

# ANNUAL REPORT 2016



ALDEAS  
INFANTILES SOS  
URUGUAY



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Annual Report 2016

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## Roads ahead



Aldeas Infantiles Uruguay is in the process of fulfilling its goal of sustainability by 2020. Implementing the transformation promoted by our organization requires the ongoing revision of services in terms of their pertinence and viability. In this sense, since 2012 we have been implementing different modalities of alternative care,

by assessing the options and deinstitutionalization possibilities of each participant, as well as diversifying our services in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children and our organization's guidelines.

We closed 2016 with a set of solutions intended to improve our Foster Care Service, as well as the stay-by-turns care system which is scheduled to be implemented in the course of 2017. This modality, the first of its kind on the continent, will be monitored and analyzed with a view to its gradual implementation nationwide. The year 2016 was also notable for the investment made on the training of direct-care personnel. To this effect, we launched a program of ongoing training for caregivers, which will continue to be further developed and intensified.

Another of the year's cornerstones was our work with youths. In this context, and based on the promotion of participation, we conducted an investigation, unprecedented in this country, on the process of adolescents and youths exiting from the protection system. This initiative intends to foster the exchange of ideas and discussion on the topic with those public entities and social organizations involved in childhood and adolescence issues. Additionally, we promoted innovative data-management tools: the digital recording of information, in order to

obtain better data quality and enhanced internal control processes, plus an educational videogame intended to improve the transition to autonomy.

Regarding our Family Strengthening service, after a thorough analysis, we closed down some of our service centers. In order to assure the sustainability of the remainder, we decided to negotiate more and better agreements with the State. Accordingly, we closed 2016 with 9 CAIFs (Centers for Child and Family Care), 1 FCTT (Family Care Territorial Team), 1 Children's Club, one Youth Center and 3 Family Development Spaces (FDS). With the exception of the FDS, all of our Family Strengthening services are fully financed by the State and operate in close partnership with INAU (the official regulatory entity for children and adolescents in Uruguay),

In 2016, our organization experienced a hefty increase of its local resources, thanks both to government subsidies as well as to the support from private contributors. We closed the year with over 32,700 individual donors and more than 80 companies who are steadfast supporters of our activities and are key to our objective of attaining sustainability for Aldeas Uruguay. This makes us proud and inspires us to take on further challenges. We trust that this joint effort will enable us to sustain and improve our services, by investing on enhancing our processes and work teams, in order to continue asserting the right of children and adolescents to family and community life.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anainés Zignago'.

Anainés Zignago, B.A.

National Director, Aldeas Infantiles SOS Uruguay







WHO WE ARE

## Aldeas Infantiles in Uruguay

SOS Children's Villages is a nonprofit, non-government and independent international organization for social development, working globally since 1949 with the goal of assuring the right of children and adolescents to family and community life. Its founder was Hermann Gmeiner, an Austrian national who was emotionally affected by the reality of children and adolescents suffering the consequences of postwar.

Currently it is present in 134 countries, cooperating with governments, civil society organizations and communities, in line with the principles set forth by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the United Nations Directives.

The Uruguayan Association of SOS Children's Villages, (*Asociación Uruguaya de Aldeas Infantiles SOS*), was founded at the initiative of Ilse Kasdorf in 1960, and was the first of its kind in Latin America.

Since then, and working on the principle that the family is the appropriate environment for the healthy development of the individual, we are providing direct care to children and adolescents, as well as supporting adults by strengthening their care capabilities and intervening when necessary with other types of assistance.

To this effect, we have in place five programs, located respectively in the departments of Montevideo, Canelones, Florida, Salto and Paysandú, through which we provide customized solutions through our Foster Care and Family Strengthening services.

### Family Strengthening Service

With the purpose of preventing family disintegration, we focus on strengthening adults' capabilities to care for children and adolescents by creating the conditions necessary for them to fulfill their protective role.

Our centers are located in Montevideo, Canelones, Florida, Paysandú and Salto, most of them operating under agreement with the Institute for Children and Adolescents (INAU) through the CAIF Plan. At each of these centers, a technical interdisciplinary team closely monitors each family group's development process; and to this end, networking with other social organizations and State bodies is a key factor.

Additionally, we provide daily assistance to children and adolescents from an educational perspective, while also feeding them breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks. We also hold group workshops for adults on

care-related subjects (guidelines on upbringing, nutrition, healthcare), as well as on occupational topics, to provide them with tools for developing job-related skills.

In Paysandú, we have a Family Care Territorial Team (FCTT)\* that reports to the 'Cercanías' [Proximities] program sponsored by Mides (Ministry of Social Development), whose work in the community focuses on closely supporting families in vulnerable circumstances, promoting their active participation in the community and creating networks to facilitate their access to opportunities and resources.

**Ilse Kasdorf founded in 1960 the Uruguayan Association of SOS Children's Villages, (Asociación Uruguaya de Aldeas Infantiles SOS), the first of its kind in Latin America.**

\* In February 2017, a new FCTT team started operating within the Paysandú program, working on the family restoration of children and adolescents currently institutionalized in official homes of the INAU-Paysandú program, as well as providing support to participant families of the Care-in-Context service, in coordination with the teams of the official homes.



## Foster Care Service

### Foster Care

The distinguishing feature of our Foster Care Service (under agreement with INAU) for children and adolescents who have lost the care of their own families, is that it offers them a loving, protective environment.

We have three villages situated in Montevideo, Florida and Salto, as well as community houses in Montevideo, Canelones, Florida and Salto. Each of them contains an average of five children and adolescents in charge of a caregiver, who, jointly with the technical team of the corresponding program, implements the actions to promote their development. Since each situation is unique, we have developed a variety of foster care protocols, with the purpose of providing the best response that each situation calls for.

At the same time, we seek to preserve permanent bonds with the family, for which purpose we work on the processes of family reintegration, bond restoration and care in context.

### Reintegration and re-bonding

Our technical teams work with the families of children and adolescents participating in our Foster Care Service in order to strengthen their care capabilities and bring about an effective family re-bonding and reintegration.

### Care in Context

This protocol consists in assisting families in the context of their homes. Its purpose is to assure children, adolescents and their adult caregivers the full enjoyment of their rights. The participants of this type of assistance continue being enrolled on the lists of our agreement with INAU and receiving financial support and goods or tangible resources (baskets with supplies and food), as well as technical and institutional backing.

We resort to this type of assistance whenever we implement a return to the family, to assure that this process evolves under the best possible conditions and receives the required support. It is essential being able to assure that, after having provided substitute care to children and adolescents, their families will be prepared to receive them again in their midst, that such return endures over time and that the right to family life becomes a reality.

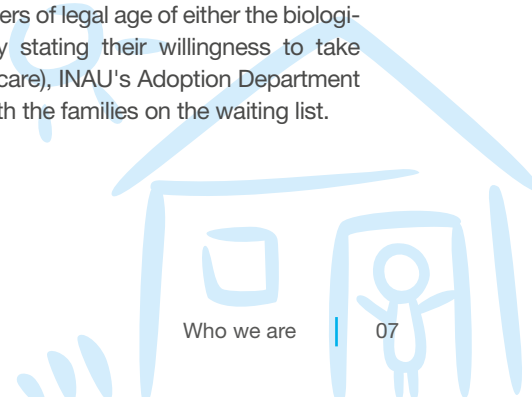
We also resort to this type of assistance to avoid the loss of family care, by providing the families with resources that will allow them to remain together.

### Adoption

Having the best interest of the children or adolescents at heart, whenever the conditions for re-bonding and reintegration are not present, another way to restore their right to family and community life is resorting to adoption.

Section 137 of the Childhood and Adolescence Code states that “the adoption of children and adolescents is an exceptional regime, the purpose of which is to assure their right to family life, and by virtue of which they enter their new family as sons or daughters, with full rights as such”.

In Uruguay, the governing and competent body for the selection of, and allocation to adoptive families is INAU. When all the adoptability requirements have been met for any child or adolescent under our Foster Care Service (that is, where there is a severe deterioration in the relationship, and there are no members of legal age of either the biological or extended family stating their willingness to take charge of the required care), INAU's Adoption Department initiates the process with the families on the waiting list.



## The autonomy processes

When all possibilities have been exhausted for the family reintegration or adoption of children and adolescents in our Foster Care Service, we work to help youths lead autonomous, independent lives as adults.

Each of our programs has a youth adviser assisting the adolescents and youths in planning their own independent status.

One of the youth adviser's responsibilities consists in expanding the range of possibilities for the life project of each adolescent, maximizing their skills and providing them with the wherewithal to lead an independent life, attain a steady job and social integration in a variety of settings. Once the youths are independent, the adviser continues being their go-to person, providing follow-up, support and guidance.

The youth advisers work coordinately with each program's management team and with the members of the technical teams. They are also in contact with caregivers and coordinate actions with other organizations and public bodies.

## Advocacy and influencing

The CRC, approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989, declared that children and adolescents are legal persons. This document is based on four principles: best interest, non-discrimination, participation and respect for life and development.

Uruguay incorporated the CRC to its national legislation one year after its approval and in 2004, lawmakers created the Childhood and Adolescence Code, a national body of laws based on the fundamental principles of the CRC.

Based on this legal framework, in Aldeas Infantiles Uruguay we have worked under agreement with INAU and coordinately with other civil society organizations, jointly with the commitment by State, community and families to assure the rights of children and adolescents.

## Uruguay ratified the CRC in 1990, undertaking to assure the rights of children and adolescents

This is why, in addition to providing direct care, we promote initiatives to amend existing laws and propose new bills and policies that may assure the fulfillment and exercise of the rights of children and adolescents.



