

Sentinelles

to the rescue of wounded innocence



Burkina Faso
2 million internally
displaced persons
in search of security

Colombia
Becoming aware
of your rights as
a woman

Healthcare
A new smile
for Louka

“Open the door of life by showing them
the path and providing the means”

Edmond Kaiser

Edito

The feminine face of survival

Increasing security incidents, a sluggish economy, extreme weather events and other disasters highlight the role of women in family survival and maintaining social cohesion.

Faced with the multidimensional crises their country is going through, Burkinabe women are drawing on their resources to overcome their fears and ensure the basic needs of their children. Some of them, having fled their villages in a hurry, have to familiarise themselves with a completely new environment. They have lost their daily bearings and livelihoods. These women are extremely vulnerable to all forms of exploitation and abuse. Yet they strive to gain independence, help each other and embody the values that are essential for integration into their host community. They look after the weakest, struggle to reunite their families and keep their offspring in school, while creating social links.

In north-western Colombia, rural women marked by gender stereotypes and violence, who are forced to work on demand, put in place many stratagems to survive a reality that seems insurmountable. Through the sharing of experiences and training, they discover that they are not alone, regain their self-confidence and, after a few meetings, release their full potential. Their willpower, persistence and creativity are a source of inspiration for their daughters and other invisible women.

Listening to the needs and aspirations of these women and supporting them in their efforts to become self-sufficient is therefore essential. Sentinelles is working to achieve this through meeting places and the development of income-generating activities.

Their resilience will undoubtedly be strengthened by your valuable support.

It is impossible to conclude this editorial without mentioning the magnificent work of Mathias Régamey, graphic designer, who for years has devoted part of his time to the layout of our Journal. In line with this faithful and selfless commitment, Judith Spinatsch has taken over from him. This new edition reflects their thoughts and talent. We would like to express our warmest thanks to them.



Marlyse Morard
Director

Switzerland

Sentinelles adopts the QR code payment slip

As of October 1st, orange and pink payment slips will no longer be accepted. Only the payment slips with a QR code will be valid. Here is an explanation of how to use the payment slip enclosed with your bulletin.

Payment at the post office

The payment slip with a QR code works like the old payment slips and allows you to make your payment at the post office counter.

By mail to your bank or to PostFinance

The procedure is the same as the payment slips previously attached in the bulletin.

Payment with E-banking or mobile banking

- Open your bank or PostFinance E-banking or mobile banking application
- Scan the QR code and validate your payment

If you do not wish to scan the QR code, you can simply insert the IBAN (CH12 0076 7000 5045 9154 0), which is sufficient to make your payment. If you do not specify which project you wish to support, your donation will be allocated to the most urgent needs. If you have chosen to support through a standing order containing the old CCP account number, please renew it by using the IBAN number.

Payment with Twint

By scanning the QR code, you can also support us via the Twint application.

Thank you for your precious support

Operation bread and jam

To make Sentinelles' engagements known to the public, we had the pleasure of repeating the Bread and jam operation on September 10th in front of the Temple de Fribourg, and again on October 1st, in front of Coop City in St-Laurent street in Lausanne.

We welcomed a large number of passers-by to our stands. Many of them were pleased to taste a delicious slice of bread and jam which showed solidarity and which, without a doubt, aroused memories from childhood... The sum that was raised will entirely be allocated to helping children victims of profound distress in our various programmes.





Switzerland Incredible support from the Ministrings

These children are absolutely amazing! Thanks to them and the generosity of a very large public, we raised the sum of CHF 4258.- during the concert played on Sunday, May 15th. That sum was integrally donated to the partner association Vivere, so that they can help children and women victims of the war in Ukraine. A huge thank you to these very talented musicians, to Tina Strinning and Baiju Bhatt, to the generous donors and to the Director of the Centre culturel des Terreaux, Didier Nkebereza, who graciously welcomed us.



