

SOS Children's Villages of India Facilitates 'Kinship Care' to over 300 Children in India

- *The Kinship Care Programme supports about 34 children, including 16 girls in Bhubaneswar*

Bhubaneswar, 24 January 2022: The Kinship Care Programme of SOS Children's Villages of India, the largest self-implementing childcare NGO in India, serves about 300 children, including 150 girls, in 10 locations across the country.

Introduced in 2017, the Kinship Care Programme ensures that children without parental care grow up with minimal disruption to their educational, cultural and social lives. Under this initiative, children who have lost their biological parents are cared for by their extended families or relatives. The interventions safeguard the right of every parentless child to grow up in a familiar environment by strengthening the capability and income of the extended biological families, so that they can provide proper care and education, till the child attains adulthood.

The Kinship Care Programme in Bhubaneswar, implemented by SOS Children's Villages of India, benefits about 34 children, including 16 girls, all under 12 years of age.

Commenting about the programme, **Mr Sumanta Kar, Secretary General, SOS Children's Villages of India**, said, "We believe that every child has the right of access to wholesome child development; growing up in a familiar environment is important so that a child's educational, cultural, and social lives are not disrupted. The Kinship Care Programme minimises these disruptions as the children grow up in their respective extended families. This programme is a part of our Basket of Care Solutions."

Under the Kinship Care Programme, the concerned caregiver is equipped with training on parenting skills, child safeguarding and child protection, health and nutrition, amongst other skill sets needed to enable the caregiver. Regular health check-ups, especially to monitor BMI (Body Mass Index) and Hemoglobin, are conducted, along with guidance on a balanced diet for not only the concerned child under the care of the Kinship Care programme, but also other children of the family. All basic needs of the child pertaining to education, health/nutrition and clothing are also taken care of. Besides this, the child is also provided life and soft skills training, along with computer and communication skills.

Surbhi*, a class X student and beneficiary under the Kinship Care Programme reminisces her experience: "When my both parents died 3 years back, my two aunty took me in, and with whatever she earned by working in homes, we managed. The pandemic, however, changed that; we were struggling for our daily meals. I was depressed. My education was a big question mark that time. When there is no money for daily bread, how can I hope to continue my education? With the Kinship Care Programme of SOS Children's Villages of India, I am rest assured that I can pursue my education as per my interest. And, it is not about me only, it is about the need I feel to support children, who have the will and the ability, but not the financial capacity." Surbhi is now preparing for her 10th boards, and harbours the ambition

of securing more than 90% overall, so that she can make her family and community proud. She wants to be a loco pilot with the railways. With her earnings, she wants to empower other underserved children too.

SOS Children's Villages of India monitors the progress of each child under the programme by holding regular meetings with the child and the family that provides care (kinship care family). It also stays in touch with school authorities of the concerned child. The District Child Protection Unit and Child Welfare Committee are a part of the monitoring committee for the Kinship Care Programme.

It is planned to extend the programme to new locations, in the wake of the imminent third wave of COVID-19, also as the programme helps to secure the future of a child through wholesome development, right from basic education, employability skills, communication and life/soft skills and working knowledge in the domain of IT.

About SOS Children's Villages of India

Established in 1964, SOS Children's Villages of India provides children without parental care or at the risk of losing it, a value chain of quality care services that goes beyond childcare alone, ensuring comprehensive child development. Our customized care interventions such as: Family Like Care, Family Strengthening, Kinship Care, Short Stay Homes, Foster Care, Youth Skilling, Emergency Childcare and Special Needs Childcare are aimed at transforming lives and developing children under our care into self-reliant and contributing members of society. We empower vulnerable families in communities to become financially independent, thereby enabling them to create safe and nurturing spaces for children under their care. As India's largest self-implementing childcare NGO, SOS Children's Villages directly touches the lives of around 28,500 children every year.

For more information, please visit <https://www.soschildrensvillages.in>