**Vision:**

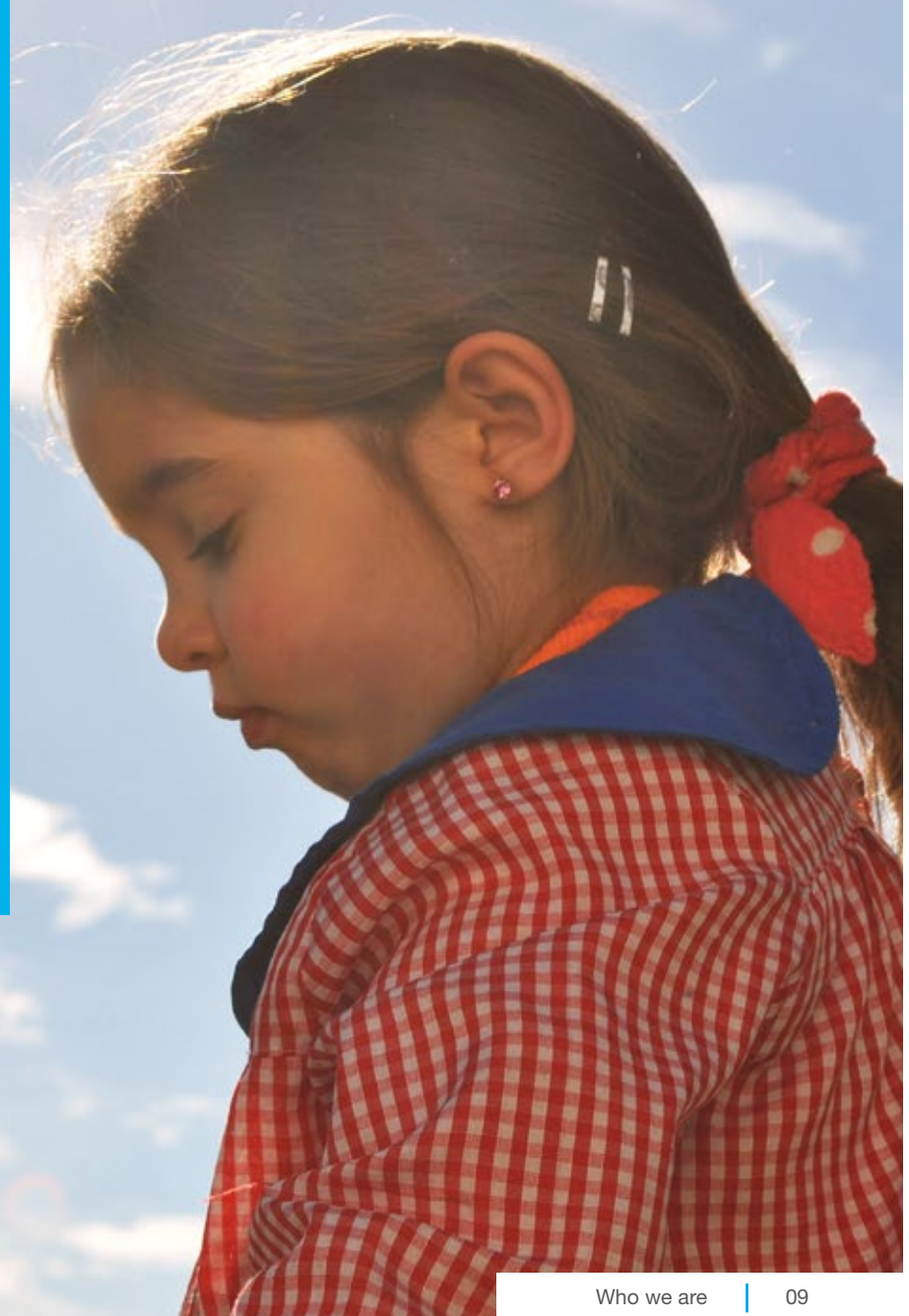
We believe that all children and adolescents should have a family where they may grow up loved, respected and safe. A healthy and loving family setting can assure them a harmonious development and turn them into adults fully integrated with their community.

**Mission:**

We provide a protective environment to the children and adolescents who need it and we support them in the construction of their own future.

**Values:**

We act boldly in favor of all children and adolescents in the world. We are committed to working with all stakeholders involved in child protection to achieve significant and lasting changes. Through trust, we build an environment of mutual respect where to learn and share our experiences. We assure high standards of care and work responsibly to guarantee child and adolescent welfare, while managing our resources accordingly.





## Members of the Board of Directors

The Board Of Directors consists of seven members (five of them, with their respective surrogates, are elected among the active members by the General Assembly; while the remaining two are representatives of SOS Kinderdorf International and designated by SOS Kinderdorf International), whose duty is the governance and management of Aldeas Infantiles SOS Uruguay.

The position of Director is honorary in nature and the term of office is three years, being eligible for reelection for up to five consecutive terms.



### **María Luisa von Metzen** - President

She became part of the Board in 2007 and has presided over it since 2013, but has been involved with Aldeas Infantiles SOS since its inception, thanks to her being friends with one of founder Ilse Kasdorf's daughters. Mainly dedicated to the arts, particularly drawing – which she also teaches – as well as decoration and painting, she has had her works exhibited in several countries of Latin America and Europe, but has managed to combine her artistic activities with working on her other fields of interest such as agriculture and forestry, while also assisting in the care of her eight grandchildren.



### **Gonzalo Trobo** - Vicepresident

He graduated as Doctor in Law and Social Sciences from the University of the Republic, also holding a Master's degree in Marriage and Family law from the University of Navarra, and a Doctor's degree in Law from the University of Zaragoza. He is a tenured Professor [Class 3] at Udelar (Universidad de la República), where he teaches Private Law I and VI. He has been a member of the Board of Directors since 2012.



### **Carlos Castiglioni** - Secretary

He became a member of the Board of Directors in 2013, and now holds the position of Secretary since March 2014. He has been involved with Aldeas Infantiles since many years ago through his father, Roberto Castiglioni, who was President of the Board from 1981 to 1986.



### **Ignacio Frechou** - Member

Holding a degree as certified public accountant graduated from Universidad de la República, he has taught at Universidad de la Empresa and ORT University. He is a partner in the legal, notarial and accounting firm of Frechou Abal, Banco & Investors Trust, and has been a member of the Board since 2014.



### **Álvaro Machado** - Member

He holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from ORT University, has worked in multinational companies for 20 years and currently is the National Sales Manager at Sherwin Williams. He became a member of the Board in 2016.



### **Johann Denk** - Representative of Children's Villages SOS International

He has been involved with Aldeas Infantiles SOS since 30 years back and has been part of the Board of Directors on behalf of Children's Villages International since 2013. From 1985 to 1990, he led the project for the creation and launching of the Florida's Village, and later on, acted as SOS Kinderdorf International's representative and as national coordinator of the Uruguayan Association of Aldeas Infantiles SOS, where he led the restructuring of the national office. Currently he is the Deputy International Director, LAAM Region, for SOS Kinderdorf International.



### **Andrea Bellolio** - Representative of Children's Villages SOS International

She holds a B.A. degree in Communication Sciences from Universidad de la República, completed a postgraduate course in International Business and Regional Integration at the ORT University, and holds a Master's degree in Direction of Corporate and Institutional Communication from the University of Barcelona. She has been a member of the Board of Directors on behalf of SOS Children's Villages International since 2015, and also since the same year and until June 2017, acted as SOS Children's Villages International's representative for Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay.





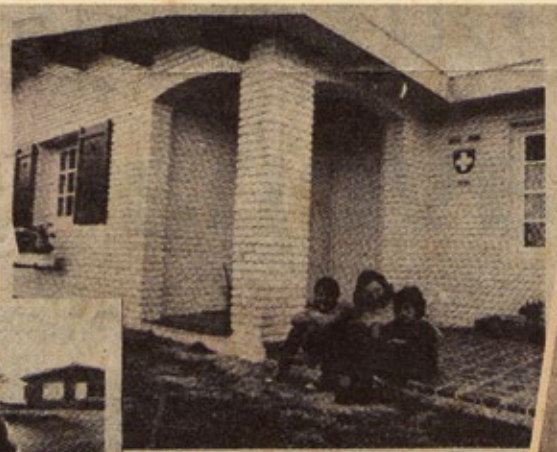


“Back then, by 1949 in Imst, I started out from nothing, with some school mates and a couple of women willing to help. When we started this project we had no money and nobody knew us, but we did have one thing: our firm belief that the path we wanted to follow was right and necessary.”

Hermann Gmeiner, founder of SOS Children's Villages



# PRIMERA ALDEA INFANTIL S.O.S URUGUAYA



Dr. Herman Gmeines, fundador y presidente de Aldeas Infantiles SOS, inauguró tres casas en el Parque Lecocó



## URUGUAY TENDRA UNA ALDEA INFANTIL



Un Sueño Sigue Tratando de ser Realidad: la Primera Aldea Infantil Uruguaya

EN EL PARQUE LECOQ

### Espera del Pueblo la Primera Aldea Infantil del Uruguay

El predio cedido por las autoridades comunales, con una superficie de 10.200 metros cuadrados, está ubicado junto al camino de acceso al Parque Lecocó, cerca de Santiago Vázquez. En él se levantarán las primeras viviendas de la Aldea Infantil (siete u ocho), las que contarán —en principio— con un jardín de infantes, plaza de juegos, una huerta y más adelante con un taller. Como



Tendremos a Breve Plazo La Primera Aldea Infantil

SERA CONSTRUIDA EN EL PARQUE LECOQ

### Toman Posesión hoy del Predio Donde se Construirá la Primera "Aldea Infantil"



Hoy a las 11 horas, en el Parque Indígena, contiguo al Parque Lecocó, será plantado un ceibo, como acto simbólico de la toma de posesión del predio donde se construirá la primera aldea infantil de Sudamérica. Asistirán autoridades, escolares, boy scouts, y se invita especialmente a la Comisión de Fomento de Santiago Vázquez.



# Inauguran hoy Aldea Infantil

## The first steps

The history of Children's Villages started around mid 20th century in Austria, with 600 shillings and a man who was an idealist and dreamer. Hermann Gmeiner was back then a young medical student who, appalled by the consequences of the European postwar, decided that he had to do something for the hundreds of children and adolescents who had lost family care.

