



## **Cramo sponsors SOS Childrens Villages (October 2008)**

“With our support for SOS-Children’s Villages’ new children’s village in Ukraine, we’re developing commitment in our workers. We’re also building trust in the brand... But there’s also an important business-related reason for our effort. Our operations are extremely local – that’s why it’s important to build goodwill in the markets we operate in.” So says Anders Collman, director of corporate communications for the European rental group Cramo, one of the principal sponsors of the children’s village in Brovary.



At the end of May, Anders Collman travelled to Kiev with his Finnish colleague Gia Tullilahti and a number of other representatives from companies that have taken part in and carried out plans for the first SOS children’s village in Ukraine. The aim was to see how the sponsors’ funds were being used on site, get an insight into operations there and meet the mothers, children and staff from SOS-Children’s Villages in the country.

“The trip made a really strong impression. We got to see a side of the country that we would otherwise never have seen, especially with our visits to families that are socially at risk and get help through SOS-Children’s Villages. It was also uplifting to feel that I’m working for a company that’s helping to make a difference for children at risk,” says Collman.

“On the personal level, the trip meant a reawakening – and seeing one’s own worries in another light,” he added.

## **HAS SUPPORTED SOS-CHILDREN’S VILLAGES FOR MANY YEARS**

Cramo rents machinery, equipment and modular space to the construction industry as well as to other industries and the public sector through a total of some 250 depots in Scandinavia, Finland, the Baltic countries, Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands. It also sells used equipment for its customers and its own account. The parent company of the group, Cramo Oy, is listed on the Helsinki Stock Exchange. The company has a total of 2,000 employees, including 650 in Sweden.

Cramo has supported SOS-Children’s Villages since 1998.

“Up until this year, our support has mostly been in the form of scattered showers, like making donations at Christmas. But starting this budget year, we decided to expand our efforts and become a principal sponsor of the children’s village in Brovary,” says Collman.

### **CLEAR CONNECTION**

One important reason Cramo chose to support SOS-Children’s Villages specifically is that the organization has well-established operations in every country the company is located in.

“Even though we don’t have any operations in Ukraine, supporting a project there is a good fit for us, because it’s a market we’re considering establishing operations in. Rental operations are by nature local – and this is a good way to both build goodwill and establish contacts,” says Collman. “SOS-Children’s Villages also has a clear link to our operations – the organization builds children’s villages and Cramo is involved in the construction industry,” he adds.

### **BRINGS SOFT VALUES TO THE INDUSTRY**

According to Collman, another reason for choosing SOS-Children’s Villages is that Cramo works in a masculine industry. “It’s good that we bring in a few soft values – both to the company and the industry,” he says.

Collman had a positive view of SOS-Children’s Villages even before, because he and his family have been sponsoring a girl, Felicia, in South Africa for several years. “I have great confidence that SOS-Children’s Villages uses the money in a good way,” he says.

### **CRAMO SECURES ENERGY SUPPLY**

On location in Brovary, Collman gained an understanding of the challenges that still need to be overcome before the children and mothers can move into the new village. One of these is the question of energy. The local government has promised to build a transformer station, which will supply the children’s village as well as a hospital being built in the vicinity – but because construction on the hospital has been delayed, the local government has also put a brake on the construction of the transformer station.

After having gotten a sense of the situation, Cramo decided to try to find a solution to the problem. The answer was to lend a generator to the children’s village from the company’s depot in Russia for the time being. The normal rent that the company charges for the generator is 1,200 Swedish kronor a day – and since the permanent supply of electricity is not expected to be functioning for another year, the generator will probably secure the supply of electricity to the children’s village until then.

Apart from this invaluable help which made moving into the children’s village possible, Cramo has also donated another 700,000 kronor to the project. “I see this as a long-term investment – but Cramo will naturally evaluate this project every year, just like we do with all our other investments,” says Collman.

*Source: SOS-Branbyar magazine, Sweden*