



*Vegetable garden for the green group - Hawassa, 2022*

## ***Interim Report***

**Project N° 1980-00/2019**

**Project title:** Socio-economic Empowerment of Children, Youth and their Families with Special Focus on Green Economy (**GREEN+ Project**)

<b>Contract partner in Austria</b>
Name: SOS Kinderdorf Österreich
<b>Local project partner(s) in Ethiopia</b>
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<b>Local project partner(s) in Uganda</b>

Name: SOS Children's Villages Uganda
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Name: SOS Children's Villages International, International Office Eastern & Southern Africa

<b>Country/countries: Ethiopia &amp; Uganda</b> Ethiopia (Hawassa, Mekelle) Uganda (Wakiso District (Katabi Town Council), Kabar District, Kamwenge District (Rwamwanja))	<b>Region/locality: East Africa</b>
<b>Duration from:</b> January 1, 2019	<b>To:</b> December 31, 2023
<b>Reallocation(s):</b> May 2020, Aug 2020, Sep 2021, Mar 2022, Mar 2023	Extension of programme until:
<b>Reporting period:</b> January 1 <sup>st</sup> – December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2022	<b>Date of presentation:</b> 30 June, 2022

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Date and signature

**Date, author(s) of report: 30 May, 2022**

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## List of Abbreviations

*ADA – Austrian Development Agency*  
*ADC – Austrian Development Cooperation*  
*CBHI – Community-Based Health Insurance*  
*CBOs – Community-Based Organizations*  
*CDOs – Community Development Officers*  
*CP – Child Protection*  
*CPC – Child Protection Committee*  
*CRs – Child Rights*  
*CSOs – Civil Society Organizations*  
*DAC – Day of African Child*  
*ESAF – Eastern and Southern Africa Region*  
*FDP – Family Development Process*  
*FSP – Family Strengthening Programme*  
*GAP – Good Agronomic Practices*  
*GBV – Gender Based Violence*  
*GDI – Gender Diversity and Inclusion*  
*HHs – Households*  
*IFD – international Family Day*  
*IGAs – Income Generating Activities*  
*IYD – International Youth Day*  
*IWD – International Women’s Day*  
*LRRD – Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development*  
*KIPs – Key Implementing Partners*  
*MA – Member Association*  
*M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation*  
*MHPSS – Mental Health and Psychosocial support*  
*NGOs – Non-Governmental Organisations*

*PfR – Parenting for Respectability*  
*SACCO – Saving and Credit Co-operative*  
*SAGE – Social Assistance for the Elderly*  
*SOS AT – SOS-Kinderdorf, SOS Children's Villages Austria*  
*SOS CV – SOS Children's Villages*  
*SOS CVI – SOS Children's Villages International*  
*SOS ET – SOS Children's Villages Ethiopia*  
*SOS UG – SOS Children's Villages Uganda*  
*SOPS – Standard Operating Procedures*  
*TOCI – Twerwaneho Orphans Community Initiative*  
*UWEP – Uganda Women entrepreneurship Programme*  
*VSLA – Village Saving and Loans Association*  
*WAD – World Aids Day*  
*YLF – Youth Leaders Forum*

## **Brief description of project progress (in German)**

Das GREEN+ Projekt zielt darauf ab, die sozioökonomische Stärkung von 2.800 Kindern und 400 Jugendlichen sowie ihrer Familien mit einem besonderen Schwerpunkt auf Green Economy zu unterstützen.

Nachdem die letzten beiden Implementierungsjahre 2020 und 2021 von zahlreichen Konflikten und Krisen geprägt waren – darunter die COVID-19-Pandemie, Naturkatastrophen sowie einer weiteren großen humanitären Krise in der Region Tigray (Äthiopien), sämtliche Projektaktivitäten am Standort in Mekelle zwischen Ende 2020 und Anfang 2023 fast vollständig zum Erliegen gebracht haben – haben die Projektteams **immense Anstrengungen** unternommen, um die **verlorene Zeit im Jahr 2022 wieder aufzuholen**.

Angesichts dieser Hürden sind die **Erfolge in Mekelle**, wo der **Nexus-Ansatz** zur Anwendung kam, von besonderer Beachtung. Darüber hinaus wurde der **Innovation Incubator** an allen Standorten gestartet und ist in vollem Gange. Auch die Komponente Knowledge Management und Learning hat weiter zum Kapazitätsaufbau beigetragen. Hier ist vor allem das Training zur Durchführung einer **Gender, Diversity and Inclusion (GDI) Analyse** zu nennen. Aller Voraussicht nach können nicht alle, aber die meisten Aktivitäten trotz aller Schwierigkeiten in den vergangenen Jahren nachgeholt werden, während wir uns bereits auf die nächste Phase der Strategischen Partnerschaft mit der ADA vorbereiten: das GROW EQUAL Projekt.

Trotz der Auswirkungen der weltweiten COVID-19 Pandemie und der globalen Wirtschaftskrise verzeichneten beide Länder einen **erfreulichen Wiederanstieg bei der Einschulung** von Jungen und Mädchen. In **Uganda** besuchen 86% der Jungen und Mädchen an den Projektstandorten **regelmäßig die Schule**, verglichen mit 65% bei Projektbeginn. Dies ist einerseits auf regelmäßige Kampagnen (etwa "back to school, stay, and complete") und andererseits auf den verbesserten Zugang zu finanziellen Mitteln durch lokale Spar- und Kreditgruppen (Village Saving and Loans Associations, VSLAs) zurückzuführen. Dank diesen Maßnahmen war es den Betreuungspersonen möglich, ihr Einkommen zu verbessern und so für die Schulgebühren ihrer Kinder aufzukommen. Auch in **Äthiopien** besuchen 95% der Kinder am

Projektstandort Hawassa regelmäßig die Schule, verglichen mit 72% zu Beginn des Projekts. Aus Mekelle liegen keine Daten vor, da die Schulen fast drei Jahre lang geschlossen waren.

Was den **Zugang zu Gesundheitsdienstleistungen** betrifft, so werden nun vermehrt sowohl präventive als auch kurative Dienste in Anspruch genommen. In **Uganda** konnten 86% der Familien sowohl präventive als auch kurative Gesundheitsdienste in Anspruch nehmen, verglichen mit 76% bei Projektbeginn. Während die ugandische Regierung vermehrt die öffentlichen Gesundheitszentren mit medizinischer Primärversorgung auszustatten versucht, hat das Projekt gezielt jene Familien unterstützt, denen der Zugang zur staatlichen Gesundheitsversorgung erschwert wurde. Im Rahmen des Projekts wurden häusliche Pflegedienste, Gesundheitsdienste in der Gemeinde sowie eine kontinuierliche Sensibilisierung für Gesundheitsförderung und Präventionsmaßnahmen durchgeführt.

In **Hawassa (Äthiopien)** wurden im Jahr 2022 72 Pflegekräfte (69 Frauen und 3 Männer) sowie 137 Kinder und Jugendliche (78 Mädchen und 59 Jungen) in das Community-Based Health Insurance Scheme (CBHI) aufgenommen, um Zugang zu medizinischer Versorgung zu erhalten. Eine große Herausforderung bei der Arbeit mit vulnerablen Familien ist es, eine Verhaltensänderung zu bewirken, da viele die Betroffenen nicht früh genug Gesundheitszentren aufsuchen, wenn sie oder ihre Kinder sich krank fühlen. Oft verlassen sie sich zu lange auf traditionelle Methoden – aus Geldmangel und/oder kulturellen Überzeugungen. Dies führt dazu, dass die Gesundheitsdienstleistungen nicht in Anspruch genommen werden, selbst wenn die Krankenversicherung durch das Projekt gedeckt ist. Aus diesem Grund kommt der Sensibilisierung und Bewusstseinsbildung entscheidende Bedeutung zu. Insgesamt waren in Hawassa 90% der Betreuungspersonen in der Lage, Gesundheitsdienste in Anspruch zu nehmen.

In **Uganda** folgen alle **Gemeindestrukturen (10)** einem systematischen **Prozess im Bereich Kinderschutz und Fallmanagement** bis hin zum Abschluss gemäß den von der ugandischen Regierung empfohlenen Kinderschutzverfahren. Während des Berichtszeitraums wurden deutliche Verbesserungen bei der Identifizierung, Meldung und Bearbeitung von Fällen verzeichnet. Sowohl in Entebbe als auch in Fort Portal wurden 72% der Kinderschutzfälle auf der Ebene der Gemeindestrukturen abgeschlossen (Quelle: Child Protection case books). In **Hawassa** waren die beiden **Kinderschutz-Komitees** in Zusammenarbeit mit dem *Ministry of Child Affairs* in der Region Sidama maßgeblich an der Bewusstseinsbildung, dem Management, der Meldung und der Reaktion auf Fälle von Kindesmissbrauch in der Gemeinde beteiligt. Infolgedessen wurden 36 Fälle (21 Mädchen) vom Komitee bearbeitet und aufgegriffen, darunter drei Mädchen, die aus der Kinderarbeit befreit werden konnten.