"I had been in the war. I knew, from what I had seen, how many children there were, in Europe and beyond, swallowed by misery, how many little ones with their homes gone forever, how many children with no food, no love, no future. From that thought, the idea of children's villages was born."

This idea started to take shape when he made the first requests of support to make it happen. In the beginning, everyone was distrustful and called him Don Quixote. But shortly after, people started trusting his project, and the first financial contributions began to pour in.

In 1950, the construction of houses began, on land donated by the Imst municipality; and one year after that, on Christmas of 1951, the first Village was inaugurated in the Austrian state of Tyrol. Toward the '50s, the organization started being replicated in other European countries.

Ten years went by until one afternoon a woman, more than 12,000 kilometers away, while sitting in a doctor's waiting room, read in a magazine a story on Gmeiner's project. "This is what I must do!", she thought at that time.

Ilse Kasdorf was 38 years old, with two daughters and working as a librarian. She decided to write a letter to that unknown man who had inspired her: "I told him that I had no money, experience or contacts, but that I did have a great desire to follow his example and asked him how he felt about it." He

sent her literature, photographs and the organization's bylaws, and promised her his support in this venture.

Ilse travelled to Germany and Austria to see the Villages from up close. "When I met Hermann Gmeiner, he showed me one of his villages in Vienna, and said to me, filled with emotion: "Today is a great day for this program. With you, my European SOS Children's Villages Association will become international, because you will be taking and introducing my idea in your country, on another continent."

Upon her return, Ilse Kasdorf organized fundraisers, interviews in the media and informative talks in the most diverse venues. People started becoming aware of the proposal and getting enthusiastic about it, but still a major ingredient was missing: the land.

"During a year and a half I hounded the Montevideo Departmental Council and the Ministry of Public Education and Social Security. Constant dripping hollows out a stone! On September 6, 1960, the bylaws of our *Asociación Uruguaya de Aldeas Infantiles SOS* obtained their Legal Identity and the donation of a long-coveted tract of land, next to the Parque Lecocq. The talks on radio and TV, and at associations, clubs, companies, private and public schools and student organizations, and the newspaper articles, also started producing results."

After doggedly insisting with the Departmental Council, she obtained in 1962 a land site of more than 10,000 square meters at the access to Parque Lecocq.

Two years later, a house loaned in Parque del Plata (Canelones) started functioning as the first cohabitation center, with three children and a caregiver. In the meantime, construction in the village was progressing.



“During my visits to look at the construction work, I used to picture in my mind several houses leaping up amid the trees and greenery. I smiled and the workmen stared at me as if they thought I was crazy. In my free time I enjoyed going there and imagine the houses that would spring up. And so they did.”

A Parque Lecocq worker apologized to her some time later: “Please accept my apologies. We used to laugh so hard at you back then! We saw you leaning on the wire fence and just stare and stare... and there was nothing to stare at! We thought you were crazy!”

The first three houses were built with the support of Austria, Germany and Denmark. Then came the other houses, the Casa Rotary, Suiza, EE.UU. (Rotary, Switzerland, USA), and later the Río de la Plata, Ombú and Noruega (River Plate, Ombú and Norway) houses.

Thus it was that, thanks to a magazine and an enthusiastic woman who engaged in several battles against windmills, in a few years the first National Association of SOS Children’s Villages of Latin America had been born



Hermann Gmeiner on a visit in Uruguay



Ilse Kasdorf at the conveyance ceremony of the Montevideo Village site





“I started to explain in Uruguay the Aldeas concept, I wrote and translated articles, I spoke on the radio. I explained that what started out small might become big, and big might become grand. And thus, the first contributions started coming in.”

Ilse Kasdorf, founder of Aldeas Infantiles SOS Uruguay



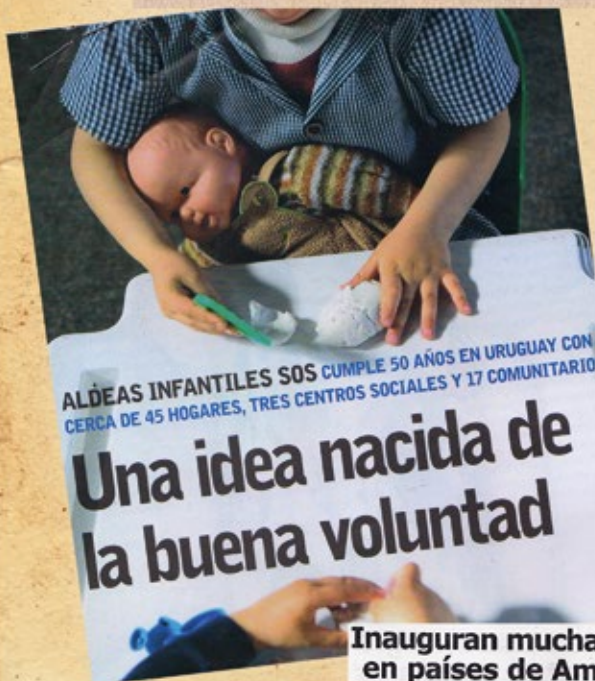


# *Ilse Kasdorf: un sueño que se hizo realidad*



**Aldeas Infantiles fue extendiendo su acción por el mundo hasta que se instaló en tierras uruguayas**

**La obra social de un visionario**



**ALDEAS INFANTILES SOS CUMPLE 50 AÑOS EN URUGUAY CON CERCA DE 45 HOGARES, TRES CENTROS SOCIALES Y 17 COMUNITARIOS**

**Una idea nacida de la buena voluntad**

**Inauguran muchas más aldeas en países de América Latina**



**“Escritora ¿para qué?, yo preferí a los niños”**

## Advancing in new directions

During the '80s, once the Montevideo village was on a firm footing, the organization started expanding inland. The year 1983 saw the beginning of the construction of the Salto village, on a tract of land donated by the municipal government. It was inaugurated two years later, at the same time that we obtained a site in Florida. The village in this department started functioning formally on 20 March 1990, although eight of its fifteen houses were already in operation nearly a year before. In that same year, Uruguay ratified the CRC.

Ten years later, our organization initiated a conversion process which involved not only providing a foster care solution to children and adolescents who had lost family care, but also working toward forestalling these situations. In 2003 the Family Strengthening Service started functioning with this purpose, and a year later we experimented for the first time with foster care in community houses, a modality that was definitely established by 2012.

Furthermore, the consolidation of the autonomy of the Canelones program (which had operated jointly with the Montevideo program until 2015) and of the Paysandú program (which had been previously annexed to the Salto program and was segregated from it in 2016) allowed to cover the needs of each of these territories in a more effective manner.

In the recent years, the organization has intensified its family strengthening work under agreement with INAU, by opening several CAIF centers that allow offering high quality standards of care to children and their families. We also ascribed relevance to the work developed by the Family Care Territorial Teams (FCTTs) in the department of Paysandú, a strategy that allows addressing jointly with Mides (Ministry Of Social Development) the strengthening of families undergoing vulnerable situations in a domestic

context. Working with the families is today a priority for our organization, since, in line with the CRC guidelines, the family unit (whatever its makeup) is the most appropriate setting for the welfare of each of its members.

Additionally, our work with youngsters, both at the Youth Center in Paysandú and in the preparation for exit of Foster Care Service participants, led us to placing emphasis on the transition-to-adulthood process. This is a stage involving particular complexities and requires a customized approach for each adolescent, in order to enhance the capabilities of each to live a fulfilling adulthood.

The ground covered over more than half a century inspires us to keep moving ahead in new directions that assure the rights of every child and adolescent to grow up in safe and protecting environments.



Hermann Gmeiner  
founds SOS Children's  
Villages in Austria.

The Foster Care Service  
starts operating in  
Montevideo with the first  
family unit under  
responsibility of the first  
social aunt in Parque del  
Plata (Canelones).

Opening of the  
Montevideo Village  
main building.

The Foster Care Service  
starts operating in Salto.  
A nine-hectare plot is  
obtained in Florida.

The Foster Care Service  
starts operating in Florida.

A house opens in  
Montevideo for the training of  
social aunts and other  
organization collaborators.

Uruguay ratifies the  
Convention on the Rights of  
the Child.