Burkina Faso Awareness-raising tour

In October 2021, we launched a new noma awareness-raising campaign that will continue until June 2024 in Burkina Faso. Hamado and David will visit more than 400 healthcare centres in five regions in the country to inform staff and community-based health workers. This awareness-raising chapter that

began in the region of the Cascades in the west of the country is part of the project for the prevention and integrated care of children suffering from noma and maxillofacial pathologies in Burkina Faso. Carried out in partnership with La Chaîne de l'Espoir, La Voix du Paysan and Bilaadga, this project is

co-financed by the French Development Agency. It is an essential and long-term project that will lead our field team to the four corners of the country, depending on the security conditions and the accessibility to the regions. We wish them a safe trip!



Burkina Faso Support for displaced families

Burkina Faso currently has almost 2 million people internally displaced by insecurity.

A large number of them are grouped together in camps or regional capitals. Some families have moved to the outskirts of Ouagadougou to live in undeveloped areas (built on the fringes of the urbanisation process). Sentinelles tries to provide relief and support as much as it can.

The security situation has continued to deteriorate since 2016 due to the presence of radical armed groups in the Sahel region, particularly in Burkina Faso, with an increasing impact on the civilian population. The growing insecurity is leading to forced displacement, which is causing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis for the country. Indeed, at the beginning of 2019, Burkina Faso had 87,000 internally displaced persons, while their number rose to 1,900,000 in April 2022, representing almost 10% of the country's total population. Most families fleeing attacks or threats in their villages gather in the main towns of the Sahel, the Centre-North, the North or the East. They are taken care of by social action and humanitarian aid, which try to cope with the ever-increasing needs. However, a very small proportion of them benefit from a full humanitarian response, as it is estimated that only 15% of the funds required to provide adequate assistance are available. The vast majority of people fleeing violence are flowing into communities that are themselves struggling to meet their needs. Health and education facilities are affected by the insecurity in 6 regions,

leaving thousands without access to health care. More than 3,000 schools and 500 health and social promotion centres are closed or operating at minimal capacity.

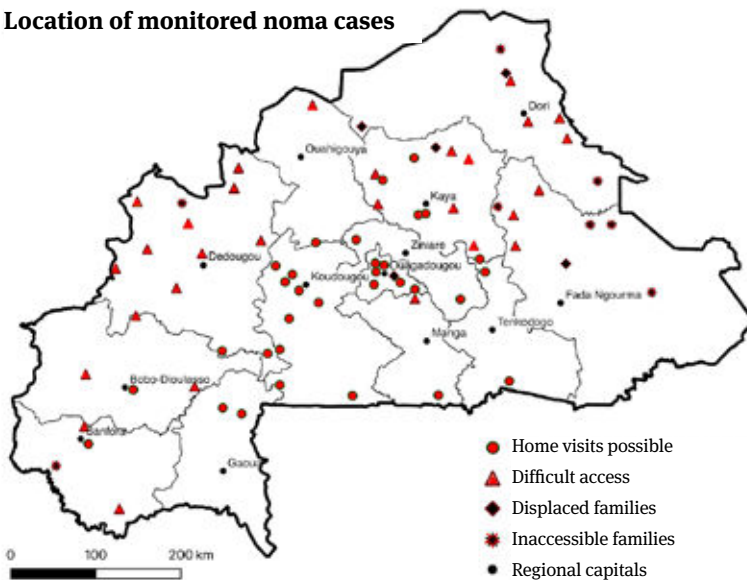
Rural populations face great difficulties in carrying out their agricultural activities due to intimidation, reprisals, theft of livestock or equipment. Threats are frequently followed by attacks on villages, the killing of civilians, the burning of houses and granaries, causing people to flee in desperation. Some lose track of their family members, witness massacres, and have to walk dozens of kilometres with children, pregnant women and elderly people. The testimonies collected by our teams in the field are chilling and unfortunately repeated. A certain number of displaced families flee to Ouagadougou in order to get as far away as possible from the threatening areas and to try to find peace. They find themselves in the unbuilt areas, looking for shelter. They are sometimes hosted by a family member or helped by goodwill neighbours who share shelter and food.

Since August 2020, Sentinelles has been providing support to some 20 particularly needy families.