Während des Berichtszeitraums **konnten 241 Familien das Projekt verlassen**, weil sie Eigenständigkeit erlangt hatten (siehe Tabelle Abschnitt 1a). Dies bedeutet, dass diese Familien in der Lage sind, auf Grund verbesserter finanzieller Ressourcen die Grundbedürfnisse ihrer Kinder zu decken und sie in der Lage sind, eine angemessene Betreuung zu gewährleisten.

Im Bereich Knowledge Management und Learning wurde der Schwerpunkt daraufgelegt, die auf Grund der COVID-19 Pandemie verlorene Zeit aufzuholen. Die Aktivitäten zum Kapazitätsaufbau konzentrierten sich auf Schulungen und Coachings für die **GDI Analyse**, die Durchführung jährlicher Monitoring-Besuche, gemeinsame Supervisionen und die Bereitstellung von technischem Backstopping und Beratung durch zweiwöchentliche virtuelle Catch-up-Calls. Auf diese Weise haben die Projektmitarbeiter\*innen an den vier Programmstandorten (Hawassa, Mekelle, Entebbe und Fort Portal) die technischen Fähigkeiten erlangt, mit minimaler technischer Unterstützung GDI Analysen durchzuführen.

Wie jede andere Projektkomponente wurde auch die Umbrella Komponente des Projekts durch die COVID-19 Pandemie und den Krieg in der Region Tigray beeinträchtigt. Infolgedessen

wurden einige der physischen Treffen und Schulungen auf das letzte Implementierungsjahr verschoben. Die Auswirkungen der Pandemie in Verbindung mit der grassierenden Inflation führten dazu, dass viele Familien und Jugendliche arbeitslos wurden. Gleichzeitig stiegen die Kosten für die Projektaktivitäten drastisch. Das Risiko für die verbleibende Projektlaufzeit besteht darin, dass die steigenden Preise für Grundnahrungsmittel und andere Güter des täglichen Bedarfs die Durchführung der Projektaktivitäten erschweren.

Der bewaffnete Konflikt in der Region Tigray hat eine humanitäre Krise ausgelöst. Für GREEN+ bedeutete dies eine teilweise und vorübergehende Aussetzung der Projektaktivitäten und eine Verlagerung des Schwerpunkts auf lebensrettende Maßnahmen in Mekelle. Die Friedensabkommen, die in Südafrika und anschließend in Nairobi geschlossen wurden, ermöglichten die teilweise Wiederaufnahme der Aktivitäten in der Region Tigray.

## **Detailed description of *project* progress**

### **1. Project outcome achieved / discernible impact**

The GREEN+ Project aims to support the socio-economic empowerment of 2.800 children and 400 youth as well as their families with a special focus on green economy.

After the two very difficult years 2020 and 2021 with the COVID-19 pandemic and several other natural disasters occurring at different locations, and another huge humanitarian crisis triggered by the conflict in Tigray, which brought GREEN+ in Mekelle to an almost complete standstill between end of 2020 and beginning of 2023, **the project teams have made huge efforts to compensate for the lost time in 2022**. Given those huge hurdles, the **achievements in Mekelle**, by applying the Nexus approach, are outstanding. Furthermore, the **innovation incubator** finally took off in all locations and is in full swing. Equally, the Knowledge Management and Learning component has made big steps forward in capacity development, especially in **Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Analysis**. Probably not all, but most of the delays can be compensated in the remaining project period, while we are already preparing for the next phase of the Strategic Partnership with ADA: the GROW EQUAL Project.

Despite the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic and prevailing economic crisis, both countries registered increased **enrolment** of boys and girls and regular **attendance** at school. In **Uganda**, 86% of boys and girls in the project area are attending schools regularly as compared to 65% at the baseline. This achievement was partially attributed to the regular “back to school, stay, and complete” campaigns as well as increased access to financial resources from Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs) through which the caregivers were able to engage in viable Income Generating Activities (IGAs) to generate income and were thus able to pay school fees for children. Likewise, in **Ethiopia**, 95% of children enrolled in the project in Hawassa are attending school regularly compared to 72% at the baseline. On the other hand, no data is available from Mekelle owing to the schools’ closure for almost three years because of the insurgency.

Regarding access to **health care** services for caregivers, follow up visits indicated that more caregivers are seeking both preventive and curative healthcare services than before. In **Uganda**, 86% of the caregivers were able to access health care both preventive and curative compared to 76% at the baseline. The government of Uganda has made efforts to equip the public health centres at every sub-county with basic services to ease access to the general community hence the project only supported those caregivers who had difficulties in accessing health care. The project further conducted home-based care services, community health outreaches as well as provision of continuous awareness creation on health promotion and preventive measures. On the other hand, in Hawassa, **Ethiopia**, for the year 2022, 72 caregivers (69 women and 3 men), along with 137 children and youth (78 girls and 59 boys) were linked with Community-Based Health Insurance

Scheme (CBHI) to access curative medical service. Health seeking behaviour is a big challenges in the work with destitute caregivers. Often they do not visit health centres early enough if they or their children feel seek. There is a tendency to rely only on traditional methods for too long, sometimes because of lack of money, sometimes due to cultural beliefs, sometimes both. This leads to not accessing services of health centres, even if the health insurance is covered by the project. Therefore, awareness raising to change health seeking behaviour is an important aim of the project. Overall, in Hawassa 90% of the caregivers who are in need were able to access health services as and when required.

In **Uganda**, all community structures (10) follow a systematic **child protection** case management process up to closure as per the recommended Government of Uganda child protection procedures. During the reporting period, there was registered improvement of case identification, reporting and management. These community structures mastered the role of each stakeholder in responding to child protection issues and network with each other as well to deliver quality service. In both Entebbe and Fort Portal child protection cases closure was 72% at the community structures level (Source; Child Protection case books). Elsewhere in Hawassa, the two child protection committees in collaboration with the Ministry of Child Affairs in the two targeted communities of Sidama region were instrumental in creating awareness, managing, reporting, and responding to child abuse cases in the community. As a result, 36 (21 girls) cases were managed and responded to by the committee, a case in point were three girl children who were rescued from child labour.

During the reporting period 241 families exited from the project as result of **attaining self-reliance** (Refer to the Statistical Table 1 below). This implies that these families are able to cover basic needs for their children, caregivers have the ability to provide adequate care and families have increased family resources.

The focus of the **Knowledge Management and Learning** component was put on catching up on the lost time during the COVID-19 era. Capacity development activities were focused on gender analysis training and coaching, holding annual joint reviews, conducting joint support supervision and provision of technical backstopping and guidance through the bi-weekly virtual catch-up calls. As a result, project staff across the four programme locations (Hawassa, Mekelle, Entebbe and Fort Portal) have gained technical abilities to conduct Gender Diversity and Inclusion (GDI) analysis with minimal technical support.

Like any other project component, the umbrella core work was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Tigray war in Ethiopia. As a result, a couple of the physical meetings and trainings were deferred to the last year of project implementation. The ripple effects of the pandemic coupled with the rising inflation left many families and youth jobless. At the same time the cost of project activities sharply increased. The risk for the remaining project period is that the escalating prices on basic items continue to hamper the implementation of project activities.

The armed conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia has caused a humanitarian crisis. For GREEN+, it meant a partly and temporary suspension of project activities and a shift of focus to life-saving interventions in Mekelle. The peace agreements which took place in South Africa and thereafter in Nairobi allowed for partial resumption of activities in the Tigray region.

### a) Target groups reached

During implementation for the year 2022, the GREEN+ project was able to reach both direct and indirect beneficiaries. The direct beneficiaries are summarised in the table below.

SOS Location	Number of catchment communities	Number of families	Number of child beneficiaries	Number of child beneficiaries exited	Number of new Child beneficiaries	No. of adult beneficiary	No. of families exited
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		Total	New families	(0-17)		18+		(0-17)		18+		(0-17)		18+		F	M	
				F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M					
<b>Entebbe</b>	3	240	64	277	256	63	61	120	108	49	36	117	109	14	9	237	77	80
<b>Fort - Portal</b>	7	475	00	844	826	210	190	195	168	41	48	00	00	00	00	340	187	103
<b>Hawassa</b>	2	209	0	165	169	78	76	55	37	28	36	0	0	0	0	195	14	58
<b>Mekelle</b>	5	293	0	186	182	131	138	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	173	20	293
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1217</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>1472</b>	<b>1433</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>534</b>

**Table 1: Enrolled direct beneficiaries (Children, young people, and adults)**

The project reached out to other direct beneficiaries through the different interventions such as community dialogues, economic strengthening interventions, parenting sessions, innovation incubator projects. As a result, **14,160 beneficiaries (7,466 women/girls)**, namely 9,797 from Uganda (5,115 women/girls) and 4,363 from Ethiopia (2,351 women/girls) were reached directly in the reporting year 2022. On the other hand, **60,000 indirect beneficiaries** (42,000 in Uganda and 18,000 in Ethiopia) were reached through radio jingles, media broadcast and massive sensitization.

In addition, the project has reached out to 137 project team members (75 women, 62 men) including Key implementing partners' staff. This was through a series of capacity development engagements, review meetings, regular catch-up calls, support supervision and mentorship.