1949

1960

1964

1966

1979

1983

1985

1989

1990

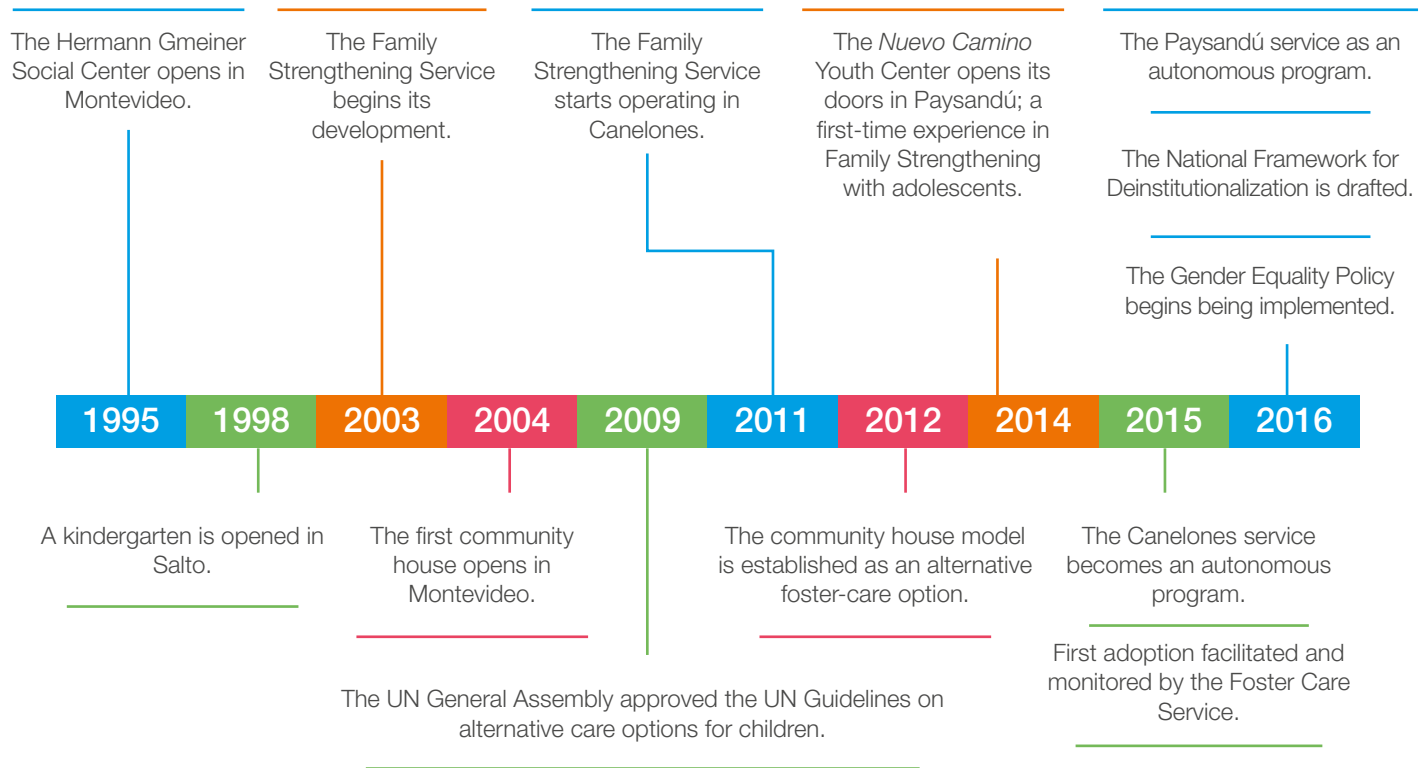
The SOS Aldeas  
Infantiles Uruguayan  
Assn. is founded.

The first village house opens  
on the land granted by the  
Montevideo Municipality  
(next to Parque Lecocq),  
under the name of Casa  
Dinamarca.

Construction of the  
Salto village begins.

The United Nations General  
Assembly approves the  
Convention on the Rights of  
the Child.









THIS IS  
HOW WE WORK





# Our coverage

## SALTO:

### Foster Care Service

- 12 houses in the Village
- 3 houses in the community
- 70 participating children and adolescents
- **Care-in-Context Modality:** 44 participating children and adolescents

### Family Strengthening Service

- 4 CAIFs
- 1 family development space
- 1 Children's Club
- 601 participating children
- 511 participating families

## PAYSANDÚ:

### Family Strengthening Service

- 2 family development spaces
- 1 Youth Center
- 1 FCTT
- 242 participating children and adolescents
- 150 participating families

## MONTEVIDEO:

### Foster Care Service

- 13 houses in the Village
- 4 houses in the community
- 85 participating children and adolescents
- **Care-in-Context Modality:** 50 participating children and adolescents

### Family Strengthening Service

- 2 CAIF
- 164 participating children
- 138 participating families

## FLORIDA:

### Foster Care Service

- 13 houses in the village
- 6 houses in the community
- 93 participating children and adolescents
- **Modalidad de Atención en Contexto:** 29 niños, niñas y adolescentes participantes

### Family Strengthening Service

- 1 CAIF
- 2 family development spaces
- 163 participating children
- 162 participating families

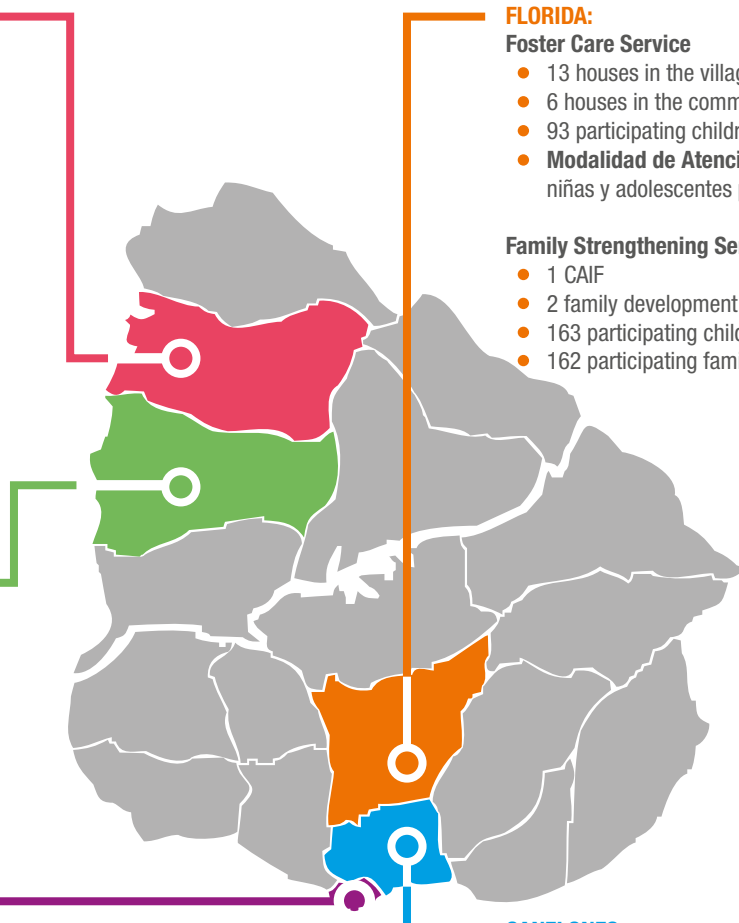
## CANELONES:

### Foster Care Service

- 7 houses in the community
- 43 participating children and adolescents
- **Care-in-Family-Context Modality:** 4 participating children and adolescents

### Family Strengthening Service

- 2 CAIFs
- 241 participating children
- 228 participating families



## At the close of 2016, we had



32.763

INDIVIDUAL DONORS



80

CORPORATE FRIENDS



127.724

NUMBER OF SOLIDARITY SMS



7

EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING  
CAMPAIGNS



# Our work in Uruguay

## Program Development

Our organization includes a Program Development function, dedicated to coordinating the work strategies for each of the affiliates. We underline below the advances made during 2016:

### Deinstitutionalization

With the purpose of reinforcing and promoting the actions conducive to deinstitutionalization that were already being deployed during the preceding years, in 2016 we drafted the Aldeas Infantiles Uruguay National Framework for Deinstitutionalization (see Annex I). Placing emphasis on fulfilling the rights of children and adolescents to family and community life, the document included conceptual and operating guidelines for advancing toward deinstitutionalization in our programs.

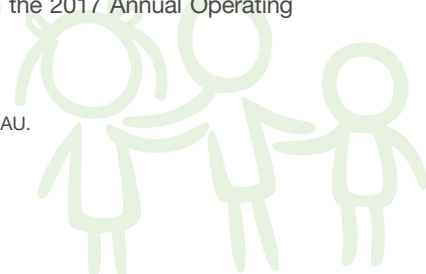
- Prevent family separation through our Family Strengthening Services.
- Promote and provide organizational support to the deinstitutionalization projects of children and adolescents scheduled for family restoration or adoption.
- Provide institutional momentum to the Family Foster Care modality and develop it as a preferential option through the coordinated efforts of Aldeas Infantiles and INAU.
- Develop care options of quality, innovative and more community integrated.
- Advocate to influence the implementation of public policies promoting deinstitutionalization, both locally and nationally.

We organized meetings and workshops addressing the topic with the management teams, technical teams and direct care personnel in our programs, to assure that the document would be understood, and discuss its implications and the actions to be taken.

Furthermore, we participated in the round table made up by FIPAM (Private Institutions Federation for the Care of Minors)<sup>1</sup> and INAU, to discuss the advance of the Uruguayan protection system toward deinstitutionalization.

Deinstitutionalization also left an important footprint in the planning processes. It set the course for the 2017 National Strategic Plan, impacted coverage and budget projections and introduced key contents in the 2017 Annual Operating Plans prepared by all the Programs at the close of 2016.

<sup>1</sup> Organization grouping all the Uruguayan associations who manage fulltime care projects under agreement with INAU.

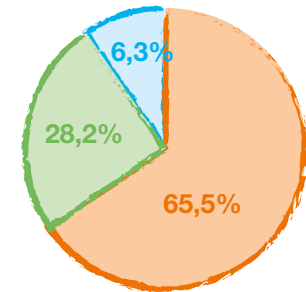


## Restoration and Care in Context

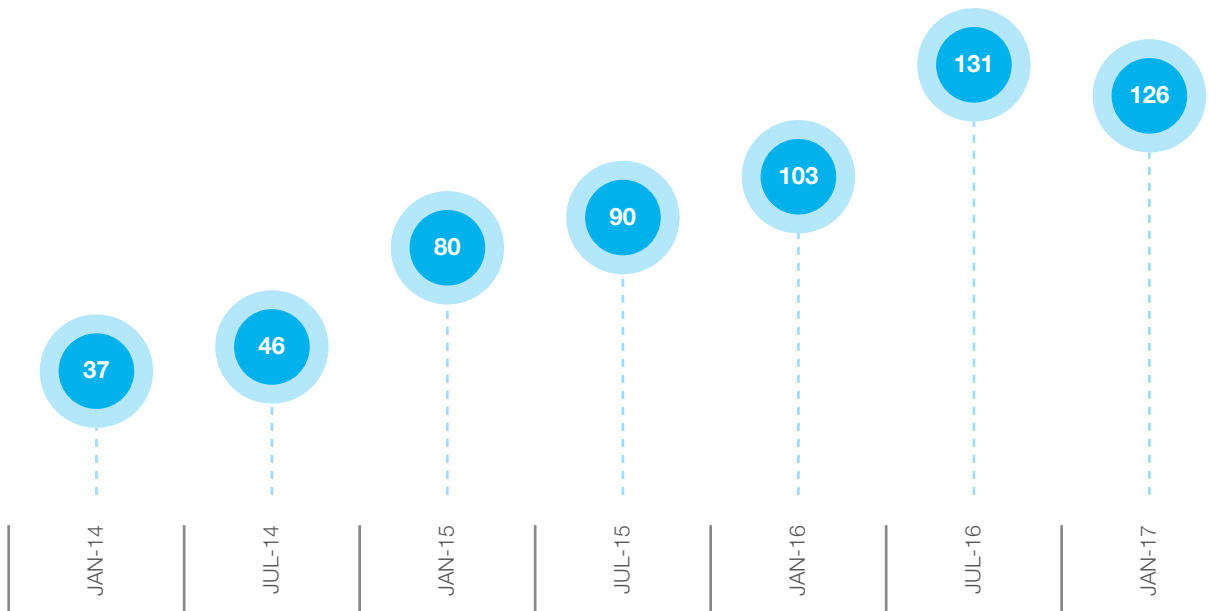
The processes of restoration and of working with the families are a key element for advancing toward deinstitutionalization.

