

THE NEWSPAPER N° 300 - June 2025

Sentinelles

To the rescue of wounded innocence



**45 years
of fighting**

Reflection of
Sentinelles' activities
in 2024



Editorial

45 years of commitment, transforming lives for good

Right up until his last breath, Edmond Kaiser worked tirelessly to provide relief and dignity to people deprived of the essentials of life. As we celebrate the 45th anniversary of Sentinelles, his unfailing commitment continues to inspire us, and in these uncertain times of growing inequality, we remain determined to continue his legacy.

Global geopolitics are generating emergencies, insecurity and displacement of populations, underlining the crucial importance of solidarity. In this special edition, this is reflected in a detailed presentation of the programmes deployed last year to support families in extremely vulnerable situations.

In Colombia, we have stepped up our support for children and women in the Amagá region, offering them a welcoming environment and opportunities for personal and professional development. Our many partnerships have helped to strengthen the social fabric and put our organisation at the heart of a vital system in this area, which is marked by violence. In Senegal, our actions have improved the living conditions of many talibé children and provided invaluable help to young girls who have been through the painful ordeal of rape, sometimes followed by pregnancy.


In Madagascar, in addition to our work in prisons, we have provided appropriate care for over a hundred children with congenital orthopaedic deformities and extended our educational and economic support to their families.

At the same time, we are strengthening community skills in the early detection of noma, and preventing the occurrence of obstetric fistulas, all activities carried out on a daily basis, and on a large scale, to preserve health in the long term.

None of this would be possible without our teams and the unfailing support of our partners and donors.

To all of you who stand by Sentinelles, we express our deepest gratitude.




Marlyse Morard
Director

COLOMBIA

Since 1983, Sentinelles has been striving to offer a better future for children and women in Amagá, Colombia, where, despite its many dangers, coal mining remains the dominant economic activity. Men work in the mines, risking their lives, while women, who are confined to the home, are vulnerable and face gender-based violence.

In 2024, Sentinelles supported 96 families, i.e. around 350 people, through psychosocial assistance programmes, access to healthcare, vocational training, educational support and assistance with housing.

Actions in favour of children

The focus of our programme in Colombia is a home for 30 children. In 2024, 13 children were accommodated there and supported from Monday to Friday, 23 received educational assistance, while 27 received psychological or psychiatric care. Sentinelles has set up eight cultural, sporting and artistic partnerships with a view to encouraging personal development, including a radio school that has enabled 15 children to produce podcasts about their rights. Music, computing, gardening and nature awareness lessons have also boosted their self-confidence and ability to express themselves.

Actions in favour of women

Support for women and mothers is also central to this programme. In 2024, 45 women attended a training course in leatheworking, 30 of whom received their certificates at the end of the year. This training, combined with entrepreneurship coaching and social skills-building activities, was aimed at empowering women and ensuring their long-term economic independence. In 2024, thanks to your many donations, Sentinelles was able to carry out its activities in Colombia through a local team of 11 dedicated employees who ensured the programme's continuity. Many thanks to you and to them!

C. D.





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BURKINA FASO

Sentinelles has been present in Burkina Faso since 1990, working in several areas of health and emergency aid.

Noma and maxillofacial pathologies programme

The aim of this programme is to improve the lives of children suffering from noma and to prevent the disease through awareness-raising activities. It offers access to treatment, reconstructive surgery and strong social support. Over the course of this year, 152 people stayed at the Ouagadougou reception centre for medical and psychological care. 90 of them underwent maxillofacial surgery in Burkina Faso, whilst three young people were transferred to Switzerland for specialist care. The social component involved 64 children and adults suffering from noma. Particular emphasis was placed on education, with support for 20 children's schooling and vocational training for 10 young adults. In addition, income-generating activities and emergency food aid were also provided to families.

As part of its noma prevention and detection activities, Sentinelles has trained 384 health workers, 415 community workers and 78 traditional healers in the Centre-Est and Plateau Central regions. A pilot project to train health workers has also been launched in Benin, along with awareness-raising sessions on oral health in primary schools in Ouagadougou.

Obstetric fistula and prolapse programme

This programme supports young girls and women suffering from obstetric fistulas and aims to prevent the onset of this condition by raising awareness. These activities extend to women suffering from prolapse. 81 women were monitored, 23 of whom underwent surgery in 2024. The social component of the programme supported 44 women, with the emphasis on starting up income-generating activities. Due to growing insecurity in the East region, our team can no longer carry out awareness-raising sessions in the villages, which is why these have been limited to Fada N'Gourma.