Families who have been followed for years in our noma and obstetric fistula programmes are also confronted with the deteriorating security situation. Sentinelles tries to provide them with assistance according to each situation. First, they are given food aid, which is the number one priority. Then, income-generating activities are developed by the women when possible and according to their proposals (small trade, sale of cakes, etc.), often with encouraging results, as in the



Location of monitored noma cases



Example of the cost of aid provided

Food aid: a 100 kg bag of maize costs about CHF 50.-

For a family of 10 people, 150 kg of maize per month, or CHF 75.- per month

Equipment and raw materials to start a cake business: about CHF 100.-

Enrolment of a child in a school: CHF 50.- to CHF 100.- per year, depending on the school

case of Hadjatou who has developed her own soap factory. The young woman learned how to make traditional soap balls from a neighbour for three months, then started her own production with the support of her husband. Sentinelles has strengthened her business with equipment. Thanks to the development of her soap factory, Hadjatou was even able to hire other displaced women to help her. Some of them, whom we had met in improvised gravel pits where they filtered the earth with sieves to separate the gravel from the sand in order to sell it for a few pennies, were able to start small businesses.

Unfortunately, not all stories are success stories. The women have often only known cultivation and livestock breeding in their village. It is difficult to imagine doing anything else. Many of them want to raise livestock, although this is impossible on the outskirts of Ouagadougou. Young people look for work on building sites by the day, children become improvised scrap metal workers instead of going to school. Sentinelles' teams try to guide families in their search for alternatives.

Sentinelles also makes sure that everyone has access to health care when

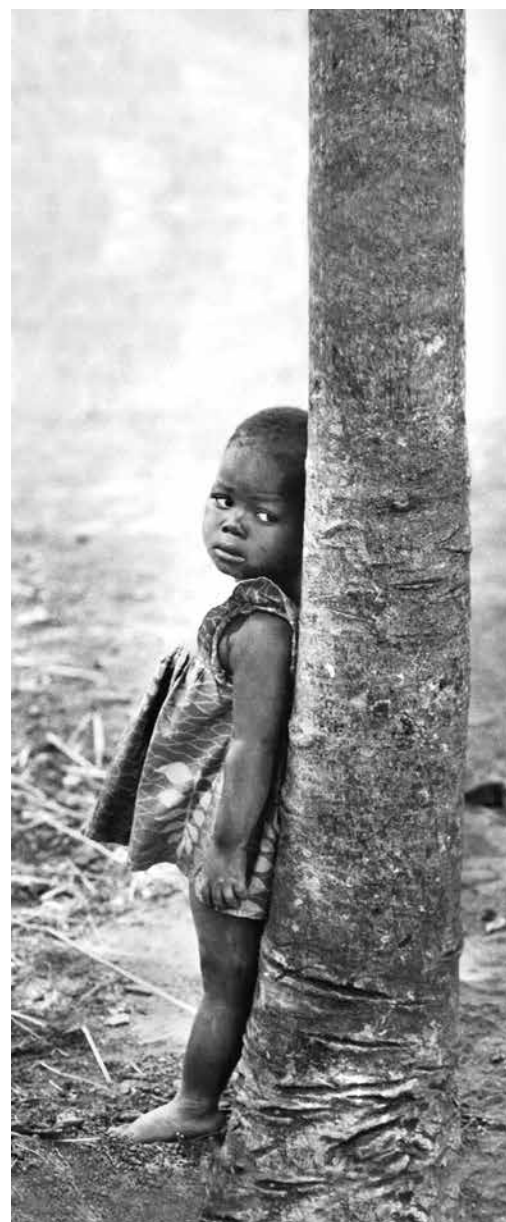
needed, and that children can go to school when the next school year starts, which is not an easy task given the lack of public schools and places in these poor neighbourhoods. In this case, we subsidise their enrolment in private schools.

There are many challenges for these families. They all hope to return to their villages and cultivate their fields when security returns to their region. In the meantime, Sentinelles continues its support.