Currently, each program has solid teams working on providing support to families, and sufficient resources funding this strategy.

December 2016 Care modality	Number of children and adolescents
Foster Care	292
Support to the process of family. restoration	126
Support to the autonomy process	28
Total children and adolescents	446



During 2016, the number of children and adolescents restored to their families under the Care-in-Context modality continued to increase.



## Caring in a family setting

**The Institute for Children and Adolescents of Uruguay and the civil-society organizations who are part of the protection system, such as Aldeas Infantiles, are implementing care options other than the traditional institutional care, to assure the right of growing up in a family.**

For every three months spent in an institution, a young child recedes one month in its development<sup>1</sup>. Given the negative impact on their growth and their exposure to different kinds of violence, the institutionalization of children and adolescents should be an exceptional measure. Moreover, children or adolescents under institutional care are prevented from exercising their right to family and community life.

Law No. 18,590, passed in 2009, states under section 134 that children of up to 2 years of age cannot remain in institutional facilities longer than 45 days, and that for children from 2 up to 7 years of age, the prescribed maximum length of stay is 90 days.

“In the age range from 0 to 5 years, there cannot be any child in need of comprehensive protection who is not in a family setting”, states Fernando Rodríguez, director of INAU.

With the purpose of promoting processes of disinternation<sup>2</sup>, INAU launched this year the Friendly Family<sup>3</sup> campaign, which involves calling on Uruguayan families to apply for the temporary care of a child or adolescent deprived of family care. A total of 200 families enrolled during the first stage of the campaign, half of them from Montevideo and Canelones. “The number of children and adolescents in institutional care is still excessive. The Friendly Family initiative intends recruiting a sufficient number of families to assure the full coverage in a family setting of children from 0 to 5 years old, who currently amount to approximately 550 boys and girls” comments Rodríguez.

In addition to this plan, another initiative calls for converting the 150 traditional fulltime homes (whether official or under agreement with civil-society organizations) into Foster Care and Family Strengthening Centers (CAFFs).

“Each center, essentially those providing service to the younger children, shall have a minimal number of children in residence for the shortest time possible, such as set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child”, adds Rodríguez.

“INAU proposes that the Friendly Family program be also managed by the fulltime projects [future CAFF centers]. This allows the monitoring by one single project of the children under institutional care in Care in Context and in Family Care<sup>4</sup>. This is a wise strategy, because it allows the seamless streamlining of each child’s or adolescent’s project”, says the National Director of Aldeas Infantiles SOS Uruguay, Ananés Zignago.

The Friendly Family initiative focuses on the disinternation of children younger than 5 years old. In the case of Aldeas Infantiles, the average age of children participating in our Foster Care service is 12 years old. Accordingly, one of the ways devised by our organization to reinforce the deinstitutionalization mechanisms, is the possibility of implementing the Extended Family system<sup>5</sup>.

“We see in the Extended Family system a project that offers to those adolescents who have been assessed for a longer stay, the possibility of living under family foster care”, states Zignago.

### Covered ground

Aldeas Infantiles SOS Uruguay, as part of the national system of childhood protection under agreement with the State, provides by its Foster Care service an institutional care that is alternative to that of the family, when the family separation is inevitable.

Nevertheless, starting in 2003 with the implementation of the Family Strengthening Service (whereby we provide direct care to children and adolescents while at the same time working with the families to strengthen their care capabilities and avoid separation), we started focusing our efforts on prevention and promotion of the right to grow up in a family.

In this sense, in 2012 the alternative modality of care in community houses became established. This option allows children and adolescents to have a wider social circulation and a better community integration, by living in houses under the care of a caregiver.

At the same time, the service places emphasis on the restoration of those children and adolescents to their families, by working with the latter on strengthening their care capabilities and facilitating their access to supporting networks, so that they may improve aspects relative to jobs, housing, healthcare and upbringing guidelines. Once a restoration has been completed, the program sets in motion protocols for the technical and financial support of the families (Care in Context). This modality may also function as a mechanism for the prevention of family separation.

Currently, a third of the children and adolescents participating in our Foster Care Service have moved on to live with their families of origin, who are supported by the Care-in-Context program. The number of restorations has significantly increased over the recent years.

On the other hand, in 2015 Aldeas Infantiles facilitated the first adoption, and concluded a second one in the same year. Currently there are 25 children (5.5% of the total enrolled participants) who are at different stages of this process.

As a result of these actions, in 2016 we prepared an institutional framework for deinstitutionalization, aimed at reinfor-

cing our work on these aspects, with the purpose that the children and adolescents participating in the Aldeas Infantiles programs may fulfill their right of growing up in a family.

“We have made huge progress in the processes of return to the family and adoption – claims Zignago. In order to continue with the deinstitutionalization processes, we look favorably on the Friendly Family campaign and the impact that Family Foster Care is having. We actually believe that we can, and feel the need – from a perspective of rights – to achieve that many children and adolescents who are in institutional care may move on to modalities of family foster care.”

“Aldeas has been working with us very effectively, and we in turn with Aldeas, to consolidate a CAFF methodology. We have expectations that this joint work may intensify and continue. This is an organization with a lot of history, and a significant track record in the care of children. Moreover, its work in the implementation of CAIFs and other protocols reveals an internal philosophy of work more oriented to prevention, promotion and community, which we consider to be a very good sign”, adds Rodríguez.

<sup>1</sup> John Williamson and Aaron Greenberg, *Families, Not Orphanages*, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> INAU uses the term disinternation to refer to the processes allowing that less children and adolescents live under traditional fulltime care projects. Aldeas Infantiles uses for the same concept the term deinstitutionalization.

<sup>3</sup> Non-related Family (Friendly Family): Short-term family foster care for children and adolescents contemplating restorations or adoptions.

<sup>4</sup> Family foster care: Protocols for the care of children and adolescents in family settings.

<sup>5</sup> Extended Family: Family foster care for children and adolescents with significant caregivers (not blood relatives, but actually affinity-related).



## Working with adolescents and youths

During 2016 we concentrated on working with adolescents and youths through several actions:

### **Research: The exit of adolescents and youths from the protection system**

In the context of an international advocacy campaign, we conducted a research —unprecedented in our country— conducive to intensifying and promoting the analysis of the main difficulties, options and challenges faced by youngsters in their process of becoming independent while exiting from alternative care modalities.

### **Standardized guideline on customized plans for adolescents and youths.**

We produced a general national guideline that allows classifying and organizing the achievements of all adolescents and youths in their progress toward autonomy, and apply this data to their individual plans, via a matrix containing indicators of expected results. Such achievements may be classified into eight key categories: a family and emotional bonding network, personal issues, education, recreation, healthcare, habitat and environment, financial security, and participation and citizenship.

### **Creating a software of customized plans for youths and their monitoring**

Based on the need to enhance the recording of technical interventions and standardize the autonomy processes of youths, our Assessment, Research and Monitoring area led the design and implementation of a data management platform that allows greater efficiency in follow-ups and supervisions, and in assessing the impact of daily interventions.

### **Videogame for adolescents and youths**

We developed, through an alliance between Aldeas Uruguay and ORT University of Uruguay, a videogame intended for the adolescent participants of the Foster Care Service. This videogame, associated with the Standardized Guideline on Care Plans for Youths, is meant to put to the test the youths' skills and practical knowledge necessary for autonomy.



## The exit of adolescents and youths from the protection system

The transition to adulthood is one of the most important stages in the life course of any person. In 2016, hundreds of youths exited the protection system —most of them from residential care centers— to start living independently, facing the multiple challenges of adult life after having undergone lengthy institutionalization periods.

In terms of an advocacy campaign promoted by SOS Children's Villages International on youths exiting the protection system, Aldeas Infantiles SOS Uruguay (a country selected, together with Belgium, as pilot for the implementation of the campaign) performed a nationwide research with the purpose of analyzing the exit processes and how they are undergone by the adolescents, and subsequently producing input to improve the work of operators, technical experts and educators in the foster care homes.

The research adopted as subject of study two sub-populations: 16-18-year-old adolescents still living within the protection system, and youths of ages between 18 and 23 years who have recently exited from it. For that purpose, the researchers visited 19 residential facilities in the eight departments with the largest percentage of institutionalized adolescents and youths (Montevideo, Canelones, Durazno, Colonia, Maldonado, Cerro Largo, Salto and Artigas), and conducted interviews with authorities, direct-care teams, autonomy program coordinators, adolescents and youths living under alternative care modalities, and youths who have exited and already gone through the process

### The transition toward adulthood as a right

According to the results of the research, the absence of institutional projects to guide the foster care homes on the process of exit (which leads to each home applying different approaches), the lack of training on the subject of the protection system operators and the scarce cooperation of the State organizations with INAU, are all factors that contribute in most cases to an inadequate preparation for exit, and that this process should not be generally viewed as a right of youths and adolescents.