Help for internally displaced people

There are almost 2 million internally displaced people in Burkina Faso. Sentinelles has set up special emergency aid to help some of the most destitute families who have taken refuge in Ouagadougou. The emergency aid focuses on a number of areas: food aid, empowerment through management courses and setting up income-generating activities for women, access to healthcare, psychological support where needed and schooling for children. 139 families have been helped in this way.

V. E.



© Serge Rabarijaona

MADAGASCAR

Since 1987, Sentinelles has been working in Antanimora prison and the Mandrosoa rehabilitation centre, with the aim of reintegrating detained minors, mothers imprisoned with their children and pregnant inmates into society and their families.

Sentinelles is also present in the particularly disadvantaged Antohomadinika district, and has been working with destitute children and families.

Sentinelles has adopted a personalised and holistic approach, providing support both inside the prisons and psychosocial care for families outside, with the aim of helping beneficiaries to become self-sufficient.

Mandrosoa rehabilitation centre and Antanimora central prison

Over the course of the past year, 57 boys received support. In addition, 148 young former detainees and their families were supported outside the Centre. At the Antanimora Central Prison, 31 girls, 74 pregnant

women and 78 mothers accompanied by their 92 children received food and medical aid, with post-release psychosocial care being given to 24 girls and 99 women. Nutritional and health support was also provided to 41 inmates aged over 60.

Antohomadinika district

1,409 families were enrolled in the mutual health insurance scheme at the dispensary, and 2,589 medical consultations were carried out by our doctors, in addition to 4 awareness-raising sessions and 5 vaccination campaigns.

Care and highly vulnerable families' programme

Sentinelles extended its assistance by providing medical and psychosocial care for 120 children suffering from various ailments.

In addition, 25 families living in extremely precarious conditions received food, medical and psychosocial support. 6 girls who had been sexually assaulted received psychological support. At the same time,

30 children, young people and women stayed in our hostel and 15 children went to school as part of our catch-up programme.

In 2024, approximately 40 tonnes of food, 387 bags of coal, 12,847 bars of soap and 204 blankets were distributed. A total of 1,255 medical consultations took place at the prison, as well as 3,190 at our premises. 44 women were provided with contraception and 6 health awareness campaigns were carried out.

M. P.



© Frédéric Léandre Sossou

NIGER

Sentinelles has been running a programme to combat noma in Niger since 1992, with the aim of preventing the disease through awareness-raising campaigns and improving the medical and social conditions of affected children.

Noma is an infectious disease that primarily affects children aged between 2 and 6. It begins with a benign lesion in the mouth and progresses rapidly: unless it is treated, 80 to 90% of children will die within a matter of days. If they survive, they often face physical after-effects as well as psychological suffering.

Medical and social care for children with noma

At the reception centre

Based in Zinder, in southern Niger, the reception centre is the nerve centre of our fight against noma. It provides care for children in the acute phase of the disease, as well as screening consultations for oral and dental illnesses, and

socio-educational activities for residents and their careers. Children under Sentinelles' long-term care return to the Centre for medical check-ups and preparation for reconstructive surgery.

Over the year, 74 children were admitted to our reception centre at various stages of the disease. The vast majority of these children stayed for several weeks or even months for daily care. 1,430 consultations resulted in treatment for gingivitis or gum disease, and 28 children with noma sequelae benefited from surgery in Niger or Switzerland.

At home

Once cured, the children return home, and support continues. The aim is to ensure medical, nutritional, family and social support for each noma survivor and their family. 148 families have benefited from nutritional aid in the form of millet or economic support to start up an income-generating activity. 80 children were supported in their schooling or vocational training.

In all, 306 children suffering from noma received medical or social care in 2024.