Accounts of the Sentinelles Foundation

From 01 January to 31 December 2021 (in Swiss francs, with comparative figures for 2020)

	2021	2020
REVENUE		
Burkina Faso	69 485	44 654
Colombia	35 613	10 054
Congo	42 717	69 875
Madagascar	57 152	36 835
Niger	27 171	20 956
Senegal	232	4 137
Donations for children with noma	464 436	425 274
Winds of Hope Foundation	80 000	50 000
Association Noma-Hilfe	45 000	
Gertrude Hirzel Foundation		60 000
The Friends of Sentinelles (Republic and Canton of Geneva)	75 000	
The Friends of Sentinelles (Geneva)	19 000	
Subtotal	915 806	721 785
General donations	915 127	789 238
Exceptional donations		318 590
Successions	5 000	107 972
Events	769	2 372
Sales of Edmond Kaiser's books	4 025	1 343
Contributions to medical care	10 895	7 688
CO2 tax/tax at source commission (*)		369
Interests on stock and c/c	15	62
Subtotal	935 831	1 227 634
TOTAL REVENUE	1 851 637	1 949 419
EXPENSES		
Burkina Faso	270 578	231 503
Colombia	134 125	136 183
Congo	178 816	133 599
Madagascar	441 628	357 235
Niger	493 069	311 570
Senegal	294 887	221 743
Care for children operated in Switzerland	66 287	59 463
Other supporting expenses	2 944	3 344
Subtotal	1 882 334	1 454 640
COSTS IN SWITZERLAND		
Salaries and expenses	119 092	129 991
Cost of premises (*)		9 648
Sentinelles newsletter	64 790	68 467
Communication media	154 370	89 948
Administrative costs	24 332	39 239
Other charges	5 070	20 182
Subtotal	367 654	357 475
TOTAL EXPENSES	2 249 988	1 812 115
Funds allocated	-22 532	65 729
Profile or loss of the periods	-420 883	71 575



Sentinelles does everything possible to ensure efficient, high-quality and cost-effective operations. The services obtained free of charge or at a preferential rate, as well as the collaboration of numerous volunteers, represent an annual saving of more than one million CHF 1,020,397.-. If the amount of these free services is included in the expenses, the Sentinelles' budget would amount to CHF 3,270,385.-.

(*) Expenses distributed in 2021 between the different countries, administration and fund-raising.

Accounts revised in accordance with the audit report of 6 July 2022 by Fiduciaire DRP SA Geneva

Colombia

Sharing and training to raise awareness

A recent study in Colombia, presented by the Ministry of Agriculture, indicates that Colombian women, 47.2% of the population, enjoy lower social and economic conditions than men.

The report also highlights their low participation in the labour market, particularly in rural areas. Difficulties in acquiring agricultural land, early pregnancies and dropping out of school are all obstacles to their autonomy.

This reality is confirmed in the Antioquia region, where the main economic activity remains coal mining. Women are left with the responsibility of bringing up children, domestic work and have few employment opportunities. The low level of education of many of them prevents them from accessing well-paid jobs, especially in the service or trade sectors.

Our experience and the many exchanges with women in Angelópolis and Amagá have shown that despite their efforts to improve their living conditions, they are totally dependent on their partners. Abuse of power and mistreatment often mark their daily lives, resulting in a loss of self-esteem and confidence.

The aim of Tierra de Vida (the name of Sentinellas in Colombia) is to support these women by offering them training, with a view to creating an income-generating activity.

A sewing project was set up this year with the generous support of the Charles Haimoff Foundation. Twenty-five women actively participated. A homogeneous group of 7 of them even created a collective workshop at the end of the training.



During the courses, the women quickly learned the basics of sewing and then proceeded to make reusable sanitary towels. During the workshops, the topics of menstrual rights, the (re) discovery of alternatives to the usual hygiene products, as well as female anatomy and, more broadly, the history of women's rights, were addressed.