"It is necessary to understand the exit as a right, as a process that requires preparation and that it should be planned and supported, not viewed as an automatic episode that occurs when youths turn 18 years old", states the sociologist Daniela Kaiser, leader of the research project.

The main difficulties faced by the youths exiting institutional care relate to the effects of the long institutionalization periods, history of abuse and/or negligence, lack of bonding networks, lack of emotional support, mental health problems, low educational level and/or difficulties to get a job.

In addition to these aspects, many of these youths are stigmatized and presumed to be in trouble with the law. This also reflects on their difficulties to enter the labor market, although it is not necessarily a direct consequence: "The difficulties to access a job are not necessarily linked to the stigmatization, but rather to the low educational levels and lack of contacts derived from not having solid family networks", comments Kaiser.

Most of the direct care personnel interviewed are of the opinion that to expect full autonomy at the age of 18 in youths that have lived through long institutionalization periods is unrealistic.

"A youth who is escorted to a doctor's appointment by the educator, or who is visited by the doctor at the care home, who does not know how to circulate through the city, who does not know how to manage a budget because they have had no access to money, will have a hard time leading an independent life", she adds.

### Recommendations

In order to achieve successful exits, the support should be directed to developing tangible skills —related to education, jobs, housing, daily domestic budget management— as well as intangible —the ability to make decisions, plan, communicate, acquire social skills.

The research suggested some recommendations on the processes of exit from the protection system, such as overriding the foster care rationale still prevailing in some institutions and promoting autonomy (through family restoration) from the very moment when the child or adolescent enters the protection system.

For this purpose, it is recommended to prepare a standard protocol that takes into account the peculiarities and needs of each adolescent and youth in their preparation for adulthood, promotes the right of youths to participate in planning their exit, devises training programs for educators and direct-care personnel, and outlines strategies for post-exit support.



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## Times of change

### **Aldeas Infantiles develops a care plan to reinforce the strategies for the autonomy processes of youths.**

Looking for a job, deciding on a vocation, handling finances, getting a place to live, thinking ahead: advancing to adulthood is one of the toughest challenges in anyone's life. Adding to this the consequences of years of institutionalization and fragile family or community networks, only increases the complexity of the issue.

Given the need to solidify the strategies conducive to the gradual autonomy of youths about to exit the Foster Care service, we developed in 2016 the Standardized Guideline on Care Plans for Youths, which allows to work on a series of aspects relative to adult life.

"The project involved asking ourselves: what are the capabilities that an adolescent need developing to exit the protection system when they come of age?", comments Pablo Perlaza, youth adviser at the Canelones program.

To this end, our initial approach was to work with youths through eight parameters: citizenship and participation, financial security, personal issues, education, healthcare and nutrition, habitat and environment, recreation and an emotional and family bonding network. Each of these areas sets up five targets (skills that the youths must develop or learn) which constitute a work guide for the

youth advisers and include teaching the adolescent a variety of subjects, from how to access a health service to how to cook healthy meals or apply for an electoral card.

"The wider number of skills a youth acquires, the better will be their chances of a more autonomous citizenship. The strategy seeks to improve the youths' development curve, by helping them to meet those targets while accordingly reducing their need of support", he states.

To Perlaza, the importance of this plan lies in that "it is necessary that the concept of autonomy be present in the care provided by caregivers, technical experts and the whole team. It is often believed that autonomy occurs per se, but it has become increasingly evident that it is necessary to work intensively developing it."

All the programs that include Foster Care Service (Montevideo, Canelones, Florida and Salto) are currently at the pilot stage of implementation of a virtual platform that allows contrasting the targets of each parameter with the victories achieved by each youth, and consequently facilitate their follow-up and monitoring. This makes it possible to not only assess the effectiveness of processes, but also to perfect the strategy.

### **The Farmer: a videogame that supports the autonomy processe**

In line with this action plan, a team of students of the ORT University in Uruguay designed a videogame as an exit tool, allowing the youths to internalize, through a computer simulation, the autonomy issues that they are likely to encounter.

The Farmer is a question-and-answer game —set in a scenario depicting a farm— including questions relative to the eight parameters, in addition to other categories.

The game seeks to promote the acquisition of skills and competencies, incorporate knowledge, cash management, decision making and problem resolution, while at the same time providing significant input to the technical teams on the processes of each youth.

A number of adolescents were asked to participate in the development stage of the game, with the purpose of having them provide feedback on details such as design, appeal and gameplay.

“The videogame was a very interesting idea, because beyond the follow-up and assessment to be performed by the technical team, the main advantage is that the youngsters themselves are the ones providing the indicators or clues as to how far they have progressed in their capabilities”, says Perlaza.



### **Alliances allowing youths to access training and jobs**

Our Strategic Alliances area established and strengthened alliances with other entities, in order to support adolescents and youths in their processes of getting ready for an independent life. Along this line, we concluded an agreement with *Unión de Vendedores de Nafta del Uruguay* (Fuel Retailers Association of Uruguay) and the *Chic Parisien* firm, for the job placement of youths.

We also concluded agreements with private educational centers for technical courses; and with the Forge Foundation and HCC-Human Capital Consulting for the development of cross-cutting competencies that may provide useful tools to the youths initiating their independent life.

Furthermore, we submitted to the National Institute of Employment and Professional Education (Inefop) a project for the training of youths in the area of gastronomy and hostelry, to be fully financed by this institute.

### **National meetings of youth counselors.**

Youth advisers are technical experts supporting the adolescents and youths in Foster Care Service in the process of constructing their autonomy, maximizing their capabilities and steering them toward the development of tools for their adult life.

The national meeting of youth advisers turned out to be a very important event for planning, strategy determination, development of tools, the sharing of best practices, and implementation of actions to improve care and the work being done with adolescents and youths.

## Working with INAU

Our work in this area focused on advocating — through the group of organizations providing full-time protection under agreement with INAU — the methodological changes that are being incorporated to the protection system via the Foster Care and Family Strengthening Centers (CAFFs).

We also intensified our efforts to conclude new alliances with the State through an agreement signed with the Integrated Care System division of Mides (Ministry of Social Development), so that children of ages 0 to 3 years living with their families of origin and in a vulnerable situation may participate of our family development spaces and be granted the Social and Educational Inclusion Scholarships.

Regarding the CAIF Plan agreements, in 2016 we opened four centers: *Verdisol* (Montevideo), *La Paz* (Canelones), *San Eduardo* and *Salto Nuevo Sur* (Salto). We are currently managing 8 CAIFs nationwide.



Opening of the Verdisol CAIF

## Monitoring, Assessment and Research

The monitoring, assessment and research system that we implement at all levels of the National Association allows us to acquire the necessary information, perform the required analysis and obtain the relevant knowledge for a timely and efficient decision-making process. We publish monthly statistical reports with data on the population assisted by all our services, and throughout the year we monitor key indicators on the development of the participating children and adolescents. Additionally, we perform annually focalized studies devised by the National Directors and the program directors, intended to provide data and input on specific topics.

During 2016, we produced reports on the educational and employment situation of youths in the process of becoming independent, and on the healthcare and educational situation of the Foster Care Service participants; we participated in drafting institutional projects and surveyed information for diagnosing the gender issue on a national level, among other tasks.

## Advocacy

Throughout the year, we continued our advocacy in favor of the promotion and protection of rights of the children, adolescents and their families, and we worked strongly toward the empowerment of youngsters.

Along this line, we implemented a campaign created by Children's Villages International, centered on the exit of youths from the protection system. The funds raised by this campaign served to complete the research *The exit of adolescents and youths from the protection system*.

We also monitored the implementation of an exit-with-housing intersectoral project, an initiative that from the outset received the contribution and participation of Aldeas Infantiles Uruguay and which is scheduled to be universally implemented in the medium term, by creating

housing solutions for youths who are in the process of obtaining autonomy.

Regarding our relationship with other organizations, networks and institutions, we continued participating in the *Red Pro Cuidados* (Pro Care Network) —a forum for coordination and discussion with government authorities— and we participated in the implementation of the Social Dialogue convened by the Government.

## Child protection

In 2016, we worked throughout the year on strengthening and intensifying the Child Protection Policy (CPP), with the purpose of providing quality care in terms of the rights of children and adolescents to lead a life free of violence.

Under this national perspective, we supported the creation and strengthening of the Local Protection Committees, both for the Foster Care and the Family Strengthening services, so that each community would be able to determine priorities and work on the awareness, prevention and care in situations of child vulnerability. On the other hand, the National Prevention Committee (NPC) functioned on a periodical frequency, visiting the programs, supporting, advising and determining priorities, as well as promoting the creation of protective environments for children and adolescents.

We continued addressing topics that had been dealt with during 2015, —such as positive upbringing, sexual exploitation, abusive practices among peers and child participation— intensifying and reinforcing the theoretical and methodological aspects.

As in previous years, we participated actively in the Regional Child Protection Network, supporting and contributing to the topics proposed, and attended its annual meeting held in Guatemala.



Additionally, our Program Development and Organizational Human Development areas organized training events for the caregivers, through study units that

addressed incrementally key topics for their work with children and adolescents, with specific sessions dedicated to child protection.

### Training of direct-care personnel

In 2016, we implemented a training method for the Foster Care service caregivers, via theoretical and real-life experience workshops.

We addressed subjects such as the structure and operation of our organization (history, services, coverage), the Child Protection Policy, the duties and responsibilities of the caregiver role, home budget management, the psychoevolutionary development in children, the reasons for family separation and the damages inflicted by it, among other topics.

The contributions and needs stated by the participants provided useful input to reformulate and modify the strategy, which received wide approval.

Outcomes of the training workshops:

**46** caregivers (40% of the total direct-care personnel)

**291** training hours

**23** workshop speakers and attendants

**100 %** level of satisfaction with the initiative



### Gender

During the course of 2016 we advanced on the implementation of our Gender Policy, addressed to children and adolescents participating in our programs, as well as to all collaborators of our organization.

