

CHILD AT RISK

The world's most vulnerable children:
who they are, where they live,
and what puts them at risk



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
INTERNATIONAL

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1 Introduction

More than 7 billion people are living in the world, including 2.2 billion children (aged 0-18) – amongst them millions of children and young people without parental care or at risk of losing it. They are the most vulnerable and marginalised group throughout society.

This overview of the life situations and locations of the world's most vulnerable children is based on results from the SOS Children's Villages Programme Monitoring Database¹ and on a global scan reviewing relevant literature.

2 Size of the challenge

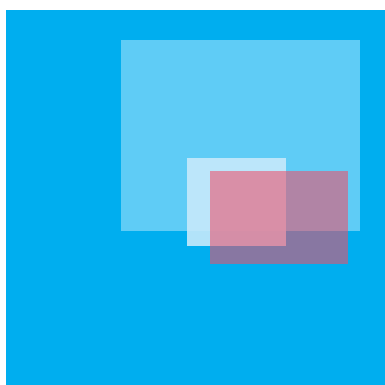
More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of all children live in two continents, Asia and Africa.² Although the child population is decreasing in Asia, Europe and Latin America, it is expected to grow in Africa by 30% over the next 15 years.

Statistics show that the number of children without parental care is rising. Today, there are an estimated 151 million children worldwide who have lost one or both parents, with at least 13 million of these children having lost both parents (about 10%).³ Most of the millions of children without parental care live in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In addition to children having lost parental care the target group of SOS Children's Villages also consists of children at risk of losing parental care. UNICEF⁴ estimates that there are currently 570 million children living below the poverty line of \$1.25 a day.

Based on these figures SOS Children's Villages calculates that in total approximately 220 million children, or 10% of the overall child population, may be in need of our support.

Our Target Group



100%	2,200 million World child population in 2015
26%	570 million Children in poverty (living on less than \$1.25/day)
7%	150 million Children who have lost one or both parents
10%	220 million Children at risk

¹ SOS Children's Villages Programme Monitoring Database (The database contains data on more than 230,000 children and youth and 127,000 families who engaged in an SOS Family Strengthening Programmes as well as of more than 40,000 children and youth who engaged in an SOS family-based care programme).

² UNICEF. (2014). Generation 2030 Africa - Child demographics in Africa.

³ UNICEF. (2013). The State of the World's Children: Children with disabilities.

⁴ UNICEF. (2015). A post 2015 world fit for children.

3 Risk factors

Contrary to popular belief, becoming orphaned is not the primary driving factor resulting in children needing alternative care; it is simply one of many factors. Children who are separated from their families or are at risk of separation tend to experience more than one risk factor at the same time.⁵

Behind these factors lies the global reality of a lack of functioning social welfare services and child protection systems. Families are turning to alternative care as a child protection response, so essentially children are abandoned not by their parents but by the wider child protection system.⁶

Key risk factors include:

Poverty. 60% of children in Africa live in poverty. 570 million children worldwide live in extreme poverty.⁷ SOS Children's Villages data shows that 63% of children and families who joined SOS Family Strengthening programmes in 2014 were facing serious economic problems, such as having insufficient or irregular income (40%) or no income at all (20%).

Poor health. Our data shows that one of the main risk factors that cause a child or young person to lose parental care is parents' health status. More than 30% of children in SOS families lost parental care due to the poor health of their carer (disability or severe illness). HIV/AIDS alone is responsible for almost 20 million children being orphaned, of whom 15 million live in Sub-Saharan Africa.⁸

Socio-cultural factors. These include migration, single parenthood, family breakdown, divorce and remarriage, teenage pregnancy, gender inequalities and ethnic discrimination. Children of parents who have separated, divorced or remarried are often placed in alternative care or encouraged to leave the family home.⁹ Discrimination and exclusion on the basis of ethnicity, race, gender or disability are also driving children into alternative care.

Violence. One of the main reasons many children end up in alternative care is violence in their family, including psychological, physical or sexual violence, or neglect. Our data shows that 73% of children in SOS families in Venezuela had prior experiences of physical or psychological violence. In Eastern Europe, the same experience is reported by 88% of children in SOS families in Croatia, 75% of children in Belarus, and 55% of children in Lithuania.

Political and economic factors. Armed conflict and natural disasters contribute to displacement, death of parents, family separation and children forced to become child soldiers are all factors increasing the risk of children losing parental care.¹⁰

⁵ S Delap, E. (2013). *Towards a Family for Every Child: A Conceptual Framework*.

⁶ Chiwaula, L., Dobson, R., & Elsley, S. (2014). *Drumming Together for Change: A Child's Right to Quality Care in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

⁷ UNICEF (2014)

⁸ *Supra note 1*

⁹ UNICEF CEE/CIS. (2010). *Blame and Banishment: The Underground HIV Epidemic Affecting Children in Eastern Europe and Central Asia*.