Prevention and awareness-raising

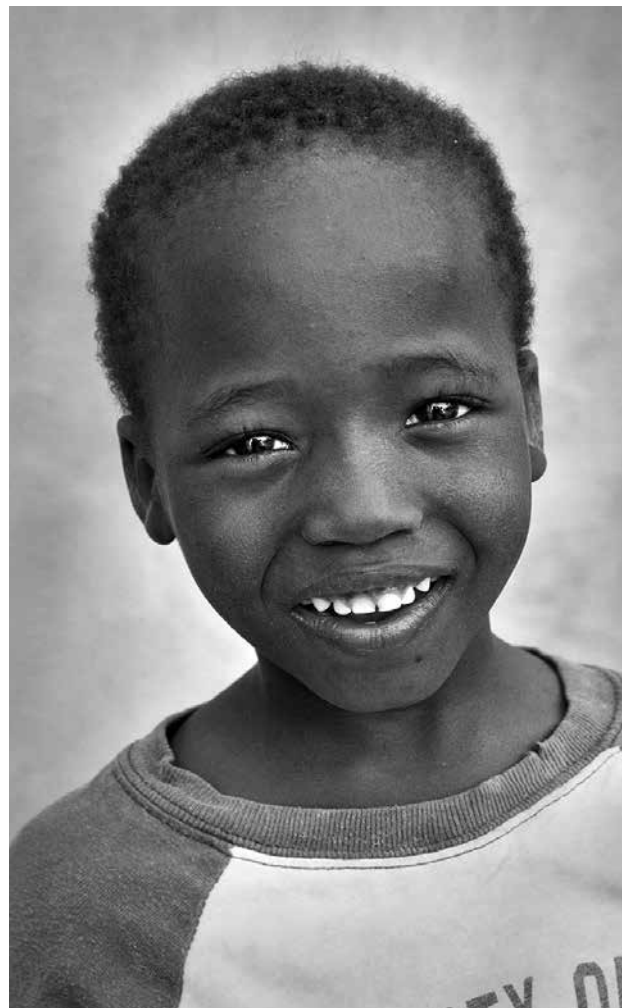
As part of the drive to raise awareness of noma and its early detection, various awareness-raising initiatives have been implemented in the Zinder region, including training courses for health workers, community networks and traditional practitioners, community awareness-raising campaigns and the broadcasting of prevention messages on local radio stations.

C. H.

Foundation **Sentinelles** account

From 1st January to 31st December 2024 (in CHF, with comparative figures for the 2023 financial year)

REVENUES	2024	2023
Burkina Faso	51 984	49 666
Colombia	5 100	50 194
Kongo	978	15 026
Madagascar	86 957	65 925
Niger	13 500	63 500
Senegal	3 630	1 839
Other support activities / Medical care	2 657	470
Children affected by noma	263 873	277 569
Foundation Winds of Hope	-	50 000
Verein Noma-Hilfe	100 000	180 000
Freunde von Sentinelles (LADS):		
LADS/Republik und Kanton Genf	75 000	150 000
LADS/Stadt Genf	-	19 000
Subtotal	603 679	923 190
General donations	682 631	845 388
Inheritants	1 435 909	852 006
Markets	140	1 364
Events	20	9 716
Book sales Edmond Kaiser	-	53
Contribution to medical costs	17 062	
Interest on current account	69 817	47 897
Subtotal	2 205 580	1 756 424
TOTAL REVENUES	2 809 258	2 679 614
EXPENSES		
Burkina Faso	352 604	300 500
Colombia	170 464	156 970
Congo	226 114	241 413
Madagascar	419 239	382 452
Niger	423 185	477 594
Senegal	337 971	320 386
Medical care to children operated		
in Switzerland	90 508	79 440
Other Support activities	15 522	2 000
Subtotal	2 035 607	1 960 754
EXPENSES IN SWITZERLAND		
Salaries and wages	138 403	132 023
Sentinelles Newspaper	58 924	58 249
Means of communication	216 242	230 191
Administrative Costs	34 250	22 595
Other Expenses	9 317	10 303
Subtotal	457 136	453 361
TOTAL EXPENSES	2 492 743	2 414 115
Movements in restricted funds	188 645	18 359
Earnings before capital deduction	505 160	283 858
Net earnings	-	-



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Sentinelles does everything in its power to ensure efficient, high-quality operation at the lowest possible cost. The services provided free of charge or at a preferential rate, as well as the collaboration of numerous volunteers, represent annual savings of more than one million Swiss francs. (CHF 1,106,883 in 2024). If the amount of these free services were included in the total expenditure, the Sentinelles budget would come to CHF 3'599'626. The costs in Switzerland are divided between the various countries, administration and fundraising. **Accounts audited in accordance with the audit report dated 28.04.2025 by Fiduciaire DRP SA Geneva.**

**The Sentinelles Fribourg association is organising
a concert in support of the women's
training programme for women in Colombia**
Sunday 22 June at 5pm
Centre le Phénix, Fribourg
Trombone and piano duo, classical and traditional
music from Colombia - free admission

Erratum: on page 8 of newspaper 299, the first two photographs were taken by the Burkinabe photographer Fasky.