The policy is based on five principles:

1. Prevent all kinds of violence against children, adolescents and women.
2. Emphasize the equality of opportunities so that

children and adolescents may access all levels of formal and informal education.

3. Emphasize awareness in children, adolescents and caregivers on the subjects of sexual and reproductive health, and promote maternal healthcare for girls and women.

4. Deal with the gender barriers through the financial empowerment of the families of origin.

5. Transform gender inequalities and develop capabilities to promote gender equality throughout our organization.

In 2016, we prepared a National Gender Plan and implemented an action plan in the Salto program, to be replicated across all our programs.

As part of the Salto events, we held workshops on sexuality and gender awareness and on gender-based violence. Moreover, in Paysandú, Florida, Canelones and Montevideo we organized focus groups and questionnaires on the subject with the program collaborators.

Additionally, we participated in the I Meeting of the Regional Gender Team at La Paz, Bolivia, where we shared the Salto pilot experience and exchanged experiences about the creation of awareness on the Gender Equality Policy, the Support Document led by the Regional Office and the XIII Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, organized by the Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean (Eclac), with the support of Inmujeres and the Government of Uruguay.

We also included a gender perspective in our work with the adolescents participating in the Nuevo Camino Youth Center through its Wandering Library project, where they explored the role of women in our national literature.

free", says one of the adolescents, while she checks out the chat on her cell phone without raising her eyes. Among the group, some of the girls do not utter a word. Others giggle nervously and only a couple dare to speak out with blunt candor: "In a relationship, both parties must respect one another. Respect is the first thing."

Talking about gender is not always a comfortable topic. It may clash with traditionally established and naturalized practices, confront prejudices, taboos, lack of information, and even personal experiences which may be hard to process.

Over the recent years, the subject has come forcefully to the forefront due to the dramatic statistics: in Uruguay, one gender-based violence complaint is filed every 17 minutes, countrywide. In total, between January and October of 2016, the complaints amounted to 24,454. Complaints pile up, femicides do not cease. Marches are increasingly attracting women, men, girls and boys who interrupt traffic in the streets to say "Enough!" to the most brutal expressions of gender violence, but also to the more veiled, hidden gender inequalities, that is, an outcry for women to earn the same wages as men if similarly qualified, that no jobs should be termed "women's jobs", that children and adolescents may grow up in environments free of violence.

### Policy in action

In the context of implementation of the Aldeas Infantiles Gender Policy (which seeks to bring up a critical analysis of the organizational structures and relationships from a gender perspective), the Salto program organized in August a training event entrusted to the El Paso Civil Association.

## This is something we do talk about

**In the context of implementation of the Aldeas Infantiles Gender Policy, the Salto and Paysandú programs hosted workshops on gender-based violence and sexuality**

"Society wants us to be all alike; parents, that we be as they were, and we, we want to be as we are and be

This event —addressed to the technical and management team, caregivers, maintenance personnel and adolescents— was intended to instill awareness and inform about gender-based violence by discussing its dynamics, the damages inflicted at an individual and collective level and the processes to be developed for protection and recovery-reparation.

Also, a workshop was held on gender and sexuality awareness, seeking the acquisition of the conceptual and methodological tools necessary to incorporate a gender equality perspective and promote the sexual and reproductive rights of children and adolescents.

“We were shown the female condom. I did not know about it. I thought there were condoms only for men”, commented one of the adolescents.

Both events —which provided not merely theoretical knowledge, but also practical tools— were very positively viewed.

Additionally, in Paysandú two discussion focus groups were organized with the program’s direct-care and technical teams, with the purpose of analyzing how do they apply the gender-equality concepts to their work, and discuss the organization’s capability for addressing and incorporating gender-related challenges.

During 2017, the work via focus groups and awareness workshops will be replicated across all the other Aldeas programs nationwide. According to the caregivers, the importance of integrating gender equality into the everyday life of children and adolescents emerges as one of the key assumptions for the achievement of respectful, violence-free environments. “The gender subjects must be talked about, because otherwise, you don’t move forward —says Alda—. I know people who still think that women exist only for

breeding and cooking. And sometimes it’s so hard to believe that anyone might have such a concept of women. Changes in attitude must be made to happen every day.”



## The Canelones Program

- Intensified autonomy of the program.
- Our coverage in community houses was increased, with the purpose of promoting the participants' development in the community.
- The La Paz CAIF was opened in a new site.
- Intensified work on family restorations.
- Our CAIF centers consolidated their status as point of reference for the community.
- Coordination of our activities with other local organizations.
- Mapping of new strategies for working with adolescents and youths.
- Training of our direct-care and technical teams in actions conducive to deinstitutionalization





## The Florida Program

- Reinforced interaction between the Foster Care and Family Strengthening teams for the follow-up of family restorations
- Efficient management of our resources; we paid our accounts in full and generated savings
- Training sessions provided on occupational safety and first aid
- We strengthened our ties with the Departmental Government, who cooperated with us through the maintenance of roads and lighting at the Florida Village, and granted scholarships to the participants for sports activities such as pool swimming and ping-pong
- Continued agreement with the Sin Límites equestrian center, for hippotherapy activities
- Articulation of work strategies with the Educational Transition program and the Training and Production Center
- Strengthened cooperation strategy with INAU and the Ministry of Public Health
- We facilitated the participation of children and adolescents in socio-educational activities and workshops
- Intensified deinstitutionalization processes
- Consolidated special protocol for the care of male children and adolescents with disabilities and/or psychiatric disorders
- Renovation of our spaces
- We participated in several networks with other local organizations, and took part in community activities of interest
- Support provided for the collection, classification and distribution of donations for the flood victims

- We prioritized investing resources on mental health services
- Follow-up performed on 31 children and adolescents in family restoration
- Advances were made in implementing family development plans



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## The Montevideo Program

- Implementation of a new personnel structure, in order to provide better services
- Advances in our customized follow-up of participants in development plans, and in the recording of best practices and daily successes
- Increased support of, and emotional assistance to caregivers
- Efficient management of our budget; debt-free at end of year
- Optimized space infrastructure
- We opened the Verdisol CAIF
- 4 restoration processes concluded
- A support teacher is available for participants of the Foster Care Service with learning difficulties, and healthcare assistance from psychotherapists, speech therapists, psychomotricity specialists and educational psychologists.
- Agreement concluded with the Catholic University's School of Nutrition to devise healthy menus for the participants.
- Improvement of the village sports fields thanks to an agreement with the Celeste Foundation and Direct TV
- Opening of a small sports training center and consolidation of our basketball team, the Dragons
- Workshops on cyberbullying and sexuality
- Intensified work with adolescents and youths, creation of listening spaces and support provided for development of their skills and capabilities for an autonomous life.





## The Paysandú Program

- Coordination of our work with local and national networks
- Assistance provided to families affected by the floods and renovation of the Vista Hermosa family development space, which had been also damaged by the floods
- Modified care profile at the Family Care Territorial Team (FCTT), in order to offer a higher quality service
- Implementation of the Wandering Library project with the Nuevo Camino Youth Center participants
- Educational work on gender issues with the adolescents
- Purchase of a container to create a reading room intended not only for the Nuevo Camino youngsters but for the entire community as well



## The Salto Program

- Implementation of a gender-related pilot via workshops on sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence
  - Promotion of children's and adolescents' participation in extracurricular activities, such as dancing, football, swimming, hockey and reiki
  - Creation of therapeutical treatment spaces for the participants
  - Continued agreement with the School of Psychology, whereby advanced students provide cognitive stimulation to children and adolescents
  - Two supporting teachers in place for students with learning difficulties
  - Alliance with the Regional Teachers Center, to secure additional educational support
  - Support to 23 children and adolescents in family restoration status
  - Participation in local and national trainings
  - New agreements concluded with the CAIF Plan. We took on the management of the Nuevo Don Atilio CAIF and additionally, we opened the Nuevo Uruguay and the San Eduardo CAIFs.
  - Opening of the level 1 room on the Nuevo Uruguay CAIF for the care of 12 children of between 12 and 24 months old, as a nationwide pilot experience.
  - In every one of our spaces, we have developed a work plan based on the prevention of abusive situations.
  - Occupational workshops for families
  - Renewed alliance with the Catholic University for the training of adults on ventures management
- We are members of the Early Childhood and Gender Coordinator Departmental Committees.
- Assistance rendered to the families affected by the floods
- Strengthened ties with local businesses, with a view to attaining sustainability



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An SOS Friend is the person who, by means of a monthly contribution, supports Aldeas Infantiles so that we can develop our programs nationwide.

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If you already are an Aldeas Friend and wish to increase your contribution, please get in touch with us to continue aiding Uruguayan children and adolescents













# Solidarity legacy

The solidarity legacy is an outstanding gesture of responsibility and generosity that consists in an expression of will, written and signed by anyone wishing to leave their material possessions to our organization and thus extend their solidarity to the future generations.

To learn more about the procedure for leaving material goods to Aldeas Infantiles, please call +598 2400-2353.



## What is the International Sponsorship?

The International Sponsorship is offered to persons and organizations from abroad who wish to make a monthly contribution. The sponsor may choose whether to assist directly a boy or girl or rather contribute to the development of a village. This contribution makes it possible for Uruguayan children and youths to grow up in a safe, loving and protecting environment, and creates a bond that becomes increasingly stronger over time through ongoing communication.

### Why sponsor a child or adolescent participant of Aldeas Infantiles SOS Uruguay?

Sponsoring a child or adolescent through Aldeas Infantiles will allow you to witness the development experienced by that child or adolescent during their life at the village or community house. By being a sponsor, you will be able to:

- write to your godchildren;
- visit your godchildren at the village or community house where they live in (by previously arranged appointment)

- send presents to your godchildren for their birthdays or other special occasions;
- follow their development through half-yearly progress letters, where you will be able to appreciate the impact of your contribution.

