

# SPONSORSHIP HANDBOOK



SOS CHILDREN'S  
VILLAGES  
INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL DONOR SERVICES





SOS Children's Villages is an international non-governmental social development organisation that is committed to children's needs, rights and concerns. We primarily focus on children whose parents cannot care for them and on children of families in difficult circumstances.

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# WELCOME TO THE WORLDWIDE SOS FAMILY!

## THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES!

Across the globe, 145 million children have lost one or both parents and 75 million children are denied education, poverty being a major contributing factor. A sponsorship is a long-term, effective way of enabling children to enjoy the security of a family and to receive a good education.

We welcome you into our family of around 300,000 sponsors who enable us to meet the needs of so many children. This handbook gives you the opportunity to learn about our work and provides you with important information about your sponsorship.

## SPONSORING A CHILD OR A VILLAGE?

There are two different possibilities of supporting our work:

- As a child sponsor you will follow your sponsored child on his or her journey through childhood and into an independent life.
- As a village sponsor you will follow all the children and their everyday life in a village.

All SOS sponsors receive a welcome package containing a description and a picture of the sponsored child or village. In addition we also send you general information about the country and the specific SOS Children's Village where your sponsored child lives or that you support through a village sponsorship.

Your only commitment as a sponsor is your continuous sponsorship contribution. You may cancel your sponsorship at any time. When doing so we would appreciate a short note with feedback.



We allocate sponsorships in the SOS Children's Villages with the highest financial need and where children have few or no sponsors. We assign several sponsors to each child.





# YOUR CONTRIBUTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Both as a child and as a village sponsor, with your contribution you enable us to cover the costs of the SOS Children's Village that you sponsor or where your sponsored child lives. The sponsorship contribution covers the living costs of the entire village, as well as all additional SOS programmes in the area, e.g. family strengthening programmes.

Your support helps us meet the daily needs of the children in our family-based care and guarantees that they receive medical assistance and education. Most SOS Children's Villages have supporting facilities attached, such as SOS Kindergartens, SOS Hermann Gmeiner Schools, SOS Social Centres, and SOS Medical Centres. The services offered here also benefit the neighbouring communities.

SOS Children's Villages seeks to reach as many vulnerable children as possible. To strengthen families at risk of breaking apart and make it possible for them to stay together is often the best way to help children. Therefore, through our family strengthening programmes, we increasingly focus on helping families in the local community find the skills and resources to become self-sufficient and to give their children the proper care that all children deserve.

While supporting our work, you help to improve the living conditions of exposed children and their families in the local community.

## SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

We share in community life and respond to the social development needs of society's most vulnerable children and young people. We establish facilities and programmes that aim to strengthen families and prevent abandonment of children. We join hands with community members to provide education and health care and to respond to emergencies.



Foto: Brenda Dimbleby

# THE SPONSORSHIP

## WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A SPONSORSHIP

As a child sponsor you follow your sponsored child on his or her journey to an independent life. As a village sponsor you follow everyday life in your village and take part in the lives of the children.



All sponsors receive updates from the SOS Children's Village twice a year.

Between June and September, you are provided with updated information regarding the development of the children. At the end of the year, you will also receive a report about what has been going on in the SOS Children's Village and its supporting programmes, e.g. the school, kindergarten or family strengthening programme. You will also receive a recent photograph of your sponsored child or village. Twice a year we send you our international SOS Children's Villages magazine, "SOS Impressions," with news and stories from our various programmes from all over the world.

## PROTECTING THE DATA OF THE CHILD

Since protecting the rights of the children in our care is an essential part of our work, we carefully observe the relevant data protection regulations. Please understand that there are details about the children in our care which we cannot pass on to sponsors. As a sponsor, we ask you to treat the information entrusted to you about the children with discretion.



When your sponsored child leaves our care, you will have the opportunity to continue your commitment by supporting another child. See page 11.



Please do not publish pictures or information about your sponsored child or family on the internet or other media channels. We also ask you not to pass on information to third parties outside your immediate family or circle of friends.





Foto: Bemo Neelaman

#### CHILDCARE FOR MORE THAN 60 YEARS

SOS Children's Villages International was founded in 1949 to help orphaned children in the aftermath of World War II. Since then the work of SOS Children's Villages has spread worldwide and our family-based care concept has proven successful in a wide range of countries and cultures.



# WRITING TO YOUR SPONSORED CHILD

The children in our SOS Children's Villages are happy to hear from their sponsors. You are therefore welcome to send letters and pictures. It is however not possible to contact your sponsored child via e-mail. When writing to your sponsored child, please consider our guidelines.