## **b) Activities implemented**

During the year 2022, major efforts were made in both Ethiopia and Uganda to accelerate implementation across the 6 result areas to cover the lost time during the second COVID-19 lockdown in 2021. The project specifically implemented activities geared towards developing the social-economic capacity of the caregivers, young people, community structures and Key Implementing Partners (KIPs). In addition, appropriate activities were developed and implemented to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Mekelle (Tigray region in Ethiopia). In addition, adjustments were made in both countries to enable specific advocacy interventions and strengthening child safeguarding among the community partners and stakeholders.

Main activities implemented across the two countries:

- Conducted family assessments during which family development plans were jointly established to respond appropriately to the individual needs of the families.
- Developed capacities of caregivers and young people in engaging in green economy related activities such as construction and usage of energy saving stoves, briquette making, tree planting
- Provided seed capital to caregivers and young people based on their individual business plans.
- Strengthened functional and financial capacity of Saving and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) and Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs).
- Supported families to access social protection services to respond to the effects of sharply increased costs of living due to escalating inflation and the aftermath effects of COVID-19
- Linked families to the CBHI Scheme in Hawassa
- Conducted capacity development sessions for marginalized women in confidence building, self-efficacy, public speaking.
- Conducted Positive Parenting training and psychosocial-support (PSS) sessions for parents/caregivers tailored on post COVID-19 recovery and addressing gender-based violence (GBV) and related cases

- Facilitated capacity development for critically vulnerable caregivers in basic business and entrepreneur skills.
- Conducted mental health and psychosocial support sessions to support women to overcome their trauma because of the Tigray conflict.
- Supported Mekelle University with a grant worth Birr 181,000.00 (equivalent of 3,085 euros) to produce one hydraulic briquette machine, one chopping machine and five parabolic solar cookers. From 15 youth (14 women) benefiting from this activity, 7 caregivers are already engaged in IGAs through parabolic cooking. 8 caregivers and youth are starting to use briquetting in the group whereby the working space is provided by the local government.
- Equipped young people with entrepreneur skills.
- Engaged vocational training centres and local artisans to train young people in various trades like photography/videography, driving, hair dressing, and basic computer skills based on the assessed market demand and individual interest of the young people.
- Conducted Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) training for young people.
- Constructed walking rails at school and trained caregivers and teachers on taking care of children with disabilities.
- Conducted humanitarian and rehabilitation interventions in Mekelle (Tigray)
- Graduating off families that attained self-reliance.
- Built capacity of the Community-Based Partners (CBOs) based on the annual organisational capacity assessment.
- Conducted capacity development for SOS CV staff, KIPs and community structures in community social protection services, including community-based rehabilitation, Child Safeguarding, GDI analysis, resource mobilisation and financial management.
- Conducted joint support supervisions across the three project site locations.
- Conducted joint reviews to reflect on the project progress.

The divergences in the planned schedule were attributed to the aftermath effects of COVID-19, escalating prices due to the global economic crisis and the conflict situation in Mekelle (Tigray). The Project team sought budget adjustments and re-allocations to be able to respond to the emergent needs of the project participants while for the rest of the project sites annual reviews, support supervision visits and weekly virtual catch-up calls ensured the project is on course.

## **c) Results achieved with regard to**

### **Capacity Development**

The GREEN+ Project continued to develop the capacities of the targeted project participants, groups, community structures, project staff and the communities at large across the two implementing countries, Ethiopia and Uganda. Different approaches were utilised such as trainings, community dialogue meetings, coffee ceremonies, community mass awareness raising and campaigns. The sections that follow highlight the results achieved through the various capacity development interventions.

#### **Capacity development for caregivers**

Capacity development for the caregivers has been at the forefront of GREEN+ project implementation with the aim of increasing their ability to take care of their children and young people. In Uganda, using the Parenting for Respectability (PfR) model<sup>12</sup>, caregiver's capacity to take care of their children was enhanced. Thus, parents reported improved child to parent, and good spousal

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<sup>1</sup> <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/10497315211056246>

<sup>2</sup> See also annexe 3A (presentation on PfR programme).

relationships due to the parenting sessions they participate in. Some of the participants shared testimonies as captured below.

*"I have now become more loving and supportive in my home. I am a changed person, more accommodative and communicate well with my husband and children", said Nalugwa Ritah.*

*Mr. Kato, said: "I learnt to be calm in my home and to communicate well. I used to be very tough on my wife and children, but now I am a changed man and my children are closer to me, Thanks to attending the parenting sessions."*

*Milly had this to say: "I learnt that children have a right to play and that they should be given time to play in order to develop their minds and bodies. Before parenting sessions I used to deprive my children of the time to play!"*

*"I learnt to set limits with my family members which was not the case before parenting skills training. I used to be so commanding in my home and I was always the boss, but now my children do their things without commanding them and I also listen to their views and opinions", said Fred Kirunda*

*"I learnt to be supportive in my household. At first I used to have fear of how the neighbours will take it when they see me doing household chores. But now I do household chores freely and I encourage follow men not to care about what others say, but to continue being supportive to the family", said Kayongo*

Similarly in Ethiopia, 122 caregivers (86 women) acquired skills in Positive Parenting while 93 most traumatized caregivers (90 women) received MHPSS sessions to help them overcome their trauma. The focus on MHPSS was to make them understand what MHPSS is and how they could access the services. Besides that, follow up and basic psycho-social support has also been directly provided for some caregivers. And 50 of them received individualized home-based psychosocial support to enable them cope with emotional stress and crisis situations

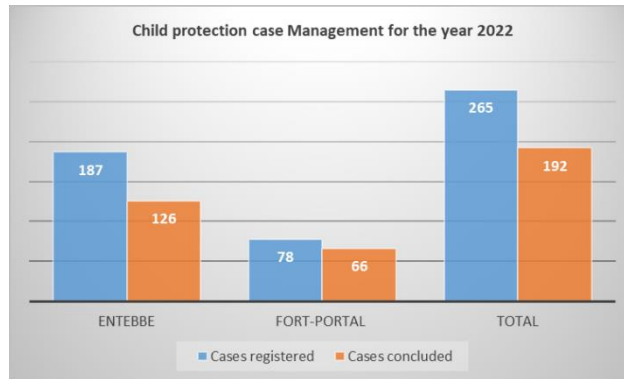


Additionally, the project team in Uganda held community sensitizations and community dialogues for caregivers on how to access social protection services, where after 1,153 caregivers (83% women) and 189 children (68% girls) accessed curative healthcare services with support through the project. The project team further strengthened preventive health education at family level through health education sessions, dialogues focusing on WASH related illnesses, family planning, malaria and COVID-19 prevention. In addition, the project was reaching out to 97 families who are living with HIV. Psychosocial support groups for the HIV+ beneficiaries have been intensified and linked to health centres in their community for continued support.

During the year 2022, there was an increase in school attendance by 14% in quarter 3 and 15.5 % in quarter 4 of the reporting period compared to Quarter 1 among the target group in Uganda. This is attributed to the back-to-school campaigns that were conducted to encourage parents to send their children back to school and to support vulnerable pupils to sit for their final exams. In addition, the team continued to create awareness on COVID-19 pandemic SOPs and provided home-based care to the infected children and families that enabled them to continue school (in Fort Portal 12 families were affected and all children put on medication before going back to their schools).

### **Child protection & GBV systems strengthened**

In Uganda, case management at community level improved. During the reporting period, at the community structure level 72% (192) out of a total of 265 registered cases were managed up to closure while the remaining 73 cases were referred to the police and other agencies for further management.



Additionally, the project focused on the reconstruction of the Sub-County Orphans & Vulnerable Children Committees (Child Welfare Committees) that coordinates other child protection and safeguarding committees/structures. Hence, all the targeted sub-counties in Fort Portal and Entebbe have functional child welfare committees that support prevention of and responding to child abuse cases. The project further provided capacity development in case management for the community structures including child support groups.

Similar commendable prevention and responses were made by Addis Ketema Sub-city Haikdar child protection committee in collaboration with Sidama Regional State and Child Affairs. A case in point were three girls who from Hawassa city who had been abducted and forced into child labour. They were reunified with their biological parents. Four cases of this nature were handled during the year 2022.

### Green initiatives

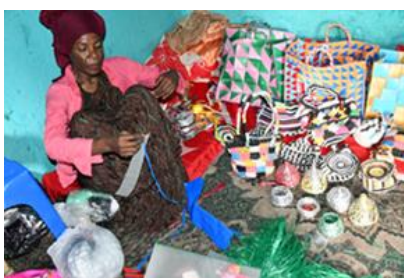
To strengthen the of green economy approach to support livelihoods in Uganda, the project trained 602 community members (70% women) in environmental conservation and environmentally friendly agricultural practices. As a result, community members in the targeted communities of Entebbe and Fort Portal further expanded their good agronomic practices and the portion of families implementing green initiatives increased to 90% of the targeted 700 families.



Sample Green petty business for one of the caregiver

Similarly, in Mekelle, in Ethiopia, 198 caregivers (194 women and 4 men) acquired skills in basic business and entrepreneurship. Out of the caregivers trained, 143 (139 women and 4 men) were able to start small scale IGAs (petty trading) such as giba (local fruit), groundnut, sesame, and vegetable selling. Monitoring visits assessments indicated their average income was Birr 100 per day/1.8 euro per day.

