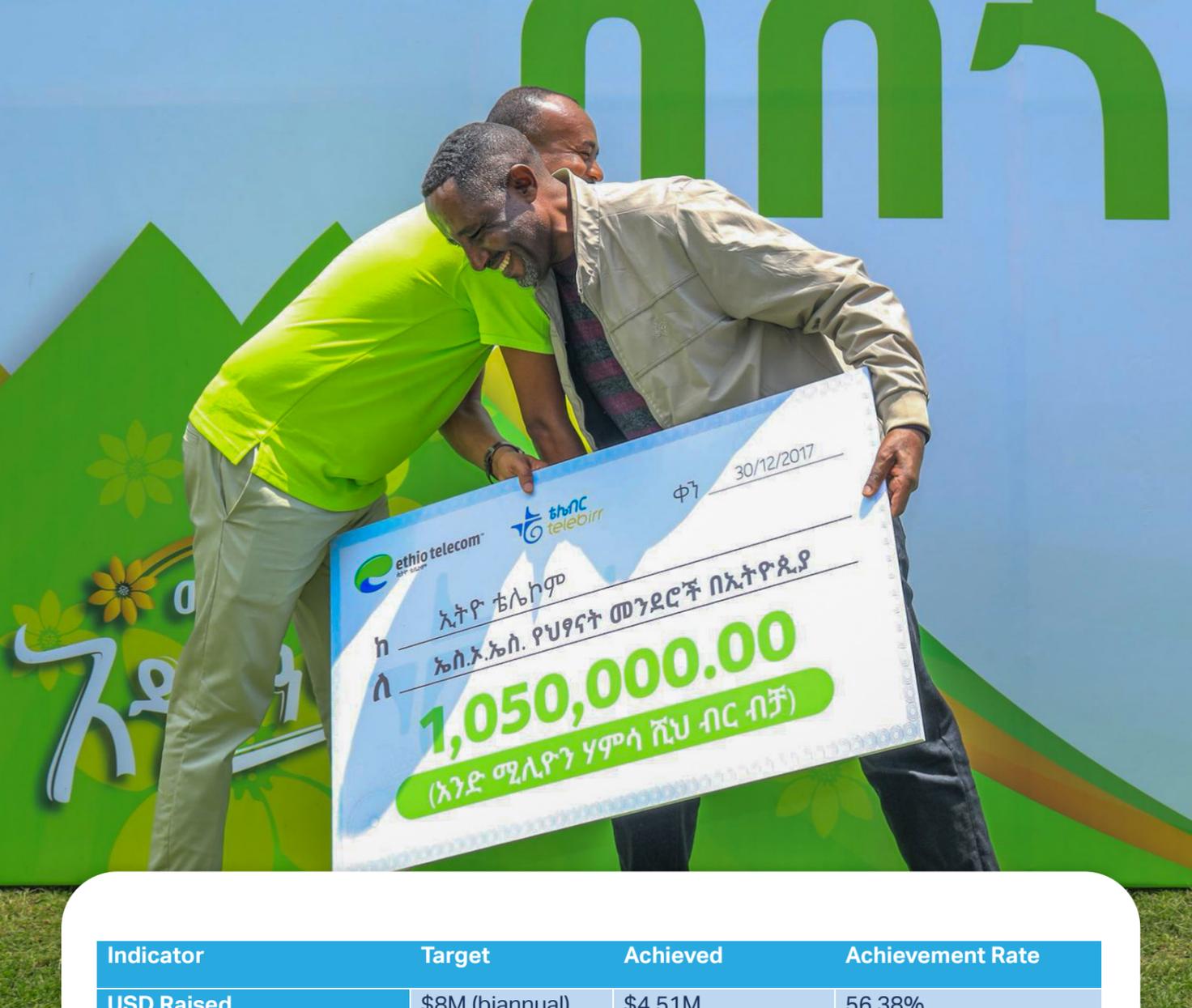


Institutional partnership development

In the first half of the reporting period, Institutional Partnership Development (IPD) efforts gained strong momentum, expanding the organization's reach, influence, and resource base. Through proactive engagement with donors and civil society organizations (CSOs), enhanced internal coordination, and focused capacity building, the organization has strengthened its position within the development landscape. These achievements reflect a well-rounded approach that integrates resource mobilization, strategic partnerships, and institutional learning to drive programmatic impact.

Key highlights:

- **Resource Mobilization:** Over **USD 4.5 million** secured during the first biannual period, representing **56%** of the biannual target.
- **Proposal Development:** A total of **18** concept notes and full proposals submitted across diverse thematic areas.
- **Cross-Functional Collaboration:** **13** proposals underwent joint review sessions, exceeding the target of **7** demonstrating improved coordination among technical, finance, MEAL, and programme teams, which enhanced proposal quality and responsiveness.
- **Capacity Building:** **25** staff trained on IPD business processes, with **100%** reporting satisfaction and **93%** noting improved capacity and confidence.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Formal engagement established with **7** CSOs, CHADET Ethiopia, Pestalozzi Children's Foundation, NEXUS Ethiopia, DSW, PHE, Siddartha Development Ethiopia, and Rejoice Africa, alongside effective collaboration with Hope for Justice and Plan International.
- **Donor Engagement:** SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia was recognized by UNICEF as a potential partner for Child Protection/GBV programming, with one concept note accepted under this framework.
- **Mapping Exercise:** Comprehensive profiling of **53** local CSOs and major donors completed to inform and refine the partnership strategy.
- **Platform Participation:** Active engagement maintained across **10** national and regional clusters and development platforms, reinforcing the organization's visibility and influence within coordination mechanisms.



Indicator	Target	Achieved	Achievement Rate
USD Raised	\$8M (biannual)	\$4.51M	56.38%
Proposals Submitted	8	18	135%
Proposals Reviewed	7	13	185.7%
Staff Trained	25	25	100%
Strategic Partnerships	3	7	233%
Mapping Reports	1	1	100%
Platform Participation	10	10	100%

In the coming months, the Institutional Partnership Development unit will focus on finalizing and validating the revised Grants and Partnership Strategy in collaboration with the leadership committee. Building on the current momentum, the team will deepen donor engagement, expand strategic partnerships, and co-create proposals with other non-profit organizations to foster joint impact. In parallel, the unit will closely monitor pending applications and prepare for accelerated project formulation and implementation once approvals are secured.

Building strategic alliances and mobilizing resources to advance sustainable impact for those we serve.



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Join us!

SOS Children's Villages in Ethiopia