## GUIDELINES FOR LETTERS

- The correspondence address is included in the general information sent to you in the welcome package.
- Please write in English or one of the other correspondence languages for the SOS Children's Village that you sponsor.
- Please keep the formulation of letters and greetings as short and simple as possible.
- Keep in mind to write about things children might be interested in, such as your everyday life, family, pets or hobbies.
- More than likely, your sponsored child comes from a different culture than your own. Values, traditions and the standard of living can be very different from what you are used to.
- If you send photographs of you and your family, please be aware that pictures of people scantily clad may cause offence and are not recommended.

The children may respond to your letters if they choose to, but they are not obliged to write back to their sponsors. In any case, you will receive a confirmation or a reply from our sponsorship co-worker in the respective national association.

## THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

In all countries where SOS Children's Villages operates, an autonomous national association is formed. Each national association complies with the SOS Children's Villages International statutes and principles for childcare and education, as well as a predetermined set of financial and administrative practices. The national association in each country coordinates the activities of all their SOS Children's Villages which also include mail correspondence between sponsors and their sponsored children. Bringing all administration tasks together under one roof at the national associations reduces the burden of the co-workers in the individual SOS Children's Village, and it also helps us to maintain a high standard in our sponsorship work.



Please do not write the name of your sponsored child on the outside of the envelope, only on the actual greeting or letter.



**DID YOU KNOW THAT...**

...SOS Children's Villages is active in 133 countries and territories and supports children and their families through more than 500 SOS Children's Villages, close to 400 SOS youth programmes, and more than 600 family strengthening programmes throughout the world. Around 80,000 children have found a new home in one of our villages, and 160,000 children are being taken care of in our kindergartens and day-care centres or have access to education in one of our schools. Today, we support over 2.2 million children through care, education and health programmes.





# GIFTS TO YOUR SPONSORED CHILD

## SENDING PACKAGES

If you want to send your sponsored child a gift, we suggest small gifts that will fit in an envelope and which can be enjoyed by all the children in the SOS family. This could be a packet of stickers, hair slides and ribbons, colouring books or something similar.



**We strongly advise against sending cheques or cash enclosed in letters.**

We recommend that you do not send big and valuable parcels as many of our SOS Children's Villages are situated in countries with unreliable postal services. Parcels often get lost or damaged on the way. Furthermore, the additional custom costs often exceed the value of the parcel. If a package should get lost, SOS Children's Villages cannot take responsibility for tracking it.

## MONEY GIFTS

You have the possibility of giving a money gift to your sponsored child in addition to the regular sponsorship contributions. The money will be held in a savings account and this together with interest will be used as a start into their independent life. Money gifts are used in the child's best interest and based on the child's individual development plan. In some cases, money gifts are used to cover costs in connection with further training or education. They may also be used to furnish the SOS child's first home with basic items, to purchase a small plot of land for farming, or even to start a small business.

If you wish to give your sponsored child a money gift, please inform us, and we will deduct the amount at the next credit card debit.



**You are welcome to donate a money gift for a village as well. The gift will benefit all the children in the village.**





Foto: Micaela Morosini

## A SECURE HOME

An SOS Children's Village offers more than food, clothing and education. The children receive the care, extra support and security they need for a healthy development.

# VISITING THE SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

You are welcome to visit your sponsored child or village. When planning a visit to an SOS Children's Village, please understand that our SOS families must keep to their daily routines. Also bear in mind that visitor numbers in popular tourist destinations are particularly high. The visit should therefore not exceed one day per year.

To ensure your visit is a success, please contact the national association in that country at least four weeks in advance to arrange a mutually convenient date and time. You will find the contact details on the village description.



You are welcome to contact us here at International Donor Services for further information and contact data on our national association in the respective country you plan to visit.

A co-worker in the village will be available to show you around and to translate if necessary. Our national association will provide you with the exact address and other valuable information about the village.



Please do not publish pictures of the children on Facebook or any other media. For further information, please see page 5 on data protection.

## PLEASE NOTE

- You cannot take your sponsored child on a visit outside the village on your own.
- You cannot be accommodated in the village.
- It is not possible for our national co-workers to look after sponsors during their stay in the area, or to accompany them on sightseeing and shopping trips.
- Visits abroad by sponsored children are not possible.



# WHEN CHILDREN LEAVE OUR CARE

Generally, children stay in our care until they have finished their education or vocational training and are independent enough to look after themselves.

Becoming an adult does not automatically mean that your sponsored child must leave SOS Children's Villages. In most cases, young people become independent somewhere between 16 and 23 years of age. It is impossible to name an exact age due to differences in education and training systems, the children's different interests and personal development, and their specific cultural conditions.