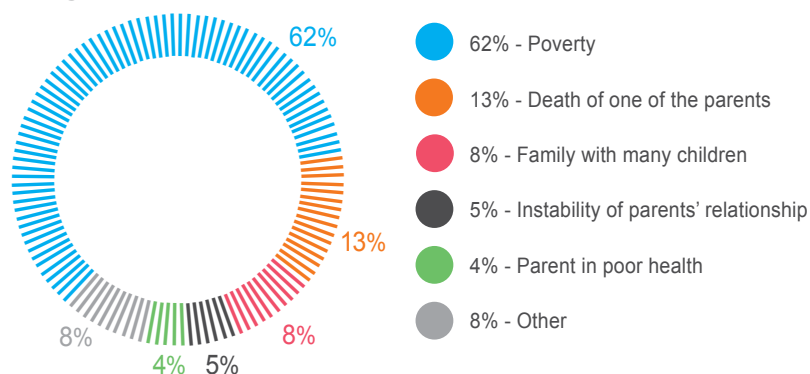
¹⁰ UNICEF CEE/CIS (September 2010); (Better Care Network and Every Child, 2012); Csaky, C. (2014).

570 million children (18 years old or younger) are living in extreme poverty.

UNICEF, 2014

The #1 risk factor for family crises that lead to family breakdown and child abandonment in Africa, Asia and Latin America is POVERTY.

Statistics from SOS programme participants in 2014



Reasons why children and young people were referred to SOS Children's Villages for care. SOS Children's Villages Programme Monitoring Database, 2015.

40,000 children and their caregivers were newly enrolled in SOS Children's Villages Family Strengthening Programmes in 2014. At time of enrolment, 62% faced serious economic problems that limited the children's access to education, nutrition, health care, housing and, ultimately, equal participation in society in the future.

40%
had insufficient or irregular income

20%
had no income to provide for their children's survival and healthy development

30%
could not afford to feed their children enough meals per day

8%
of children were malnourished or severely malnourished

5%
were homeless

16%
of families risked eviction or forced relocation from their living situations

2%
of children were working to help support their families

38%
of children were not enrolled in school or were behind in school for their age

3 Risk map

The Child Vulnerability Index (CVI) is a measure of how likely it is for children to be at risk in a particular country. The CVI reflects data such as Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, the under-5 mortality rate, and other measures of living standards, schooling, and orphanhood. The

following table reflects CVI rankings according to latest available data (2013). It was developed by SOS Children's Villages in consultation with Professor Jonathan Bradshaw, an internationally renowned researcher in child well-being at York University.

Child Vulnerability Index

100.0	Somaliland	100.0	Somalia	96.5	Niger	95.2	Burundi	94.2	Central African Rep.
93.9	Mali	92.7	Ethiopia	91.9	Angola	91.7	Sierra Leone	90.7	Chad
90.4	Mozambique	88.1	Burkina Faso	86.4	Guinea	85.4	Congo. Dem. Rep.	84.0	Syria
83.1	Liberia	81.3	Uganda	80.6	Madagascar	80.3	Rwanda	79.8	Malawi
79.8	Zambia	79.0	Nigeria	78.3	Guinea-Bissau	77.5	Cameroon	77.0	Benin
75.5	Côte d'Ivoire	75.3	Zimbabwe	75.0	Sudan	75.0	South Sudan	74.2	Lesotho
72.5	Tanzania	72.5	Zanzibar	72.0	Togo	72.0	Swaziland	72.0	Haiti
71.2	Gambia	71.2	Senegal	68.9	Kenya	68.9	Equatorial Guinea	64.4	Nepal
64.4	Djibouti	64.4	Cambodia	63.9	Ghana	63.9	Bangladesh	61.9	Laos
60.1	India	59.3	Pakistan	59.3	Namibia	57.1	Mauritius	55.3	South Africa
53.8	Bolivia	53.0	Guatemala	53.0	Nicaragua	52.5	Botswana	51.8	Honduras
50.8	Uzbekistan	49.5	Jamaica	48.7	Cape Verde	48.5	Mongolia	47.2	Morocco
47.0	Paraguay	47.0	Kyrgyzstan	47.0	Indonesia	46.7	Venezuela	46.5	Vietnam
45.7	Peru	45.5	China	44.9	Philippines	44.9	El Salvador	44.2	Palestine
43.7	Algeria	43.4	Azerbaijan	43.2	Egypt	43.2	Dominican Republic	42.7	Jordan
42.2	Thailand	41.9	Sri Lanka	41.7	Panama	41.7	Bosnia & Herzegovina	41.4	Kazakhstan
41.4	Georgia	41.4	Colombia	41.4	Brazil	40.9	Romania	40.9	Albania
40.5	Kosovo	40.4	Macedonia	40.4	Ecuador	40.4	Armenia	39.9	Ukraine
39.6	Lebanon	39.1	Tunisia	38.9	Bulgaria	38.6	Argentina	37.6	Mexico
37.6	Costa Rica	37.1	Serbia	36.9	Lithuania	36.6	Russia	36.4	Uruguay
36.1	Chile	35.9	Estonia	35.9	Belarus	35.4	Latvia	34.3	Poland
34.1	Croatia	33.8	Hungary	33.0	Northern Cyprus	32.6	Portugal	31.3	Czech Republic
31.1	Greece	26.5	Spain	26.5	Italy	26.3	France	24.4	South Korea
24.5	Israel	24.5	Finland	24.0	Belgium	23.5	Denmark	23.2	Canada
23.0	Germany	22.5	Austria	19.9	Japan	19.4	United Kingdom	16.2	Sweden
15.7	Netherlands	11.9	Switzerland	9.6	USA	3.3	Norway	0.0	Luxembourg

4 Conclusion

Further information about the situation of the child at risk and the response of SOS Children's Villages can be found in our International Annual Report and other materials on our website:

<http://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/>