



Public Statement

Nairobi, 08 June 2023.

Dear Partners and Publics,

In October 2021, the SOS Children's Villages International commissioned an Independent Special Commission (ISC) to investigate a collection of allegations of historical failures arising from the work of SOS Children's Villages International across the world. The collection of allegations related to historical failures in safeguarding (child and asset safeguarding), misuse of funds, corruption, and other governance failings. Two internally commissioned reports - the Independent Child Safeguarding Review (ICSR) and the Duty to Act (DTA) - summed up these allegations of past failures in the organization. The ISC was chaired by Kenya's former Chief Justice, Dr. Willy M. Mutunga, deputized by India's former Chief Justice, Gita Mittal.

SOS Children's Villages International has this week made public the final ISC report. The ISC report recognizes that SOS Children's Villages has made progress in addressing failures noted by the ICSR and the DTA reports including significant steps in the implementation of the organization's Safeguarding Action Plan developed in 2021 to address gaps identified in the ICSR and DTA reports. These include:

- An independent ombuds system established to strengthen representation of voices and needs of children and young people.
- Individualized support to more than 500 people affected by past cases of abuse.
- New policies including a new Code of Conduct and Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy.

The ISC report notes that continued efforts are needed to further strengthen safeguarding of children and assets, leadership and governance to ensure full safety of children and young people in the care of SOS Children's Villages.

SOS Children's Villages in Kenya reiterates its total commitment to the implementation of recommendations of the ISC report including but not limited to making necessary policy changes in the best interest of children, young people, staff, and assets.

SOS Children's Villages in Kenya is open and available to respond to questions relating to this statement. For further information and or clarifications, please reach out to the undersigned.

Walter S. Odhiambo, **National Director**

NB: SOS Children's Villages in Kenya is the country's single largest childcare and protection non-governmental organization with presence in five (5) of the country's 47 counties. This year, SOS Children's Villages in Kenya marks fifty (50) years of its presence in Kenya providing quality care and protection of children without adequate parental care in Kenya.

SOS Children's Villages in Kenya is an autonomous member of the federation of SOS Children's Villages International which has presence in 138 countries and territories.