Likewise, in Hawassa, basic business and entrepreneurial training were rendered to 55 caregivers (54 women). After the training, they either scaled up their trade (35 participants) or started up a business (20 caregivers) such as petty trade like producing and selling injera (local bread), tea/coffee, vegetables, spices (Baltina), fish soup, goat rearing or making bags from plastic recycling.



*A woman producing handicraft  
from recycled plastic*

*Goat rearing*

*Vegetable gardening*

## Capacity development of the young people

Equipping young people with marketable skills is one of the aims of the GREEN+ project. In Uganda, for the reporting year 2022, 104 young people (76 girls and 28 boys) acquired vocational skills in different trades such as tailoring, hairdressing, motorcycle repair, metal fabrication, motor vehicle mechanics, solar installation/maintenance and tourism. 68 (34 girls) of them are practicing the skills attained and earning an average monthly income of 53 euros. These youth are now leading independent lives and are contributing to their families' household basic needs as well as supporting their siblings' education.



*Metal fabrication (Fort Portal)*

Similarly, according to the household assessment conducted among 222 youth (143 women and 79 men), 131 (59%) were engaged in green economic activities such as backyard gardening, agriculture, briquette making, paper bag production, solar usage, garbage sorting, tailoring, making re-usable sanitary pads or planting trees.

S/N	Type Trades	Male	Female	Total
1	Hairdressing	21	1	20
2	Motorcycle Repair	3	3	0
3	Metal Fabrication	6	5	1
4	Motorvehicle Mechanics	8	8	0
5	Eco-tourism	1	0	1
6	Phone Repair	1	1	0
7	Tailoring	14	1	13
8	Solar & Installation Repair	2	2	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>35</b>

*Table 2 – Vocational participants – Uganda 2022*

Likewise, in Hawassa (Ethiopia), 24 young people (15 girls and 9 boys) acquired practical skills in four fields; photography/videography, driver license for motorcycles (bajaj), hairdressing, and basic computer skills in 2022.

S/N	Type Trades	Male	Female	Total
1	Catering	0	0	0
2	Hair making	0	7	7
3	Driving License (Bajaj)	3	0	3
4	Photography/ & videography	3	1	4
5	Basic Computer	3	7	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>24</b>

*Table 3 – Vocational participants - Hawassa 2022*

In spite of very difficult access to land in Ethiopia (all land is state owned), 8 young people (5 girls and 3 boys) were able to engage in integrated household urban gardening using the very small available space in their respective households. The technical skills for the young people were blended with life skills to enable them to cope with challenging situations in life. Similarly, 5 caregivers acquired skills in fashion design and catering and are now able to cover the basic needs of their children.

Despite the successful training of 35 young people in Uganda and 24 in Hawassa in the reporting period, the career choice of students remains a challenge in that men tend to receive training that is traditionally male-dominated, while women learn a trade in what are often described as female-dominated jobs. In the last year of implementation, as well as in the next phase of the Strategic Partnership with ADA, special attention will be paid to ensuring equal access for men and women to all professions, and in particular to innovative green sectors.



### Capacity development of the key implementing partners (KIPS) and SOS staff

The success of a project is much dependent on the human resources that deliver the services to the programme participants and the community at large. Thus, to enhance the projects' sustainability as well as to increase the knowledge and skills of the SOS co-workers and the KIPs to implement the different interventions of GREEN+ project, the project team developed the technical capacity of the KIPs and staff at different levels.

As a result, the 7 KIPs in Ethiopia and Uganda demonstrated commendable progress in their governance systems, policy development, accountability, and financial management as well as programme implementation. This was attributed to capacity development sessions in financial literacy, child safeguarding<sup>3</sup>, resource mobilisation, case management, psychosocial support, exchange learning visits, annual organisational capacity assessments, regular backstopping and mentorship during project implementation and follow up on implementation of their capacity development plans.

This progress has been further demonstrated through approval of KIP registration renewal by the local authorities, improved KIP coordination and collaboration with other CSOs in the communities of operation, improved quality of programme implementation, accountability, and functionality of the board of 5 KIPs. Specifically in Uganda, KIPs and community structures have managed 54 child protection and GBV cases. 35% of these cases were followed up to closure and the rest are being followed up.

Type of Abuse	Girls	Boys	Total
Physical abuse	UG: 01 ET: 11	UG: 00 ET: 04	UG: 01 ET: 15
Sexual abuse	UG: 22 ET: 07	UG: 00 ET: 04	UG: 22 ET: 11
Neglect	UG: 17 ET: 01	UG: 05 ET: 05	UG: 22 ET: 06
Labour exploitation	UG: 00 ET: 02	UG: 01 ET: 02	UG: 01 ET: 04
others	UG 06	UG 02	UG 08
<b>Total</b>	<b>UG: 46 ET: 21</b>	<b>UG: 28 ET: 15</b>	<b>UG: 54 ET: 36</b>

**Table 4 – Type of Child Abuse Cases (Uganda & Ethiopia)**

<sup>3</sup> See also annexe for a child protection training report (annexe 3F).

Furthermore, the year 2022 saw a series of capacity development initiatives for the SOS workers and KIPs representatives. A case in point was the GDI analysis training conducted in Uganda facilitated by two gender expert consultants. The first phase commenced with a one-week face-to-face training in June 2022, followed by a coaching phase with practical assignments in the real working environment in each location. The second phase is planned for 2023 (again face-to-face followed by coaching) with the aim of enabling project staff to conduct a GDI analysis that will inform the new strategic partnership 2024 – 2028. The report (annexe 3B) captures the highlights of the proceedings for the training.

Additionally, other platforms and avenues aimed at strengthening the abilities of the projects team and partners, were done through provision of technical backstopping, feedback on reports, conducting joint support supervision and regular bi-weekly catch-up virtual calls.

In an attempt to respond to the critical situation in Mekelle in Tigray region, 20 SOS co-workers received training on the Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD)/ Nexus approach that has been developed in the ADA funded ReBuild project, to enable them to respond to the emergency, rehabilitation and development needs of the participants and the targeted communities at large.

### Innovation Incubator

To unleash the innovative ideas developed by young people and caregivers across the two countries, the innovation incubator group-based businesses picked momentum in 2022. In Uganda, twelve green groups received technical and financial support under the innovation incubator worth **15,090** euros to operationalise their innovative green economic ideas. The green initiatives ranged from briquette making, organic vegetable growing, fish cage farming, and apiary farming to crafts basket-making.



*Sample briquette products and energy saving stoves (Entebbe)*

In Hawassa, 24 women caregivers acquired both theoretical and practical knowledge and skills in making briquettes and energy saving stoves as well as making bags from recycled plastic waste. Of the 13 women who acquired knowledge and skills in briquette making, 8 of them established a briquette-producing group called “*Yenege Briquette Producing Association*”. Whereas 10 caregivers formed an energy saving stove group and 1 caregiver was engaged in handbags production from plastic waste. The project team is supporting the groups to acquire legal documents as well as securing a production place.

A detailed process description of the innovation incubators in Ethiopia and Uganda can be found in annex 3D and 3E respectively.



## Disability inclusion

Persons with disabilities were given specific consideration. In Ethiopia, the project team incorporated people with disabilities in different service provisions. For instance, 21 caregivers (16 women) who with different types of disabilities were supported with seed money to start businesses and 2 female youth with disabilities participated in SRHR training. As a result, 20 of them engaged in IGAs and are now able to cover their basic needs. Additionally, 1 female caregiver with disabilities was linked with an organization called RADO and received an adaptable toilet seat.

Equally in Uganda, to enhance the capacity of caregivers in identifying and supporting children with special needs, more than 5,000 people were reached during radio awareness on the rights of persons with disabilities. In addition, 201 participants (149 women) were equipped with practical skills to ensure that children with disabilities receive good nutritional supplements to keep them healthy and strong and help to boost their immune system; this was also a preventive measure for mothers at reproductive age to avoid malnutrition-induced malformation of the foetus.

## Advocacy

Advocacy is part of GREEN+ project and is a cross-cutting issue in all core thematic areas in both countries where efforts are made to influence policies and their implementation at different levels. In Uganda, advocacy focused on children to go back to school through back-to-school campaigns predominantly at the community level. Additional mass campaigns were done through radio, hence reaching out to 14,000 people, complemented by school dialogues with 264 children (191 girls). As a result of these awareness campaigns, the schools registered an increase in the enrolment of learners from 1,390 (792 girls and 598 boys) to 1,470 (842 girls and 628 boys). Discussion with children indicated that they had lost interest in schooling after the long stay at home during COVID-19 era.

In addition, there was improved participation of children and young people in the affairs of their community and school; from 119 that participated in 2021 to 316 children and youth in 2022. 67 children (26 boys and 41 girls) participated in the children's parliament where they aired their views on issues that affect them and 212 (77 boys and 135 girls) participated in the Day of the African Child commemoration. Similarly, 31 children are engaging in different clubs at school such as Debate Club 18 (10 girls and 8 boys), 7 in the Environment club (4 girls and 3 boys) and 6 in the Drama Club (3 girls and 3 boys).

