

December 2003

Dear Friends,

Yet another year has gone by and it is once again time to present our annual report and send you greetings for the New Year. I hope it is happy and prosperous for all of you and that your Eid celebrations will also be joyful.

We continue to be very busy, planning projects, constructing new facilities and - what is perhaps the most challenging - constantly striving to improve our standards. For the lattermost, I must acknowledge the immense contribution of our various committees as, without these dedicated volunteers, we could not maintain our record of excellence. This can be achieved only through commitment and perseverance and I salute and thank all our committee members and co-workers, all over the country, who implement our policies and plans. To establish a project is relatively easy, to manage it well is the real challenge.

At the risk of sounding immodest I would like to share with you the news of three awards which I received during the year. I do this because, though this is a matter of great personal pride, I must share the credit with all of you who make it possible for us to achieve so much. It is your confidence and support which enables us to execute work worthy of recognition. The first award was in the 'Name of Allah' and was given by a Karachi based group to 100 citizens who have made a meaningful contribution in their respective fields. Another was conferred on me by the prestigious Human Rights Society of Pakistan for services rendered to the cause of children. The third award was not only unique but a tremendous honour for me personally, for SOS and for Pakistan. The President of Austria conferred on me a Decoration of Honour in Gold, the 'Knights Cross'. It was presented to me by the Austrian Ambassador to Pakistan, Dr. Guenther Gallowitsch at the Austrian National Day reception in October. He also presented Safia Awan, one of our Vice-Presidents with the Decoration of Merit in Gold. Her total commitment and outstanding contribution to the organization certainly deserve this recognition.

While expressing gratitude to the Austrian Government, and to SOS Kinderdorf International for showing us the way, we share this honour with all our donors, co-workers and volunteers who have enabled us to change the lives of countless orphans in our midst – to offer them hope and a fair chance in life. We are elated by the success stories and saddened by those who fall through the cracks but, fortunately, there is more success than failure.

Our big news of the year is that we have finally moved to the **National Office** of SOS Children's Villages of Pakistan. With the growing number of projects and increased staff requirement it was becoming difficult to function out of the cramped space we occupied in the Lahore Village. Our new premises are smart and cheerful and provide us with an excellent workplace. Do drop in when you come this way.

We now urgently require a **National Training Centre** where we can conduct courses for Directors, Mothers, teachers and other staff from all our projects. We have been conducting these courses for some time now but require proper premises to do this effectively. This Centre will be constructed on land available behind the National Office and the estimated cost of construction is Rs. 10 million. I am happy to announce that a recent fundraising drive enabled us to reach the target with the major donors being Ch. Pervez Elahi, Chief Minister Punjab, Mr. Hussain Dawood, Mrs. Kulsum Dawood, Mr. Shahid Butt, Mian Mohammad Mansha, Mr. Razzaq Dawood, Mr. Iqbal Qarshi, Mr. & Mrs. Humayun Naseer, Chaudhry Arshad and an anonymous 'Friend'. Mr. Amjad Wazir donated the cost of a family home. A gala function, 'Dar Deewar Jharoka' was held at the Lahore Fort to thank these and other supporters. Frieha Altaf, Bina Jawad and Imran Aslam, each outstanding in their respective fields. combined their talents to present a superb programme which was a fusion of history,

drama and dance. Our gratitude to Telebiz for preparing a presentation on SOS and to Shell Pakistan for once again sponsoring our programme.

The South Asia Foundation has been established by UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Madanjeet Singh with the objective of promoting regional co-operation in the SAARC countries, particularly educational and sustainable development projects focusing on the youth. In August the Foundation sponsored a two week joint SOS/SAF Environment Camp at the SOS Vocational Training Centre at Malpotha, Sri Lanka which was attended by 28 teenagers from the SAARC countries. From Pakistan two girls and two boys from the Dhodial and Lahore Villages were nominated and came back thrilled with the experience, calling it 'magnificent and fantastic'.