Some time before becoming independent, young people generally move into semi-independent accommodation. With the guidance of an educational co-worker, they gradually learn how to look after themselves.

SOS Children's Villages works together with local authorities to enable children to be reunited with their family of origin. In cases where this is possible, we support the family and follow the reintegration process. As a result, some children may stay in our villages for a shorter period of time.

If your sponsored child leaves the care of SOS Children's Villages, you will be informed immediately. Along with the departure letter, we will give



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you the opportunity to continue your commitment by supporting another child. If you choose to accept this suggested sponsorship, you do not need to do anything else. Should you not wish to continue your commitment or if you have a special request, we kindly ask you to contact International Donor Services in Vienna.

Should you not want to be offered a new child when your sponsored child leaves the village, please let us know beforehand.



The children in our care leave the international sponsorship programme when they move from the village or at the latest when they turn 23.





International Donor Services belongs to the umbrella organisation SOS Children's Villages International (SOS Kinderdorf International) located in Austria.



# MANAGEMENT OF FINANCES

SOS Children's Villages makes every effort to ensure transparency and keep administration costs low. Your sponsorship contributions are earmarked donations which may only be used to support the children living in your sponsored SOS Children's Village and to cover the running costs and budgeted investments in this village and its supporting programmes. Each SOS Children's Village must keep well-documented accounts and produce an annual budget which is checked and approved by SOS-Kinderdorf International, the umbrella organisation.

Every national member association of SOS Children's Villages International is required to submit accounting records and annual accounts to an internationally recognised external auditor for verification. This audit report is then submitted to SOS Children's Villages International. There is a clear audit trail for every earmarked donation.

If you need to update your credit card details, please use this safe link:

<https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/services/pages/sponsor-update.aspxww>

For earmarked donations that are not charged by your credit card, please find our bank data below:

Account holder:	SOS-KINDERDORF International
Account number:	04446 002 000
Name of bank:	UniCredit Bank Austria AG
Bank code:	11000
BIC:	BKAUATWW
IBAN:	AT44 1100 0044 4600 2000
Bank address:	Bank Austria Pyrker gasse 40 A-1190 Vienna, Austria



The International Donor Services team is happy to be of assistance concerning any request you may have. Please do not hesitate to contact us.







Foto: Nusrin Sornchat

## THE HOUSE

The house is the family's home, with its own unique feeling, rhythm and routine. Under its roof, children enjoy a real sense of security and belonging.

We build families for children in need. We help them shape their own futures and we share in the development of their communities.



Foto: Georg

## THE MOTHER

The SOS mother builds a close relationship with every child and provides the security, love and stability that each child needs.



Foto: Marko Magi

## BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Girls and boys of different ages live together as brothers and sisters, with biological brothers and sisters staying within the same SOS family.



Foto: Micaela Wroosim

## THE VILLAGE

SOS families live together, forming a supportive village environment where children experience cultural identity and affiliation. Living as integrated and contributing members of the local community is a fundamental part of the village.



## PERSONAL DATA

In order to register your sponsorship, SOS Children's Villages International will save and process the personal data you provide in accordance with Austrian and European data protection laws.

Once your sponsorship is allocated, your data is then sent to the SOS Children's Villages national association. You are always welcome to check the data kept by SOS Children's Villages International and correct any mistakes. SOS Children's Villages International ensures that everyone who has access to personal details works in strict accordance with data protection requirements.

Please inform us of any change in e-mail or postal address or a change in your personal data, as we want to make sure that you receive all updates on your sponsorship, as well as our biannual magazine, SOS Impressions.

Here you can find the link for changing your personal data:

<https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/services/pages/sponsor-update.aspx>

## CONTACT US

If you have any questions, please contact our International Donor Services team. We kindly ask you to always quote your sponsorship number in all correspondence.

E-mail: [donor.services@sos-kd.org](mailto:donor.services@sos-kd.org)

Website: [sos-childrensvillages.org](http://sos-childrensvillages.org)

Address: SOS Children's Villages Int.  
Brigittenauer Lände 50  
1200 Vienna  
Austria, Europe

**PLEASE NOTE YOUR SPONSORSHIP NUMBER  
HERE:**

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You can also find your sponsorship number in our welcome letter.





Cover Picture and Last Page Picture: Joris Lugtigheld

**WE THANK YOU WHOLEHEARTEDLY FOR  
SUPPORTING OUR WORK.  
YOUR CONTRIBUTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE!.**

SOS Children's Villages International, Brigittenauer Lände 50, 1200 Vienna, Austria | [www.sos-childrensvillages.org](http://www.sos-childrensvillages.org)  
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