



## SOS Children's Villages Visitor's Guide

### Welcome to our SOS Children's Village!

We are pleased to introduce you to life at the SOS Children's Village. A visit is a great opportunity for you to see the difference your donation makes and we are happy to welcome you to the SOS Children's Village. We trust that your visit will be a very special experience for you and also for the SOS family. As you probably know, our aim is to provide vulnerable children with a safe family environment; the best interests of the children are always our primary focus. We work in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the SOS Child Protection Policy. We also comply with the standards of Keeping Children Safe.

We ask you to be our partners in ensuring that the children remain in a safe, caring and protective environment, in general and also during your visit to the village. During the visit, you will learn about the activities the children take part in, their families and the different areas of our work. A member of our staff will be your guide and is happy to answer your questions. Although we will try to have an English-speaking guide available for you, this may not always be possible.

This guide offers some further explanations to the visit agreement for visitors to the SOS Children's Village. Let us know if you have any questions or need clarification on any of the points!

#### **The village is the children's home; so visits need to be organized beforehand:**

- ✔ We ask for your understanding of the fact that we have to be aware of all persons who visit. Therefore please only visit the SOS Children's Village when coordinated with the National Office and only accompanied by a member of our staff. We will ask you to show your passport or other identification to our staff.
- ✔ As a general rule, in order to make sure that the daily life of the children is not disturbed, you are welcome to visit once per year during day-time. Please arrange the exact date with the national office at least four weeks in advance and agree on the appropriate length of your visit with the village staff.
- ✔ Some children have relatives that they visit from time to time or they may be away on school journeys. Planning the visit in time allows us to make sure that the children are in the village, informed and ready to meet you.
- ✔ Please understand that a SOS co-worker will accompany you during your visit at all times. Do not invite children to be alone with you or to take part in activities outside the village. Since SOS is responsible for the children we cannot agree to this.

### You are visiting a private home:

- ✔ Your visit is appreciated and an exciting event for everyone. However, structure is important for the daily life of the children and the SOS families need time for their routines to maintain a sense of belonging provided by a stable home. Therefore, please respect meal- and bed-times as well as school schedules.
- ✔ Cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings. Please interact with children and staff in a respectful and culturally appropriate way. Make sure you are dressed in an appropriate manner.
- ✔ Please bear in mind that you are someone the children have probably never met before and they are not familiar with you. Therefore please let the children approach you and do not actively seek physical contact, e.g. hugs and kisses, with the children.
- ✔ Considering that many children in our SOS Children's Villages have had difficult experiences in the past, please interact with them in a way that will strengthen their self-confidence, rather than making them feel like objects of pity. Please handle any information you receive about the children as confidential, in order to respect their personal rights and their privacy.

### All children are equal:

- ✔ Treat all children equally. If you consider bringing gifts, please choose something that can be shared among all the children. Some children don't have sponsors that visit or bring presents. This might create disappointment and sadness which we want to avoid.
- ✔ The children receive all they need for their daily life. Please do not distribute personal gifts of money or expensive presents (for example mobile phones, laptops, etc.). This may be inappropriate in relation to the average belongings of the children and the surrounding community and could create envy among them.
- ✔ We understand that visits are inspiring and you may want to support the children further. We encourage you to make a difference by donating through the SOS office in your home country.

**Thank you for partnering with us to protect children  
and keep them safe!**



## SOS Children's Villages Policy Declarations

(One to be completed per visitor over 18)

The work of SOS Children's Villages has a strong focus on protecting the children in our care. To ensure that all possible steps are taken to protect sponsored children and their families from those who wish to exploit or abuse them, we follow a very thorough Child Protection policy. We do everything possible to keep children safe.

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor Number \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby agree to the following conditions set out by SOS Children's Villages with regards to the proposed visit. If I break any of these conditions, SOS Children's Villages has the right to cancel the visit and the sponsorship:

- To the best of my knowledge, I have never been investigated, charged or convicted of crimes, for any form of abuse, violence or sex offence to a child or an adult, including abduction, human trafficking and child endangerment. Nor have I been investigated by a local authority for the mistreatment of children or vulnerable adults.
- I have received, read and agree to abide by SOS Children's Villages' Visitor Guide.
- I agree to show my passport or other identification to SOS Children's Villages staff upon arrival.
- I will contact SOS Children's Villages at least four weeks before my intended visit whether it is a first time or a repeat visit. I understand that the visit will be once a year for one day.
- I will only meet children in the presence of SOS Children's Villages staff, and will not be alone with them. I will not invite any child or his/her SOS family to visit me.
- I will not ask the children to speak about their past, background or other potentially embarrassing or sensitive personal information (e.g. health conditions, appearance, negative behaviour, etc.) I will not share the personal information of the child on any media.
- I will obtain permission before taking any photos or videos in the village, and agree that all materials are for my personal use only. Even with declared permission from SOS Children's Villages staff, I will respect the individual wishes of any child or co-worker who do not want to be photographed or featured in any kind of material.
- I will at no point give my personal contact details to my sponsored child or his/her family.

Thank you for partnering with us to protect children and keep them safe!

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_