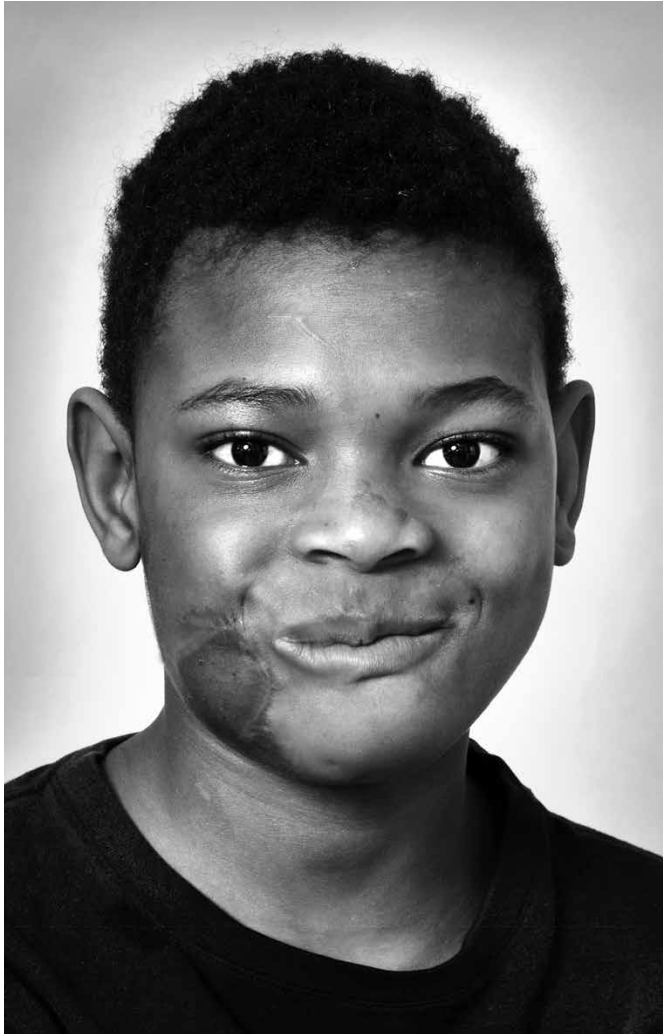
The discussions highlighted how little the participants knew about their rights and the benefits of sisterhood. They also became aware of the erroneous beliefs about the menstrual cycle and the sometimes simplistic image of women. Some said they did not know how to teach their daughters about female anatomy and menstrual management as the subject is so taboo.

It is therefore essential to encourage these training and sharing spaces. The women, young and old, want to strengthen their practical sewing skills and, with their shared values and life stories, develop solidarity and mutual support. Tierra de Vida will continue to accompany them collectively and individually, with your support.

¹ Problems of access to menstrual hygiene products and the stigma associated with menstruation have a direct negative impact on women's rights



Healthcare Homecoming of the brave Louka



© Yvan Muriset

Louka, aged 11, is returning to Burkina Faso after a seven-month stay in Switzerland.

He was transferred to us for an operation on a constricted jaw (almost total inability to open his mouth) following the after-effects of noma, a disease he contracted at the age of three, because, given its complexity, this operation is unfortunately impossible in his country.

He courageously and successfully undergoes two operations at the University Hospitals of Geneva (HUG), involving a maxillo-facial surgeon and a plastic surgeon. Volunteer visitors visit him regularly during his hospitalizations to ease his life in hospital.

During his stay, Louka lives at the Terre des hommes Valais House in Massongex where he is very well looked after and cared for. He shares his life with many other children from different countries with whom he has a lot of fun, between board games, animations and football games that he particularly likes. The young boy also takes part in school classes to consolidate his knowledge, to progress in various fields and to be able to go back to school without difficulty when he returns home. As a polite and helpful child, it is clear that he enjoys learning.

When he first arrived, Louka was rather shy and reserved, but he adapted well to our country and to his life in the hostel and gradually grew in confidence to become a cheerful, very sociable and communicative boy. It is a great pleasure to accompany him every week to his consultations at the HUG. At the same time, Louka has to follow a physiotherapy treatment for which he has to be assiduous, because he absolutely must not let his mouth close. He is very cooperative and courageous, and his efforts are bearing fruit.

Back home, Louka, from the Bobofing ethnic group and of animist religion, will be reunited with his family. Born into a polygamous family - his father has two wives - he will be happy to see his parents, his four brothers and sisters and his half-brother. Louka will return to school in the new school year, while continuing with the regular physiotherapy sessions necessary to ensure that he does not lose the benefits of all his efforts. We wish him a safe return to his family and the best for the rest of his life.

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MAKE A DONATION



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