



**SOS CHILDREN'S  
VILLAGE**  
KAZAKHSTAN

## **ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE NATIONAL LEVEL IN THE STRATEGY 2030**



Youth consulting in Kazakhstan

*International Youth Coalition, June, 2015*

The consultation on the Strategy 2030 in Kazakhstan involved 25 young people in two locations: Astana CVPD – Youth Resource Center and Youth Facility of CVPD Temirtau. Young people from the age of 16 to 23 years old took part in the discussion on four questions. The session on the consulting was launched with the introduction of the main objectives of the workshop with the youth. Since the format of the questions was not simple to understand to those who not have been working with the co-workers of SOS, the coordinator prepared the list with the definitions of the following words and phrases within the questionnaire:



1. “Youth care”;
2. “Leaving care support”;
3. “After leaving care support”;
4. “Integrated families”;
5. “Satellite families”;
6. “Social integration”;
7. “SOS couples”;
8. “Foster families”;
9. “Community’s involvement”.

After the introduction to all participants objectives and personal introduction of all young people the facilitator gave examples on each definition that has been mentioned within the questionnaire and discussed different examples with youngsters. The examples were projected on the stories about the young people, their stories on success. Also the drawings of the families in their classical model and the families lived in the communities were presented by the facilitator targeted at better understanding the differences between the classical SOS family model and integrated families. The live discussion was kicked by rising up the open question on the feelings and key thoughts about the period in life when young people were at the stage of leaving care and transferring from the SOS family into Youth Facility.

Some young people voluntarily shared their thoughts on their personal experience. Interestingly the young people after three years of the live in the Youth Facility demonstrated their personal analysis on their life before the youth facility and after. They stressed out how it was important to cope with the changes in their life. *“The change was needed to become adult, to start independent living”*, - as one of the young person confirmed. In spite of that fact that they almost left care, young people were concerned on the life of their siblings in SOS. *“It is very important to improve the care setting, the families for the children within the strategy 2030,”* - as young people said. Young people actively proposed the ideas how to improve the alternative care in SOS families. One young lady in Astana Resource Center gave very practical examples from the daily routine how to improve the family care settings in SOS. According to her thoughts it is very important to diminish the



features of the institutional care when we . *“If we perform ourselves as families, we need to act as families any time. For example, we have to go out for the concerts or*

any other walk as separate families, not as the children and SOS families of affiliated organization “SOS Children’s Village Astana”. The tickets for the concert may be arranged for different days and time. Our children are fed up with the concerts for the special guests for the sponsors. We want to live and to be as a real family by any mean and feature.”

The main attention within the discussion of the strategic questions of young people was devoted to the youth care support and to transformation of the care settings of SOS families.

The young people actively argued the reasons regarding the **Option 5** of the first question “A. *What would create better employment opportunities for young people once they will leave programs?*”. This option assumed the partnership of SOS Youth facilities with the local business representatives in order to support the start-up of the young people and strengthen their capacity in business.



In terms of the youth care model fifty per cent (50%) of young people proposed to keep the support as long as would be possible, other participants were positive on the differentiation of youth care support based on the individual cases of each young person.

Indeed some youngsters could have accommodation from the colleges that provide the dormitory for the students; others could live in the boarding schools between the age of 15 and 17 years old with the partial support on daily needs form SOS. In general during discussion of the second strategic question “B. *In your opinion which youth care model should we use to strengthen youth development in the future*” young people discussed to the possibility when alumni could deliver some support to young adults aged leaving care, “*It is very important to get an advice, temporarily housing, promotion for the employment with the friendly support of older peers who*

*had an experience in independent life. It is good idea to have networking with the peers after care support by organization so far”, - young people pointed out.*

The strategic question on the transformation of the infrastructure of SOS villages raised discussion on the reasons to make shift from the classic model to the integrated model of SOS families. If young people of Temirtau Youth Facility argued in regard to the integrated families whereas the young people of Astana Recourse Center were defending the classic model of the families’ settings. The arguments on the integrated families were based on the need of young people to get rid of the stigmatization from the society. *“The attitude of the people in the external environment is likely negative to children form the SOS Children’s villages. It ruins our identity and self-esteem,”*- as young guy stressed out at the end of workshop.

The main activities on the consultation were coordinated by the National Advocacy Advisor of Kazakhstan – Larissa Tikhonova, and the team of the social workers of Youth Resource Center “I MATTER!” of CVPD Astana.





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