Regarding increasing access to health care services at the community level, in Uganda there is a welfare fund in each VSLA group which members can access to respond to the health needs whenever need arises. The project has intensified on preventive health to reduce the need for curative services and ongoing awareness for the establishment of a self-managed community health initiatives by VSLA groups and community structures in Fort Portal. In addition, 36 participants (F 33) were equipped with practical skills to ensure that children with disability receive good nutritional supplements to keep them healthy and strong and help boost their immune system; it was also a preventive measure for mothers in the childbearing age against giving birth to children with disability.

In addition, during International Women's Day, commemoration, the project advocated for gender equality, putting role model men at the forefront as a grassroots level strategy to engage men as advocates for gender equality within the community.

Due to the massive awareness creation on child protection, 11 child support groups were established in the targeted communities of Karangura and Kicwamba sub-counties. Likewise, efforts were made to build the capacity of the communities in advocating for the rights of children both in Entebbe and Fort Portal. The focus was put on case identification and reporting, choosing person of trust and referral pathways. As a result, 265 abuse cases were identified, reported and managed with in these communities.

Elsewhere in Ethiopia, in association with partner CBOs, partners and other service providers advocated for child protection, green economy and environmental protection, gender equality and social inclusion. In line with this, the project supported project participants and specifically women to take part in different forums to amplify their voice on these matters. Through community conversation over coffee ceremony events, the issues of inclusion of persons with disabilities were raised and discussed among the communities. Women project participants were empowered to report domestic violence issues or any other cases of abuse. Both women and men were trained on Positive Parenting, GBV prevention and response as well as on holding open dialogues with their respective partners.

Likewise, the project organized Child Safeguarding and Gender equality campaigns that attracted different stakeholders at different levels and held them accountable regarding child protection and promote gender equality. Similarly, in every community, child protection committees were established, serving as dedicated advocates for children's rights and acting as proactive forces in safeguarding their well-being.



In Mekelle, the GREEN+ project advocated for and introduced urban gardening as a coping strategy responding to food shortage among the target families and the community at large. Following this initiative, the regional government of Tigray broadcasted in the wider Tigray communities to practice urban gardening for improved food security in every household of the region. As a result, SOS CV Mekelle was appointed by the local government to be part of the urban agriculture technical cluster meeting. Being member of the cluster, the GREEN+ project team was able to influence the local government and other NGOs to replicate this best practice example in urban gardening and other livelihood activities. This further created an avenue for both the local government and non-governmental organizations to consider SOS CV Mekelle to be a partner of choice. As a result, GREEN+ project started to work in partnership with a number of organizations such as Mekelle University, WEFORREST, Tigray Bureau of Agriculture and rural development, Tigray Biotechnology Institute, REST, and other private green initiatives.

### Cooperation with local partner(s)

In cognizant of the value of partnership, SOS Austria and IOR have strong working relationship with the implementing Member Associations (MAs) in Ethiopia and Uganda. This strong collaboration has contributed to the realization of the planned project results as well as working as a platform for sharing working practices which are progressively being cascaded to the ESAF region member countries. A case in point is green economy which is taken up increasingly by other countries or the GDI analysis which is taken on as a mandatory activity in the upcoming projects within the ESAF region.

Both SOS Uganda and SOS Ethiopia work through implementing partners and community structures as well as like-minded organisations which include government and non-governmental organisations. In this cooperation with local partners SOS CV is providing operational and technical backstopping and support on strategic organizational development of those partners.

The relationship with partners comes along with strengths and weaknesses of which some are listed in the table on the next page:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	MITIGATION MEASURES	RECOMMENDATIONS
Rooting the GREEN+ project into the community and enhancing ownership	Dependency syndrome of some KIPS and community structures which compromises on their growth and future continuity	Focus on empowerment of the KIPs reduce dependence syndrome	Work with existing community-based partners support them to strengthen their systems.
	Some local leaders are not cooperative. and committed	Use of community dialogue approach	Integrate the policy dialogue approach into programming
	Human rights abuses and this affects programme progress.	Strengthen safeguarding at institutional and community level	Child safeguarding integrated into programming
Well established working relationship between KIPs and SOS.	Governance is still a challenge characterised by insufficient involvement of the board in some KIPs. The team has continued to build their capacity to ensure the board supports CBO growth.	Capacity building of the board management with focus on governance	Work with the existing community-based partners and conduct annual OCA and follow up on the actions
	Limitations in financial and other material resources	Conducting training and mentorship resource mobilisation	Focus on community resource mobilisation
The working relationship between SOS and KIPs is getting stronger	Founder syndrome that may limit the growth of the CBO. However, the project team has laid focus governance to counter the problem.	Guide KIPs on roles segregation	Focus on effective leadership and governance of the KIPs
	Limited commitment from some KIPs / CBOs which compromise growth	Mentorship and coaching and intensify follow-ups	Terminate KIPs who are not committed to their work
Government departments are very supportive	Some local leaders give high priority to political interests which may paint a different picture before community of the project being partisan	Remind	Remind the government of their roles as duty bearers. Empower rights holders to claim for their rights
	Some local government officers still overwhelmed by needs of the community but with very small budget.	Community resource mobilisation	Adapt Public- private partnership strategy

*Table 5 – Strengths and Weaknesses in cooperation with local partners*

## Cooperation with other organisations: synergies, information exchange

Creating synergies with other government departments and non-government development agencies is one key strategy used by the project team to realise the planned results. In both Ethiopia and Uganda, the project works with technical organisations, institutions and universities to get technical support. In doing so, the project in both counties is able to implement relevant interventions to address emergent issues across board, for example inclusion of persons with disabilities at the family and community levels, green economy, gender equality or youth development.

In Uganda, SOS Uganda has a close working relationship Makerere University Child Development Centre. The later designed a parenting model commonly referred to as Parenting for Respectability (PfR) which has been instrumental in improving the parental care and reducing gender-based violence not only in project targeted families, but in the communities at large (refer to parents' testimonies in chapter 1c – capacity development for caregivers).

In Ethiopia, the project collaborated with the sub-office gender, children, and women of the sub-city in mainstreaming gender in the target communities via a jointly established gender network. Further, the partnership developed with the economic department of Semen sub city in creating green businesses and supporting youth employability. To enhance green practices, the project team established partnerships and collaboration with government bureaus that have similar focus areas such as the Tigray Biotechnology Centre, Bureau of Agriculture, Tigray Agricultural Institution, Agricultural Transformation Agency, Woreda Agriculture Office and Mekelle University. GREEN+ project staffs on regular basis attended the urban agriculture weekly technical meeting and established different collaborations with the participants. As a result, the GREEN+ project was able to acquire above 146,000 broccoli, spinach, lettuce, chilli, sweet potato and cabbage seedlings from Tigray biotechnology centre and distributed them to caregivers and youth.

The urban gardening initiative in Mekelle stands as a remarkable example of successful synergies, particularly its impact on local government and the development of exchange platforms. This initiative brought together community members to engage in urban gardening practices, fostering sustainable food production, environmental consciousness and social cohesion.

The success of the urban gardening initiative in Mekelle led to increased collaboration between the local government and the community. Recognizing the value of such initiatives, the local government actively supported and promoted urban gardening by providing resources, infrastructure, and policies conducive to its growth. This collaborative approach not only strengthened the relationship between the government and the community, but also showcased the power of partnership in addressing local challenges.

## Networking and co-operation with relevant stakeholders

In both Ethiopia and Uganda, the project has established very good working relationships with the respective local government, KIPs, CBOs and other mandated government sectors at ministry, district, and lower-level structures. The networking and cooperation with local authorities enabled the project to be accepted and rooted in the targeted communities of operation. The relationship with mandated ministries such as the Ministries of Gender and Child Welfare not only created avenues for technical backstopping, but is also fostering the relationship between SOS and the Government. As a result, SOS has been able to lobby at the relevant government departments for provision of quality services to the targeted families and the communities at large. In both countries, the project often created opportunities and platforms for community-based partners and other relevant stakeholders to discuss and exchange on topics like child protection or gender equality.

In Uganda the project team engaged the district technical teams, in particular the community Development Officers and sub-county Chiefs, to access different services from government such as SAGE (Social Assistance Grant for the Elderly), YLF (Youth Livelihood Fund), UWEP (Uganda Women

Entrepreneurship Programme) for the programme participants to have knowledge about, access to and benefit from these government programs. In Ethiopia, SOS CV was instrumental in establishing the Hawassa City level green network, where all government and non-governmental organizations that are working on green economy and environmental protection take part. The network serves as platform for information exchange and sharing good practices. The project also has good relationships with other non-governmental organizations operating in Hawassa city, such as Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia where technical support is sought in regards to Sexual and Reproductive Health.

In both Ethiopia and Uganda, the project team have participated in coordination meetings with like-minded organizations that operate within the same area with a focus on improving service delivery for marginalized children through enhanced referral mechanisms. The project further promoted joint activities related to child protection by facilitating case conferencing where all networks and child protection actors come together and develop action plans for complex cases. Similarly, in Mekelle, the GREEN+ project worked with relevant local government offices and bureaus in the areas of green practices and socio-economic empowerment of vulnerable HHs.