In the last week of December the SOS Inter-Village Cricket Tournament was again organized in Lahore. Teams from six Villages participated and the trophy was won by the Faisalabad Village. The former test cricketer Ramiz Raja graciously distributed the prizes. Apart from the sports aspect the boys thoroughly enjoy this interaction with each other.

Our projects all over the country report ever-increasing activity. Unfortunately space does not permit me to present more than the highlights.

Lahore:

The year started with the marriage of another SOS girl which was followed by two more a few months later. Like everywhere else these celebrations are an exciting and joyful activity in which the children all participate and thoroughly enjoy. Our thanks to the Friends of SOS who take full responsibility for the arrangements.

March saw the annual SOS Walk which has become a popular event for thousands of school children who collect funds for the SOS School. Shahreen Kasuri kept up her family tradition as the highest collector closely followed by Mohammad Ali of Chand Bagh School. The children were well rewarded for their efforts by an excellent entertainment programme. To their great delight, the popular singer Jawad Ahmad entertained them and acrobats of the Lucky Irani Circus also gave a brilliant performance. Our gratitude to all those who participated in the programme and to the Governor Punjab, Lt. Gen. Khalid Maqbool for, yet again, hosting a party in Governor House and graciously joining the festivities.

A week later the annual reunion of our integrated children took place and it is always such a pleasure to see them again, many with their spouses and offspring. They were served a delicious lunch and enjoyed catching up with the latest developments in each other's lives.

The summer programme organized over the holidays attracted about 100 volunteers from six different schools, all eager to interact with the children. They assisted them with their homework and organized many interesting programmes such as drama, art and games. The children thoroughly enjoy making these new friends. As usual, during the vacations children also had the opportunity to visit other Villages and Lahore played host to children from Multan, Faisalabad and Sargodha.

The PIA Boy Scouts have been active in the SOS Village Karachi for a long time and have now started up a programme in Lahore also. The boys eagerly look forward to the weekly visits of the trainers.

Three additional family homes are nearing completion donated by Dr. Munazza Malik, McDonald's and Mohammad Afzal, an SOS boy now based in Hong Kong. Needless to say, Afzal's donation has very special significance for us.

The older children all fasted during Ramzan and, along with the little ones, were rewarded with the traditional Eid Mela which is an occasion of great festivity. Many generous donors brought eidee, clothes, shoes, sweaters and items for the homes, besides organizing iftaris in the Village. Nestle presented gift hampers to each child and after Eid organized a Magic Show for all the children in the School and also served them Maggi Noodles.

The **SOS Hermann Gmeiner School** continues to strive for academic excellence and this year's outstanding matriculation result reflects the efforts of the teachers. Out of the 11 girls who appeared 10 obtained First Division and out of 22 boys, 9 secured First Division and the remaining Second Division. An impressive result indeed!

Many of the children continue higher level studies and we are especially grateful to the management of Superior Science College which is presently providing eight scholarships for our girls and boys.

We are still determinedly pursuing the promised grant of land for a new **Youth Home** as this is an urgent need of the older boys. We are reluctant to spend money on the old building as we must move as soon as possible so conditions leave much to be desired.

Dhodial / Abbottabad

There are now 140 children occupying 14 family homes in this most picturesque **SOS Children's Village**. The facilities are steadily being upgraded and along with the mandatory stress on providing good academic facilities, sports and outings have not been overlooked. In addition to basketball and volleyball, a regular PTI and karate instructor has been provided ensuring that the children remain active and fit. Those residing in the **SOS Village Dhodial** and associated **Youth Home** in Abbottabad are most fortunate to be able to benefit from the programmes of the Adventure Foundation of Pakistan as our dedicated Brigadier Jan Nadir wears two hats— one of the General Secretary, SOS Children's Villages NWFP and the other of President, Adventure Foundation of Pakistan. The latter organization provides the youth of the country great opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. Our children are fortunate to have been included in Basic Rock Climbing, Watermanship and Ski Courses.

The **SOS Hermann Gmeiner School** located in Dhodial continues to flourish and one of our own girls, after completing her education, is employed there as a teacher. The **Girl's Vocational Training Centre** is to be relocated to a new building but classes continue under the instruction of an experienced teacher.