**In 2016, over 90 % of the children and adolescents in the Foster Care service had an international godfather or godmother.**





## Beyond borders

**Barbara and Susanne live more than 11,000 km away from Elena and Alejandro\*. They have never been to Uruguay, but twice a year they receive mail with stamps from this part of the world, a moment that is anxiously awaited by both of them. They are a part of the nearly 3,200 persons within the International Sponsorship program, which supports the development of Uruguayan children and adolescents cared for by Aldeas Infantiles.**

“Do you think that my goddaughter will like this? It’s just like our own pet, but smaller”, says Barbara, opening a small package she takes out of her purse. A message written in perfect Spanish accompanies the stuffed dog that in a few weeks will arrive in the mail for Elena from Germany.

Barbara lives in Bonn and collaborates with Aldeas Infantiles SOS Uruguay by sponsoring Elena. She is one of the nearly 3,200 sponsors who, from different countries, support children and adolescents in Uruguay through a monthly financial contribution. With this contribution, the sponsors contribute directly to the development of a child or adolescent, and their contribution is fully allocated to the living expenses of the house where the godchild lives.

Each of the 236 children and adolescents within the International Sponsorship program and under the Foster Care Service of Aldeas Infantiles Uruguay is allowed to have up to 12 sponsors. Twice a year, these sponsors receive updated information about their godchildren on their day-to-day activities, educational progress, recreation and preferences. For the most part, the international sponsors supporting Aldeas Infantiles Uruguay are in Europe. Germany occupies first place with 40%, followed by Norway (24%) and Sweden (14%).

Barbara is married to Theodor, has no children of her own and teaches Natural Sciences and Spanish. She has

found in the International Sponsorship system a way of being in touch with children and youngsters. But, why Uruguay? “I wanted to have a godchild in a Spanish-speaking country so I could write to them in their language”, says Barbara. The same thing happens with Susanne (50 years old), single, a secretary in an international corporation in Germany. She also speaks Spanish, and since 1988 has sponsored five children from Brazil and Uruguay.

Both these sponsors chose with great care an organization with which to contribute. Barbara considered several options and chose Aldeas Infantiles “because there, the children may live in a house together with their siblings and other children. We find it excellent that the Aldeas people work with the children and their parents so that the children can return to their biological family”. A friend of Susanne’s recommended that she contribute with Aldeas Infantiles, based on her own positive experience with the organization.

Barbara comments that collaborating through a sponsorship allows her to maintain a more direct contact and see how her contribution specifically assists with the development of a particular person. Susanne anxiously awaits the months of July and December, as it is then that she receives news about Alejandro and sees a current picture of him.

Both these sponsors wish for their godchildren the same things that a father or mother would. “I would love to accompany Elena during her time in school and her overall education”, says Barbara. “I wish for Alejandro a happy, very healthy life”, adds Susanne. And they are eager to meet them. The International Sponsorship system allows the sponsors to visit their godchildren during the day, subject to a previous request and authorization. “I am Alejandro’s godmother since early 2016. I have never been to Uruguay, but I am fond of the Latin American cultures and I would like to be able to visit my godson some day”, says Susanne.

\* The names have been changed to protect the children’s identity

# Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility consists in a voluntary commitment of companies —beyond their current legal obligations— with the goal of contributing to the sustainable development of the community, respecting the balance between economic growth, social progress and protection of the environment.

If you are subject to the payment of IRAE [tax on economic activity], you may contribute with our organization making use of the tax benefits under Sections 270 and 271 of Law 18.834 (Special Donations).



Charity performance of the *Swan Lake* ballet, by the National Sodre Ballet corps.

## How can a company contribute with Aldeas Infantiles?

### Financial donation for child protection:

These are contributions made by your company to strengthen family relationships at risk, and help to pay for the food, healthcare, education and clothing expenses of children and adolescents under the Foster Care Service, as well as for the training of caregivers.

### Events Sponsorship:

At Aldeas Infantiles we organize different kind of fundraising events: concerts, artistic activities and conferences, where your company may participate as sponsor. A presence in the media, image consolidation and favorable publicity will be some of the benefits that will increase your brand exposure and add to a positive identification of your company.



Second edition of Conferences on Childhood



Fundraising campaign with Diego Godín



Third edition of Music for the Children

### Corporate volunteering:

These are Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) actions where the collaborators contribute with their talent, time and energy to transform not only their communities in a positive way, but also the companies where they work. Some of the benefits that your company will reap out of these actions will be motivation, a sense of pride and belonging, an improvement of the organizational climate and an enhancement of its corporate and human values.

### Cause-related marketing (CRM):

This funding and promotional strategy consists in linking the sales of your company's product or service, and donating a percentage of the sales revenue, to any one of the projects managed by Aldeas Infantiles in Uruguay. In this manner, you will create a positive impact on the life of thousands of Uruguayan children and adolescents, while simultaneously increasing your sales revenue and positioning your corporation as a socially responsible company.



These were our 2016 contributors:



Carlevaro & Asociados Ltda.  
 Colectate  
 El Coraje  
 Odacor SA  
 Cabaña Berachi  
 CEI SRL

Las Correntinas  
 Bonabel SA  
 Juan Ache  
 Cabaña Vertiente del Águila  
 Las Rosas Estancia SRL  
 La Perdiz

La Trinidad  
 Edgardo Luzardo  
 Cabaña Rincón de los Negros  
 Supramar  
 Colorflex  
 Aceros Paisano

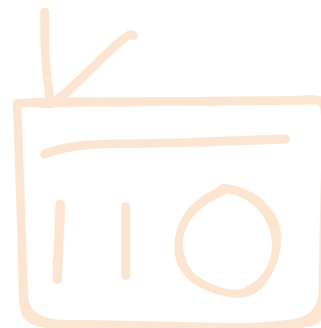
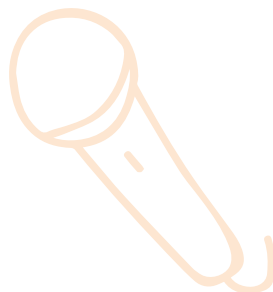


## Media who supported us during 2016:

Alfa 96.3 FM  
Andebu  
Canal 3 Colonia  
Canal 3 TV Artigas  
Canal 4 Chuy  
Canal 7 Durazno  
Canal 7 Maldonado  
Canal 7 Tacuarembó  
Canal 8 Salto  
Canal 10 Telediez Rivera  
Canal 11 Maldonado  
Canal 11 Treinta y Tres  
Canal 12 Río Uruguay TV Fray Bentos  
Canal 13 Cerro del Verdún

Disney 91.9 FM  
El País  
En Perspectiva  
IMPO  
Infonegocios  
Más Bus  
Melo TV Canal 12  
Mont Soleil (Sarandí)  
Monte Carlo TV Canal 4  
Movimagen  
Océano 93.9 FM  
Portal 180  
Publicartel  
Radio Cero 104.3 FM  
Radio Monte Carlo 930 AM

Saeta TV Canal 10  
Screenmedia  
Tele 9 Rocha  
Teledoce Canal 12  
Tevé Ciudad  
TNU  
Total 102.9 FM  
TV Río Canal 3 Paysandú  
Visor PDV  
VTV

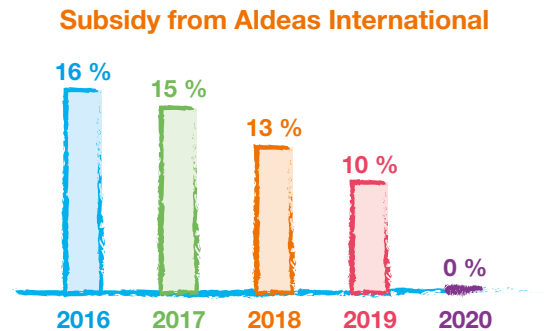
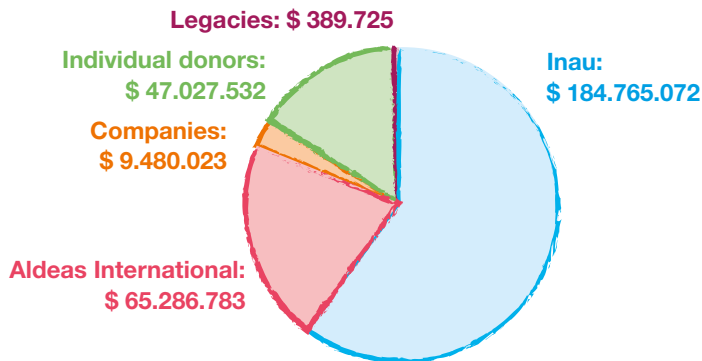


**Your contribution will make it possible for hundreds of children and adolescents to access their right to family and community life.**

**Contact: [corporativos@aldeasinfantiles.org.uy](mailto:corporativos@aldeasinfantiles.org.uy)**

## Sources of financing

Historically, our organization has financed its work with funds originating from a variety of sources, such as international subsidies, contributions from individual donors, corporate alliances and agreements with State institutions (INAU). With the goal of attaining sustainability by 2020, the conclusion of agreements with the State, the increase of individual donors and the development of new strategic alliances with companies committed to the cause of the rights of children and adolescents, are key factors in helping us not only to avoid the need to restrict any of our services but also allowing us to continue improving them. Currently, the sources of income on a national level are distributed at follows:



Transparency in our actions is essential, and we assert it in a number of ways:

- We are audited by Children's Villages International on an ongoing basis.
- An international external firm of auditors performs an annual audit of our finances (since 2014, Deloitte). To date, each and every one of the external audit examinations has issued a clean Audit Report with no issues noted.
- We account, via a bimonthly report, for all monies that we receive from the State.
- We issue an annual report for the Ministry of Economy and Finance accounting for the use of funds raised as company donations under the special legal regime of Special Donations.
- We participate in the civil society Accountability (*Rendir Cuentas*) initiative to promote transparency, and every year we release key information using this tool.



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**Aldeas\_Uruguay**



**Aldeas Infantiles SOS Uruguay**



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