### **Systematic knowledge management**

SOS CV globally is committed to build a knowledge and skills base that can be shared within and outside the federation. For this reason, the SharePoint platform for GREEN+ created and nurtured collaboration and knowledge sharing amongst the project teams. On this platform project related materials are shared and accessible to all. Further sharing has also been facilitated through “Teams” meetings, a case in point was the sharing on the innovation incubator process and on PfR, an approach piloted in Uganda and then shared with the Ethiopia and IOR team. This enhanced understanding of the approach to benefit the implementation of the innovation incubator and Positive Parenting. Furthermore, the GREEN+ project team conducted periodic assessments that are crucial for planning and implementation of the project. These include but are not limited to rapid assessments on emergent situations such as the Tigray conflict to determine the family needs and success and best practice tracking.

In Ethiopia, to bridge the gap observed in CBOs on resource mobilization, a strategic plan was developed by an external consultant. This helped the partners to develop a three-year resource mobilization plan, which was then broken down to an annual plan. Once the first draft was prepared, a detailed discussion during a validation workshop with respective CBO leaders was held. During the session, the consultant presented the strategic plan of each CBO in detail. Comments for further improvement were given. The CBO Egnaw Legna was able to raise resources in kind and in cash. It managed to collect exercise books (74) used closes equivalent to 7000 ETB, and 7000 ETB cash from local community and distributed it to vulnerable children and caregivers. In the same manner, Gebeya Dar CBO raised 14,400 ETB from newly convinced members to the charity wing.

### **Added value of programme approach**

The Knowledge Management and Learning component in GREEN+ (aka Umbrella) is the core instrument linking the implementing teams in Ethiopia and Uganda in their joint capacity development effort. Moreover, new approaches piloted and tested in both countries are spreading even beyond the project and the implementing countries over to the wider ESAF region. Basically, the advantages of the program approach can be summarized under 4 key aspects:

- **Joint capacity development:**

In 2022 the most important joint capacity development initiative was the GDI training, followed by a coaching phase. Not only during the face-to-face training, but also in the rich discussions along the coaching phase, using a Teams platform specifically created for that purpose, the teams benefitted from the joint reflections, sharing their different experiences while implementing their assignments, and inspiring each other with ideas on how to overcome difficulties in the application of the process. The

interactive learning-training-coaching approach provides a better chance to link theory to practice right away, and through that, is promising to improve capacities a more sustainable and long-lasting way.

- **Experience sharing and replication of models:**

Joint monitoring visits, annual review meetings, joint capacity development initiatives and virtual exchange platforms offer opportunities to share experiences about day-to-day implementation, new approaches (e.g., PfR), challenges and ways to overcome those. In the past we have seen several occasions, where one team took on board the approach used by the other team, adapted it to their individual context and walked with it successfully.

- **Multiplier effects in the region:**

The example of green economy has become quite famous and prominent in the wider ESAF region and even in the federation. The number of projects taking up environmental protection, sustainable income generation, renewable energy sources, environmental protection and alike is significantly rising within the federation and more and more member associations are asking to learn more about our experience in that field.

PfR, a methodology and a process that was developed in Uganda at the Makerere university and piloted in GREEN+, is about to be rolled out to Ethiopia and later on probably also to the wider ESAF region.

- **Future opportunities to learn from each other:**

GREEN+, like any other project, is operating in a constantly changing environment. This is also true for the legal context. While advocacy has been implemented in Uganda for quite some time, this was not possible in Ethiopia until recently. However, with a new window opening there, the Ethiopian team can easily take on approaches, methods, strategies used by Ugandan team for years (e.g. policy dialogue) and adapt and apply them to their context.

In the upcoming GROW EQUAL project, a joint advocacy strategy is being developed, that will address not only the local and national level, but also the regional up to the continental level, focussing on equal opportunities for women and girls in the green economy sector.

As laid out above, using the programme approach, the two MAs (SOS Uganda and SOS Ethiopia) with the technical support and guidance from the Regional Office cross functional teams (programmes, Finance, Advocacy and Gender and SOS Austria benefit from knowledge transfer at several occasions. During the reporting period 2022 the programme steering team organised joint weekly virtual meetings to share regular updates, held joint review meetings, joint monitoring visits and joint trainings aimed to foster learnings from each team aimed at delivering quality results.

## **2. Lessons learned / outlook**

### **Experience from implementation of project**

In 2022, lessons have been picked along the way, arising from the practices, observations and challenges. The key lessons include the following captured in the table below.

Type	Topic	Lesson learned	Task	Person responsible	Status	Comments
<b>Good practice</b>	Working with community structures	Engaging community structures in follow up of households alongside KIP staff ensures reach to all families	Train community structures in home visit tools (FDP, monitoring, tools, WASH tools)	Project Officers	In progress	Community Structure members live in the same communities and can be of good support when engaged
<b>Good practice</b>	Working with other CSOs through collaboration & networking	Resources are brought in a pool and this reduces costs of organizing events, It is a collective voice for advocacy and reaches more caregivers, children, and young people	Continue working with the civil society network and bring advocacy agenda on the table	FS Coordinator	Ongoing	Many children women, and young people were reached during the different national & international calendar events (IWD, IFD, DAC, WAD, IYD) jointly held with CSOs and local government
<b>Good practice</b>	Establishment of VSLA+ (child fund)	Children's well-being has improved for the families that have joined the initiatives which reduce the health risks of children	Ongoing support to the group for continuity & engage others to enrol.	Project Officers	Ongoing	Cascading lessons learned from parenting to a wider community and social support
Good practice	Briquette production	Linking with government structure for innovative green initiative.	Lobbying and supporting caregivers to engage innovative & green IGA	project officers	Ongoing	Innovative initiative needs the commitment of all concerned bodies.

<b>Challenge</b>	Increasing living cost	Fast change management to mitigate the challenge	Discussion with caregivers on how to quickly adapt to the hardships	Project officers	Based on situation of each caregiver	It supports caregivers to tackle economic shock
<b>Good practice</b>	GDI coaching Approach	To instill the practice, use of accompanying coaching approach is necessary, yielding better results than just a one off training	A coach phase followed the GDI analysis training	GDI consultants	Ongoing	Project staff were able to learn the GDI analysis through practice
<b>Good practice</b>	Emergency programming during the conflict	It is possible to bring about positive changes during difficult circumstances if humanitarian professionals and experts joined their effort together	Nexus approach in Mekelle	FS Programme Coordinator	In progress	It is very possible to support families and children in difficult situations. To do this, courage, strong commitment, trust, sense of ownership, humanity and integrity are the most important values that every humanitarian worker should have during any circumstance.

*Table 6 – Lessons learnt*



## Outlook

GREEN+ project across the two countries will continue to focus on strengthening the KIPs, community structures such as role model men, child protection committees who are obliged to interface directly with the families in order to safeguard continuity of project outcomes. Enhancing collaboration with mandated stakeholders is a vital resource for ensuring the continuation of operations. Emphasis will be put on the scaling up the innovation incubator intervention so that more groups and individuals benefit.

Since the project is heading towards the fifth year of implementation, the focus of the remaining period will be to tie the loose ends, accelerate implementation across the 6 result areas and ensure that the intended results are realized. Providing targeted support to families that was earmarked for exiting the project will be one of the priorities. Similarly extra attention will be given to KIPs and community structures majorly focusing on the remaining functional gaps and enhancing the financial sustainability.

Regarding the targeted families and communities, the project envisages 85% families exiting the project when they are self-reliant, which implies, they will be able to access basic services independently. Those caregivers will have the ability to provide quality care to their children and young people. The families will have increased their resources as well through operational IGAs. Similarly, communities will have a functional child protection system in place.

Following the GDI analysis training, the project teams are now working together along with consultants in the coaching phase in conducting a GDI assessment aimed at facilitating initiatives for marginalized groups to participate in decision-making processes. This will enable the project to identify the barriers hindering effective participation of marginalized groups in decision-making and seek to address them. The skills attained from the GDI training will also be utilized to push the Gender Marker II agenda in the upcoming five year strategic partnership phase.

While some activities planned for 2023 within the Knowledge Management and Learning component have already been implemented at the time of writing of this report (e.g. GDI analysis training and coaching (ongoing); exchange visit to Austria focusing on GBV and VAC; training on results oriented report writing; training on financial management for non-financial staff; advocacy training and coaching (ongoing) focusing on gender and climate change;) others, mainly geared towards building necessary capacity for the next phase, are planned for the second half of the year (e.g. a general gender training for new staff to bring everyone at the same level; training and coaching on action research; documentary on innovation incubator).

In Uganda, environmental conservation will continue to be the focus area in the community and given priority by every stakeholder that interacts with programme participants and the entire community. The team will continue to focus on green practices and advocate for planting more trees. The last year of implementation, one of the KIPs, TOCI-Uganda (*Twerwaneho Orphans Community Initiative*), will be supported to establish a glass recycling enterprise mainly targeting girls and survivors of GBV. Similarly, focus will also be on operationalizing the CBHI and working closely with the groups who have embraced it to register its success and lessons learned for replication to other groups and the wider community.

