

Documenting Sustainable Change: LIA with SOS Kinderdorf in Lesotho and Ethiopia

My Summer 2025 **Leadership in Action** project took place in Lesotho and Ethiopia, alongside the global NGO **SOS Children's Villages**, the largest non-governmental organisation focused on supporting children without parental care and families at risk. Our roles involved working as part of a team to document the various projects and initiatives being supported by SOS across various locations across Lesotho and Ethiopia and helping to produce various media materials promoting the work that SOS does to the public and donors. This experience not only allowed me to witness the life-changing work that SOS Children's Villages does across the world but also allowed me to learn about how NGOs can operate in often unstable environments, working holistically with communities to construct and deliver groundbreaking initiatives that produce sustainable change, allowing communities to become part of the process of child and family empowerment, and creating change that continues even after the NGO leaves.



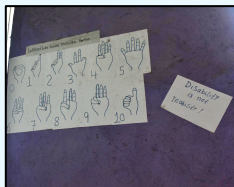
In Hawassa, Ethiopia, we saw how SOS supports children's education by providing support to schools and families, including funding educational materials, training for teachers and parents, and providing holistic support for children to access education, such as transport and accessibility devices for children with disabilities.



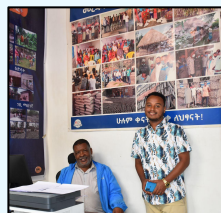
In Lesotho and Ethiopia, we met many children, families and young people who had been supported through various schemes and projects supported by SOS, such as their children's villages, where SOS provides homes and foster parents to children who need them, as well as supporting kinship care, which allows children to stay with families and grow up in their communities.



In Leribe, Lesotho, we documented the progress of the Youth Education, Employment and Training Programme [YEET], which provides free vocational training and education to vulnerable young people, supporting them with the skills, knowledge and eventual funding and materials to start their own sustainable businesses so that they can support themselves and their families.



In Bushulo, Ethiopia, SOS strengthens families by utilising local networks, businesses and relationships in the community to support vulnerable families to generate their own sustainable income, providing financial and business training and education, whilst holistically supporting families with access to education and healthcare. These interventions aim to prevent the issues which can destabilise families and promote keeping families together, whilst in tandem supporting the local economy.



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