

## *Extending support to care leavers in Vietnam in the context Covid-19 pandemic*

### 1- Context

The COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating effect on all aspects of lives across the world. Like in other countries, this pandemic hit hard also Vietnam economy and society despite its effective preventive measures and policies. Two waves of coronavirus pandemic have made the businesses across a range of economic sectors to face terrible losses. Economic fallout caused many enterprises (especially the smaller ones) to close down and/or suspend its operations. As a result, a large number of workers have faced income loss and layoffs, struggling harder for their living conditions.

In SOS Children's Villages in Vietnam, since the first wave of pandemic, the caregivers at all the locations have contacted the care leavers to check for their well-being and the care leavers did the same to seek for support. A number of **824 care leavers** working in the sectors badly affected by the pandemic were reached out. It was recognized that they faced a **different set of challenges** such as **reduced income** (due to job loss, salary cut), **accommodation challenges** (nonpayment for the rent), **no food security, missing financial security, missing social networks** (emotional challenges in isolated conditions due to social distancing, etc.).

### 2- Extended support to SOS care leavers

Figuring out the challenges and difficulties faced by our care leavers, we have extended the necessary support to those in need. Among the reached number, **462** youth have received the **monetary support** through bank transfers for their food, rent and other necessary requirements. Another group of youth were supported with food and necessary commodity items. Some of them requiring the temporary **accommodation** were arranged to live either in the village premises or youth facilities. Many Care leavers returned to their SOS mothers and coworkers for advice and **Counseling support** was provided to help them not to feel alone in this difficult situation and take any unwanted steps. Some of them also received support from their biological/extended families.

### 3- Conclusion & recommendations

Care leavers appreciated the support they received and were glad that they have a network to look back. With these supports, many care leavers could overcome the difficulties and gradually stabilize their living conditions. However, it is required more support to the number of care leavers still in need and follow all up while the pandemic situation is getting complicated.

The pandemic will not end soon and the economic crisis will last nonetheless. Some trends of the sectors can be foreseen below:

Falling	Maintaining	Rising
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hotel/ tourism</li> <li>- Airlines</li> <li>- Restaurant</li> <li>- Cinema</li> <li>- Entertainment</li> <li>- Sport</li> <li>- Mall/ Retail (Fashion)</li> <li>- Consumer Electronics</li> <li>- Automotive</li> <li>- Oil &amp; gas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Education</li> <li>- Bank</li> <li>- Insurance</li> <li>- Manufacture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- E-Commerce</li> <li>- Logistic/ Delivery</li> <li>- Media</li> <li>- Telecommunication</li> <li>- Food delivery</li> <li>- Remote working</li> <li>- Online learning</li> <li>- Pharmaceutical</li> <li>- Cleaning Service</li> </ul>

The given situation has demonstrated that improving the resilience of youth in care shall be put in the heart of all the future activities and the network of care leavers shall be strengthened further in order to promote the strong long-lasting bond between our SOS youth and caregivers.