The **SOS Youth Home** houses 38 boys all attending local schools and colleges. One of the boys has been admitted to the MBA Programme at Institute of Leadership and Management in Lahore, sponsored by 'Roshni Foundation'.

SOS Mother and Childcare Centre Pattan

This out-reach facility is serving the needs of mothers and children of the remote areas in Kohistan District and providing a much needed service in female health care.

At present the centre is not fully equipped and needs to be enlarged. This will enable a lady Doctor to visit the facility on a regular basis to assist the resident LHV. Efforts are being made to upgrade this centre.

Rawalpindi

The SOS Village has been the hub of much activity with the children being invited to various installations during the year, the Army Public School, Shell Pakistan Filling Installation, Salt

Mines & ICI Factory Khewra to name a few. They are fortunate to be welcomed by the community and learn so much from the field trips. Besides this they, too, have been visited by many dignitaries, including Mrs. Nelofer Bakhtiar, Advisor to the Prime Minister for Social Welfare, the President of the Rotary Club, the wife of General Richard B. Myers, Joint Chief of Staff US Armed Forces and H. E. Kemal Gur, the Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan.

The **Youth Home** presently has 44 boys of which six are in College and three are enrolled at the Technical Training Institute. One of the boys has been sponsored for the MBA programme at GIFT University, Gujranwala courtesy Roshni Foundation.

During the summer the children visited Murree and Bhurban and PTDC kindly sponsored the visit of 24 of the older boys to Ayubia.

The **SOS Hermann Gmeiner School** continues to progress and celebrated National Days in addition to an excellent programme on Annual Sports Day. The highest praise for the activities in this city is reserved for the excellent facilities offered by the **Technical Training Institute**. This is now in its third year, is self-financed and running to capacity. An impressive addition to the existing disciplines is the establishment of an Automobile Training Institute which was visited by Shaikh Rashid Ahmed, Federal Minister in December. A purpose built, state-of-the-art centre takes students through all stages of automobile repair and maintenance. Engr. Rashid Choudhry, Chairman of the Technical Training Centre deserves our compliments for establishing yet another excellent and innovative facility.

Karachi

Keeping in mind that academic achievement will make all the difference in the future lives of the children 2002-03 was declared 'academic year' with special focus on academic advancement. An accelerated learning programme for those coming to SOS with no prior education has resulted in 22 children being able to join their own age group in school. This is a problem we face in all our projects and SOS Karachi is to be congratulated for successfully tackling the problem.

The Director HR, Reckitt & Benickser visited the Village and donated six computers. The computer laboratory in the Village can now accommodate 25 children at a time and facilities in the **SOS Hermann Gmeiner School** have also been upgraded. Class IX was the first group to appear in the Board examination with a 100% pass percentage and next year will see the final batch matriculating. Those with good grades have gone on for higher education. Four boys have started a three year apprenticeship with Indus Motors and one has been employed by Shell Pakistan.

There have been many exciting events in the children's lives such as visiting Alladin Park, Maritime Museum and KFC. Ofcourse, the very best is the SOS Annual Carnival organized by Friends of SOS. A big crowd turns out and enjoys a colourful and fun-filled day. The proceeds this year were approximately Rs.1.5 million and this popular event makes many friends for SOS.

During the summer vacation many extra-curricular activities were organized for the children starting with a six-week summer school. Following this was a summer camp organized by Family Educational Services which was full of colour and activity. The programme included fabric and glass painting, pottery making, music and much more. The students of Indus Valley arranged a mela for the children and 18 senior boys attended a week-long training camp organized by the PIA Boy Scouts Association.

High on the agenda of the Committee is the construction of a **Youth Home** as the boys presently occupy very inadequate rented premises. Fortunately 10 of the older boys have

been able to move into the flat donated by Dr. Mohammad Saeed. Mr. Fuad Hashimi has kindly donated 2 acres of land for the new Youth Home and TOTAL FINAELF has promised to assist in the construction which will hopefully commence before too long. Formalities are in hand for transfer of the land and construction will commence as soon as these are completed.