CONGO

Girls and women in extremely vulnerable situations

Sentinelles works with women and children living in extremely precarious conditions in rural areas of Bukavu, in the eastern province of Sud-Kivu. Many women are the sole providers for their families and live in constant fear of the future. In 2024, 61 families benefited from tailor-made care, including medical care, psychological support, temporary food aid and housing assistance. Sentinelles also works to get children into school and offers vocational training for young people. Income-generating activities are designed for the families in question, such as trading in basic goods, livestock breeding and seed distribution.

Girls and women in prison

Women and girls are held in Bukavu's central prison, often for crimes committed out of necessity or desperation. Sentinelles provides food on a daily basis as well as medical, psychological and social support to cope with the difficult conditions of detention. In 2024, 300 women prisoners and 23 children received support. Sentinelles helps these women reintegrate into society and the workplace, by providing training courses in sewing, cooking and handicrafts, which are delivered while they are in prison. When they are released, they receive a reintegration kit corresponding to the training they have undergone. In addition, a kindergarten has been set up to enable children living with their mothers in prison to take part in social and educational activities, thus providing them with a more conducive environment for their development and well-being.

M. V. V.



CARE IN SWITZERLAND

This programme enables children from various countries, mainly Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal and Madagascar, to be transferred to Switzerland. They suffer from various illnesses such as noma or other facial conditions, orthopaedic pathologies or heart disease, and unfortunately cannot be treated in their own countries due to their parents' lack of resources or inadequate medical infrastructure.

They undergo surgery in Switzerland, receive appropriate treatment and then return home once they have recovered. Reductions in fees on humanitarian grounds granted by certain health facilities and fee waivers granted by HUG and CHUV bring the treatment and care for these children within our reach. Transfers are carefully prepared at home, to ensure that patients have the best possible stay. At head office, administrative and organisational procedures are handled by the programme manager.

Children are met on arrival by our coordinator, before being taken to hospital for an initial check-up. They are then taken to La Maison de Terre des hommes Valais, where they will stay, free of charge, until their return. This home meets all the necessary requirements.

Every year, around eight patients are treated for noma at the HUG, as well as two or three orthopaedic cases. Since 2024, we have benefited from a cooperation agreement with the CHUV that enables us to transfer five cases of heart disease to Switzerland.

Once back home, our local team provides medical and social follow-up for each child and their family in their place of residence.

J. D. G.



SENEGAL

Talibé children

From an early age, sometimes as young as 3 or 4, talibé children are entrusted by their families to Koranic teachers to receive religious instruction in schools called daaras. The children are sometimes left to fend for themselves, forced to beg for their survival and severely abused. Sentinelles supports a number of daaras to improve their living conditions, providing medical and health care, access to schooling, literacy courses for 137 talibés and vocational training for 24 young adults. 18 awareness-raising campaigns were conducted in the daaras, training centres, schools and in the community, on issues such as abuse, hygiene and sexual violence. If a case of abuse is detected or reported, the child is immediately taken into our care and a complaint is made to the relevant authorities.

Child guides for the blind

In M'bour, children are forced to guide their blind parents on the streets to beg, which prevents them from going to school. Sentinelles continues to support 8 of the 40 families originally included in this programme, by assisting them with education, vocational training and medical care. For families in particularly difficult circumstances, temporary food aid is provided, and income-generating activities are set up to help them become self-sufficient.

Child victims of violence

Child victims of sexual violence often lack access to appropriate medical and psychological care, and in some cases are stigmatised by their family and community. Sentinelles provides medical, psychological and social care for 19 children. In cases of adolescent pregnancy, we offer support to the child mother throughout her pregnancy and facilitate her return to school or vocational training. The family

is involved in this process through a holistic approach, and benefit from an income-generating activity.

Medical care for children

A number of children suffering from serious illnesses lack access to vital medical care because of their families' financial difficulties. Following a detailed social survey, Sentinelles paid for the treatment of 77 children in local hospitals in 2024. We organised transfers to Switzerland for cases requiring surgery that cannot be performed locally. Thanks to our cooperation with CHUV, we are now branching out to manage cases of heart disease.

M. V. V.

Sentinelles

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