On the other hand, in Ethiopia, Hawassa project will focus on consolidating efforts on innovation incubator such as energy saving stoves, support caregivers to implement their business plans, exit families from the project and organize graduation ceremonies. In addition, using the new budget adjustments of 2022, the project will also provide food items for families severely affected by the inflation. The project will also start an advocacy intervention aiming at strengthening the government's child protection system.

In Mekelle, Tigray region, the project will continue with the nexus approach in 2023 with a focus on life saving and rehabilitation interventions such as providing emergency food support, cash-transfers to target families, contribute to house rent expenses and psychosocial support such as counselling and follow-ups. In Mekelle, the sudden eruption of conflict and political instability highly affected the

implementation of the project and became the major bottleneck to attain medium and long-term sustainability of the project. Thus, additional funding, resources, and relevant interventions are needed to compensate for the damage in the region in general and the target community in particular.

### 3. Challenges encountered and modifications

The year 2022 along with the preceding years 2020 and 2021 came with challenges that obviously affected the project implementation. These challenges included among others the COVID-19 pandemic, the conflict in Northern Ethiopia and high inflation. The section below explores the major challenges and the coping mechanisms applied.

**The aftermath of the global pandemic of COVID-19:** While the spread of COVID-19 subsided and many countries opened their economies and removed all the restrictions, the aftermath effects of COVID-19 traversed every country and community, and the effects were diverse varying from one country to another. Globally, the impact of COVID-19 is still a threat in community as the viral sickness is still prevalent and all citizens are mandated to be alert. The economic and social impact is still prevailing. Hence, budget re-allocations and adjustments were done to respond to the emergent needs of the project participants. Similarly, some actions were postponed to the end year 2023. Despite this acceleration plans/strategies were developed that led to the successful implementation of the project to 90%.

**Political instability in Mekelle:** The civil strife in Mekelle did not allow the GREEN+ project to proceed as planned. After stalling every economic activity such as business banking, communication, and transport, project implementation became practically impossible. The Tigray emergency coupled with the difficulty in communicating with the team in Mekelle, led to major challenges for monitoring the project progress. Under the given situation it is unlikely to achieve the overall targets of the activities, outputs, and the outcome at the project location Mekelle until the end of the GREEN+ project.

The project implementation process has been confronted with the challenges directly resulting from the conflict in Tigray. The conflict made the implementation of the project more challenging through closing of banking systems, communication blackouts, and lack of transportation systems affecting the implementation of the project in 2022.

Though a big part of the solution could only be solved politically by the local and federal government of Ethiopia, the project team tried to minimize the vulnerability of target children and caregivers via applying various techniques as highlighted below:

*Summary of preliminary findings of the Rapid GDI in Mekelle:*

- *Girls' and women's workload per day increased from 16 to 20 hours.*
- *Participation of women and girls in paid activities decreased from 87.5% to 39% during crisis.*
- *The crisis negatively affected women's decision-making power in male headed households*
- *Access to health services is almost impossible (lack in financial resources and non-functioning facilities).*
- *Latrine facilities are reportedly not safe; neither separate toilets for men and women, nor locks or lights*
- *No water and no access to menstrual hygiene*
- *86% girls/women with no access to sanitation material like laundry soap, body soap, etc.*
- *20.3% of girls/women report cases of PSHEA during the crisis (dark figure probably way higher)*
- *97% of respondents indicated increased security concerns since the emergency.*
- *Freedom of movement highly restricted due to cost of transportation (80%) and security concerns (70%).*
- *Prime needs: 1. Food, 2. health care services, 3. shelter*

- Created harmonious partnership with local partners/service providers and suppliers who provided the project team with goods and services in advance. Payment was done as soon as the project received its monthly cash delivery from SOS National Office through the World Food Programme (WFP) Humanitarian Flight Service.

- The project team made an agreement with target families, youth, and children to attend different kinds of trainings even though transportation allowances were not covered. However, the team also made an agreement with hotel owners who could provide different services such as refreshments, lunch and hall rent expenses.
- In addition, the project team made an agreement with local vegetable seedlings producers and suppliers like individuals, the Tigray Biotechnology Institute and Bureau of Agriculture to supply different kinds of seeds, seedlings, and technical supports. The seeds and seedlings were provided to the targeted caregivers who were able and committed to engage in integrated household gardening using vertical, plastic, and small space gardening to reduce their food insecurity.
- The project staff together with community volunteers moved on foot for family follow-ups and monitoring as a solution to the transportation and communication challenges.
- Introducing buddy system among target caregivers and community volunteers was also another solution to share information and ease the transportation problem<sup>4</sup>.

The proposed solutions enabled the project team to continue the implementation of the project activities and minimize the vulnerability of target children and families in Mekelle.

**High Inflation and escalated fuel prices:** As a consequence of the COVID-19 aftermaths and the conflict in the Tigray as well as war in Ukraine on a global level, both implementing countries faced high inflation rates in 2022. For instance, in Uganda saw an enormous rise in fuel costs in 2022 that resulted in increased cost for all essential goods and services. This affected the participating families in a way that school fees for children doubled, costs for school material increased while the income remained at a low level. Consequently, this also affected the budget and other activities which led to budgetary adjustments and reducing the frequency of field activities. For example, cost of training for a single person for a day in a community increased from 2.4 euros to 6 euros.

The situation further increased pressure of demand from programme participants to stabilise their incomes, yet with limited funds to enable to project team to cover every aspect of the participants' needs. However, the project team continued to encourage them to work in groups. Others were referred to the respective community development offices for possibilities of benefitting from the government social protection services and grants.

Likewise in Ethiopia, sky rocketing price of goods and services adversely affected the implementation of project activities. The project team strived for managing activities in a cost-effective way as much as possible.

#### **Slow processes at local government level**

In addition, in Hawassa, the lengthy process to secure licenses for newly organized association of caregivers entailed difficulties. Those groups were organized to engage in innovative and environmentally friendly business (briquette production). The group members, GREEN+ project team and partner CBOs developed mitigation measures to cope with the situation.

Lastly, the turnover, and busy schedules of the government officials remained a challenge to respond swiftly to all arising matters.

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<sup>4</sup> The buddy system is a collaborative arrangement where individuals are paired up or grouped together to provide support, assistance, and information sharing. In this context it involved pairing caregivers in need with community volunteers. In doing so, caregivers could benefit from the knowledge, guidance, and practical assistance provided by the volunteers. Additionally, the buddy system helped to alleviate transportation issues by having volunteers available to assist caregivers in accessing necessary services, such as medical appointments, grocery shopping, or other essential tasks. Volunteers may offer transportation support by accompanying caregivers or helping them navigate transportation options within the community.

## 4. Risk Management

Monitoring and finding appropriate mitigation and steering measures was a key concern throughout the implementation of the GREEN+ project to ensure that all foreseeable risks are managed effectively. At the onset of the project, no unforeseen risks arose. However, in the following years, land eviction in Entebbe communities as well as COVID-19 and the war in Tigray were arising. SOS CV has worked with other mandated stakeholders at various levels to respond to those risks to minimize their impact on the project. Annex 1 table illustrates how the risks were addressed. The table remains an important tool that is regularly updated.

For example, regarding community stakeholders who are not interested in participating or oppose project activities, SOS CV location teams have continued to maintain close working relationships and continuous cooperation with relevant community stakeholders and like-minded development agencies. Advocacy efforts have been intensified in order to gradually change mind-sets and gain trust. On the hand, working with relevant partners and stakeholders enabled SOS CV both in Ethiopia and Uganda to respond to the technical gaps and needs of the project.

In addition, SOS CV locations have continued to keep a close eye on the political situation in the targeted communities where the GREEN+ project is implemented. SOS CV being non-partisan has enabled the organization to respond to the needs of the beneficiaries in unstable political situation as well as seeking support from the relevant authorities.

## 5. Sustainability / capacity development

### Sustainable impact on the local context

To enable sustainability of the intervention was crucial from the onset of the project which is reflected at different organisational, community, family, and individual levels. The resources and capacity development efforts provided to the KIPs/ CBOs enable them to respond to the needs of the vulnerable families when the project has phased out.

Similarly, the local structures such as role model men and child protection committees respond to cases of child abuse and GBV not only among the targeted families, but also within the wider community. In addition, the informal groups formed such as VLSAs, parenting groups and IGA groups will continue to pursue their mandate beyond the end of the project.

At the individual level, the project has imparted skills for life to young people and caregivers. Among the trained youth 72% in Uganda and 46.5% in Ethiopia were able to translate the knowledge and skills into action, which does not only improve their socio-economic independence, but also benefits the wider community.

### Specific measures to develop local capacities

Various methods and approaches have been applied to develop the local capacities of the community and implementing staff. Key measures include a needs assessment to identify the existing capacities and gaps for staff and KIPs, conducting trainings, peer learnings, exchange and learning visits, mentorship and coaching in GDI, apprenticeship/vocational training, bi-weekly, monthly and quarterly catch-up calls, joint reflection meetings and technical back-stopping at different levels.

