



INGO Accountability Charter
c/o International Civil Society Centre
Agricolastraße 26
10555 Berlin, Germany

Innsbruck, 29 January 2016

Response to Independent Review Panel Feedback of 18 December 2015

Dear Charter Secretariat,

Thank you for the feedback from the Independent Review Panel on our 2014 accountability report. We are happy that the panel found our third accountability report again to be good and comprehensive, and that we achieved improvements over previous years.

We appreciate that the panel recognised SOS Children's Villages for good practice in several different areas, including feedback mechanisms for internal stakeholders, promoting a culture and practice of meaningful workforce training and life-long learning within the organisation, and holistically and meaningfully managing our impact on local communities.

We absolutely strive for honest and transparent reflection on the areas we need to improve and appreciate that the feedback panel has also commended us for this reflection. In this letter, we want to briefly address the major areas for improvement as mentioned by the panel:

- **Feedback and complaints handling mechanism**
We want to highlight that we do have written and fully functioning mechanisms in the key areas of child protection and anti-corruption. Moreover, we do have different processes - such as child and youth committees - that are designed to bring in feedback and complaints from our programme participants, which we also consider part of our feedback and complaints mechanism. However, in our next report, we will more clearly describe the channels that can be used to solicit external complaints and feedback as well as our processes to deal with and follow up on these complaints and feedback.
- **Environmental sustainability**
We have initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote environmental education activities on the programme level. We will also start an initiative to pilot measuring greenhouse gas emissions within the General Secretariat in the year 2016.
- **Accountability standards implementation and reporting in member associations**
We are committed to strongly aligning our policies with accountability standards and ensuring their implementation in member associations.

We want to thank you once again for your much appreciated feedback, which we consider as an important trigger and resource for the continuous improvement of our work. We also especially want to express our thanks to the Charter Secretariat for their great support throughout the year.

Yours sincerely,

Carsten Völz
Chief Operating Officer
SOS Children's Villages International