Faisalabad

As everywhere else both Eids were celebrated with much festivity. This is a time for new clothes and shoes, shopping for bangles and other personal adornments. Our children, like children everywhere, get caught up in the excitement and thoroughly enjoy choosing their outfits and preparing for the celebration.

Yet another happy occasion was the marriage of one of the girls, Nazia, who has the distinction of being the first girl from this Village to graduate. She is a bright girl and intends to study for a Masters degree after marriage. We wish her well.

Though the **SOS Children's Village** has been in operation for many years, the Community Centre was still incomplete. Messrs Dobotex through Mr. Musadak Zulqarnain of Interloop Private have kindly undertaken the completion of this facility at an estimated cost of Rupees two million. Our sincere thanks to them.

The **SOS Hermann Gmeiner School** continues to upgrade its educational standard. In the last Board exams, the students achieved 100% result. All the National Days were appropriately celebrated and during the vacations a summer camp was organized to assist the children with their homework. The school is progressing well and efforts are being made by the Committee to raise the standard higher.

The **Youth Home** boys are receiving much needed counselling from the committee members and four boys who appeared for the BA and B.Com examinations are now receiving training at the Chenab Computer College. The Research Wing of National Fertilizer Corporation has provided training in electronics, electrical skills, plumbing and computers. Volunteers are helping the boys with their English. Three boys have been integrated into society with one joining the Pakistan Army, another employed in a textile unit and the third as a dispenser in a local hospital.

Sargodha

For various reasons this project had been lagging behind the others but now, with the appointment of a concerned and competent Village Director, things are looking up. Even before her arrival great improvement had been made in the infrastructure, with the grounds and playgrounds being upgraded and the family homes being made more cheerful and homely. The children are well settled and have enjoyed picnics in nearby areas such as Kallar Kahar and Chenab Nagar.

During the summer months a group of children visited Lahore and enjoyed visiting the parks and historical sights.

The first marriage in this Village took place amid great festivity. As everywhere else this is an occasion for joyous participation by all the children. The arrangements for the marriages of the girls in all our projects are made by Friends of SOS – from the clothes and jewellery to furniture and food. On this occasion, however, special mention must be made of Dr. & Mrs. Zulfiqar Bhatti who have been loyal friends of the children ever since the Village was established. Mrs. Bhatti took over the entire wedding arrangements and did a superb job. It is friends like these who contribute so much to the success of our work.

More and more visitors and donors are now being welcomed to the Village and being briefed about the organization. Through them we look forward to more community support.

Multan

This has been an exciting and event-filled year for the children of the **SOS Children Village** Multan as they were waiting anxiously for the vacation, especially for the summer trips arranged for them. The Youth Home boys visited the SOS Village Lahore and enjoyed sightseeing and visiting the children there. A group of young girls visited the SOS Village Rawalpindi. The Directors of both Villages arranged interesting visits to different places for the children. The younger children who remained in the Village enjoyed visits to Aladdin Funland, Jinnah Water Park and Shah Shams Park. After the trips the children were busy with regular coaching classes to help them with their studies.

This beautiful Village has a bright and cheerful look with increasing plantation. Currently there are 92 children with another house being opened soon, as there is a steady increase in the requests for admission. Many groups of students from various educational institutions, in addition to numerous other visitors, visited the Village. The Preston University Computer Faculty donated two computers. District Governor Rotary Club International, Dr. Ali Akhtar, with other Rotarians visited the Village and were impressed by the living standard of the children. The Rotary Club also took the responsibility of sponsorship of a child and made a commitment to furnish a computer laboratory in the Village.

The Crescent Lions Club organized an eye-screening camp in the Village and the local MPA and Lion's Club members made generous donations. The Pakistan Medical Association arranged a check-up of all the children. The children are also fortunate to have the services of a child specialist who visits the Village every week for medical advice as well as giving tips on hygiene to the mothers and children.

Many donors such as Hafeez Ghee & General Mills make regular monthly donations for the children and make it possible to provide them with a high standard of care. A generous supporter has offered to finance the construction of an SOS School in Multan and the government authorities have been approached for the donation of a suitable site. We cannot be grateful enough for the support we receive.