### Exit strategies in place

Exit strategies were embedded in the entire project cycle, from project design, implementation and monitoring to evaluation. Three strategies as reflected in the Family Strengthening Programme (SFP) sustainability manual and SOS Results-Based Management toolkit were applied.

- **Phasing down implementation:** Within the 5 years period of project duration, SOS gradually deploys fewer own human resources in the implementation. Especially in the second half of the project period, implementation focuses majorly on working through partners and community structures. This approach was effected across the locations (except for Mekelle where implementation strategy had to shift due to the situation).
- **Phasing out:** For some project interventions, SOS will phase out completely. Neither the KIPs nor other community structures will be in position to take them over (e.g., the provision of seed capital to caregivers and groups).
- **Phasing over:** SOS CV will be able to transfer some of the programme activities to local and formal institutions such as KIPs, CBOs (role model men, child protection committees) as well as formal mandated government structures and other community-based service departments.

### Financial sustainability and management beyond project of newly created structures

SOS CV for the past years has capitalised on building the capacity of the partners such the KIPs/ CBOs, other community structures in mobilising local resources and proper financial management. Focus has also been put on the strengthening the governance structures to ensure effective delivery of services and accountability now and beyond the project duration.

In Uganda, the newly formed structures such as the role model men, child protection committees and parenting groups, efforts have been supported to establish viable IGAs that generate income for groups. Furthermore, majority of the members in these groups were linked to the VSLAs to enable them to save and to improve their access to resources. In addition, six innovation incubator groups with innovative ideas were provided with seed capital to execute their projects. These green initiatives ranged from briquette making, vegetable growing, apiary farming, tree planting and handicraft from recycled produces. It is expected that when the businesses take off, the groups will be able reinvest the profits and to scale up their innovations.

In Ethiopia, the green groups have been linked to SACCOS to save and access more credit to support their businesses. Similarly, the child protection committees are closely working with the women and child affairs department for technical back-stopping. In addition, financial and functional capacities of partner CBOs have been built to effectively deliver high-quality and community-based initiatives for child protection. Besides, MOUs were signed with KIPs that clearly stipulated their roles. Similarly, the KIPs are guided to elaborate development plans where progress is reviewed on bi-annual basis. The aim is to bring the partner CBOs to reach level 1 or 2 financial and functional sustainability.<sup>5</sup>

An example of successful networking and capacity building within the scope of the GREEN+ project is the establishment of the Hawassa city level green network, where government actors, non-government organizations, other association and stakeholders working in the field of green economic activities are discussing and exchanging learnings and best practices. Overall, the project facilitated experience sharing and trainings to increase the knowledge and know-how on green economy and environmental protection.

On the other hand, given their current capacity, the established child protection committee (CPC) will continue their important role in the community. This is due to the fact that there is a significant increase in awareness, reporting and responding to cases of child abuse in their respective communities. Furthermore, the executive committee of the CPCs include representatives from the child parliament, CBOs and government structures at community level.

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<sup>5</sup> These benchmarks indicate that the degree to which the CBOs have the functional capacity for governance and leadership, legal registration, project management and planning, financial management and administration, infrastructure and equipment. Regarding financial capacity, this means that that the CBO is able to secure sufficient resources to run programs via resource mobilization and fundraising.

On an individual level, project participant caregivers were guided to prepare their own family development plans and road maps that reflects their journey towards self-reliance. Having identified all the needs of each family, tailor made support was provided. To this end, the project facilitated various capacity development initiatives for project participant caregivers according to their needs. They were linked to VSLAs and SACCOs to improve their access to financial services. While others were provided with start-up capital and engaged in various feasible businesses including green activities.

## 6. Monitoring / learning exercise

To track the progress of the project implementation and respond to project deviations and changes in timely manner, the project steering team held virtual bi-weekly catch-up calls that brought together project teams from Ethiopia, Uganda, IOR and SOS Austria.

In addition, joint support supervisions were conducted across the three location of Entebbe, Fort Portal and Hawassa for validation purposes as well provide on spot technical backstopping to the project team.

As a result, areas that would require up scaling were identified as well as what areas for improvement. Joint reviews were organised that provided room for reflections on learnings that could inform the programme interventions. Among the key outcomes of the review meetings included:

- ✓ SOS and KIPs staff registered improvement in financial management and reporting.
- ✓ Reporting schedules were developed to enable the KIPs to adhere to the reporting timelines.
- ✓ KIPS such as TOCI developed model green initiatives at their office premises.
- ✓ Early preparation of the families earmarked for exiting from the project is an integral part of the programming.
- ✓ Establishment of the social protection fund in VSLAs.
- ✓ Integration of the LRRD/Nexus approach in GREEN+ Project as it was done in Mekelle.
- ✓ Ethiopian Team gained a better understanding of innovation incubator options from Uganda such as apiary (honey production), briquette making or energy saving stove making.
- ✓ Acceleration of innovation incubator across all project locations.
- ✓ Adapting PfR model for enhancing positive parenting skills among the parents.
- ✓ Role model caregivers approach adapted across all project locations.

The monitoring visits were further blended with capacity development sessions based on the needs of the project teams. The minutes of the annual review meeting held in March 2022 can be found in the annexe (3C).



*CVI representative, SOS Uganda Management during field technical support visit.*



*Joint support project visit by SOS Austria, SOS Netherlands, SOS Ethiopia, IOR team together with SOS Uganda team in the communities of Fort Portal*

In Uganda, similar country support visits were done by the Children's Villages International Representative (CVI Rep) and the National Director. They commended the impact the GREEN+ project has made to the targeted communities.

At the community level, implementing team together with KIPs, community structures, sub-county and district technical team continued to carry out joint monitoring activities, family assessment and reviews, quarterly project reviews. Corrective actions were developed and implemented for better programme outcomes.

Similarly in Ethiopia, the project team conducted weekly meetings upon which reports were compiled and submitted to the respective supervisors to inform programming. Monthly, quarterly, bi-annual and annuals reports were prepared and submitted to the signatory government sectors, national, office and donors. The project also collected quarterly report from the KIPs as per the agreement and joint plans prepared at the beginning of the year. Furthermore, the project team held quarterly review meeting with KIPs and CBOs to assess their progress. Field visits and home-to home family follow ups were essential to the monitoring process.

Besides, ESAF IOR FS Project Advisor and SOS CV National Finance Coordinator and National Project Coordinator conducted a project support supervision visit to Hawassa with a focus on the GREEN+ project. Brief discussion made the project team on the main achievement and development areas. Valuable comments and directions were provided which helped to improve project performance.

Due to political insurgence in Tigray region and for safety reasons, the monitoring team was not able to reach Mekelle programme location.

## 7. Evaluation

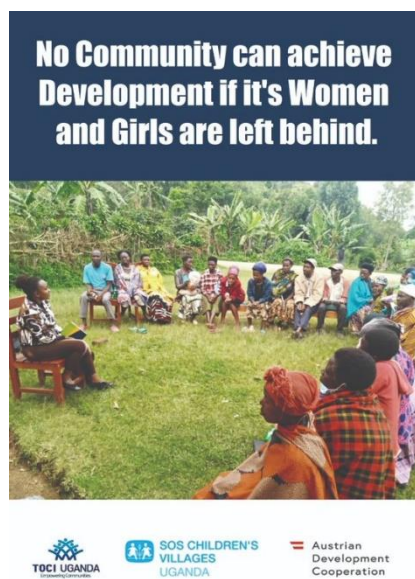
The final project evaluation will be done at the end of the project in 2023. However, each project team at location level was mandated to conduct an annual rapid assessment in December to ascertain the progress on achieving the project targets. In addition, joint programme reviews were conducted to check on progress of implementation and develop corrective actions in case of deviations.

## 8. Visibility and public awareness raising locally and in Austria

Public awareness and creating visibility of the impact of the project was done consistently also in the fourth year of project implementation. Building on the previous ADA framework efforts, the project teams in both Ethiopia and Uganda continued to enhance the visibility through creating partnerships and networks as well as engaging with the media.

In Uganda, documentations related to the project were always branded with the logo of the Austrian Development Cooperation. While on media like radio talk show, jingles, DJ/radio mentions (advertising messages read live by the radio presenters and broadcasters of radio programmes), and on public functions, the presenter was required to recognise that the event/activity/function was supported by SOS with funding from ADC. The team also developed advocacy materials, specifically banners, during this reporting period clearly showing the ADC logo. Similarly, the team also produced signposts for innovation incubator groups for visibility in the community.

In Ethiopia, activities were performed to promote visibility, various in the reporting year. For instance, during the Child Safeguarding (CS) and gender campaign, banners, brochures and T-shirts were used



to disseminate messages. Among the materials produced there are vests (11), laptop bags (40), umbrellas (28), key holders (60), and notebooks (60), which were distributed to staff, community volunteers, CBOs, and government stakeholders (see below a set of examples of visibility materials produced

To enhance the capacity of children's clubs in partner schools, wireless speakers with microphones, banners with the four ways of ensuring child protection and safeguarding (awareness creation, prevention, reporting and responding) provided to three partner schools.

## **9. Other points**

Despite the challenges faced during the project implementation during the reporting year 2022, creditable life changes across the five result areas were realised. A few of them are captured in the annexes.