Sialkot

This project is taking shape with the construction of most of the family homes reaching roof level. A model house is ready and the Committee organized a get-together in the beginning December to show this to their donors and to invite more support. Many people have responded generously to appeals for this project but much more assistance is needed to complete the Village.

We have great expectations from the citizens of this progressive city and look forward to their wholehearted involvement in this facility for the orphans of their area.

Quetta

The Government of Balochistan gave us a site for the construction of this project some years ago. A Committee has been formed to start the planning and consists of prominent social workers of the area. Senator Mrs. Roshan Bharucha, has kindly agreed to be the Chairperson and the Secretary is Brig.(R) Abdul Razaq Baloch. We invite philanthropists to support this project and when we receive the necessary funding can proceed with our plans.

SOS Rural Support Programmes

The SOS Rural Support Programmes has been functioning for fifteen years bringing relief and enlightenment to the residents of 25 outlying villages in Kasur District.

A well-integrated uplift programme includes health and education facilities, water and sanitation inputs, social mobilization and youth organizations, with special focus on the needs of women and girls. In addition to regular schools, three evening primary schools, as well as adult literacy classes for women, are functioning. Both boys and girls are obtaining training in repair of household electrical appliances and teachers are being trained in 'Child Friendly School Methodology'. This year over 2000 patients were treated by the Mobile Dispensary and 100 households have been provided clean drinking water through new hand pumps. The Women's Committee has been very enterprising and established a Digital Telephone Exchange while, both men and women, are benefiting from the micro-credit facility offered by the programme.

On Universal Children's Day in November, an elaborate programme was organized at the Convention Centre Islamabad. President Musharraf was the chief guest and several Federal Ministers, amongst many others, attended the function. Ten schools participated in a drama competition highlighting the problems of health and education in the rural areas. To our great delight the team from the SOS RSP Schools was judged the best and received a generous cash award from the President. This is a great achievement when one considers that they were competing against urban schools.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated team working in the area. Their interventions are making a huge impact on the lives of the deprived population of this area and are part of the community development initiatives undertaken by SOS all over the world.

SOS Afghan Relief Programme:

With the gradual repatriation of the refugees we are winding down our programme in Shamshatoo Camp. The Girls School has been closed but the Basic Health Unit is functioning as there are still many sick children needing attention.

Badaber Camp, however, is another story. There are no facilities available apart from those provided by SOS. The Girls School and Basic Health Unit are being utilized to capacity and there is no likelihood of these refugees leaving in the near future.

The Medical Centre in Peshawar, where last year approximately 23,000 sick children were referred, is providing a high standard of care which has been appreciated by the many dignitaries who have visited the project.

Representatives of UNHCR and other UN Agencies as well as EU Ambassadors commented that the SOS project was a remarkable achievement and the best run refugee project they had seen in Pakistan. The high standards and services provided at the SOS Medical Centre in Peshawar were appreciated by all.

This programme has been sponsored by SOS Kinderdorf and they have committed funding for another year as they understand the enormous need for such interventions.

Pakistan is plagued by so many problems but the realization is finally dawning that, if we want to bring about change, we have to accept that this is our collective responsibility. We witness this in the response to the work we are doing which is made possible only through the generosity of the people of Pakistan.

It is impossible to describe the satisfaction one gets from watching the transformation of frightened, forlorn, unwanted children into cheerful and confident individuals through the magic of love and security. SOS has made a world of difference in the lives of hundreds of such children and with your support will, inshallah, continue to reach out to many more.

We need to involve many more people in our work so please tell others who may not know about us. Visitors are welcome to visit any of our projects to see for themselves how we function. We are aware that our best publicity is through those who see for themselves what a difference SOS can make.

We cannot thank all of you adequately who, through your concern and sense of social responsibility, make it possible for us to carry out our mission. We are grateful for your confidence in us and assure you of our continuing best efforts. On behalf of all the children who benefit from your concern we extend to you heartfelt gratitude.

We look forward to your continued support and thank you for caring.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Souriya Anwar
President