

Sponsorship Handbook

International Donor Services



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES



SOS Children's Villages is an international, independent and non-governmental social development organisation that is committed to children's needs, rights and concerns. We respect different religions and cultures, and we work in countries and communities where our programmes can contribute to development. We work in the spirit of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and we promote these rights around the world. Our focus is on children without adequate parental care and 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, around 220 million children are shut out from a caring family environment. Many have no access to education, poverty being a major contributing factor. A sponsorship is a long-term, effective way to support children and families to overcome hardship and giving them perspective and an education. We welcome you into our family of over 400,000 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.

TWO DIFFERENT SPONSORSHIPS

Sponsorship funds are always earmarked for the village that you sponsor or the village where your sponsored child lives, but while your contribution is earmarked for the village; as a child sponsor you will accompany a child on their journey through childhood and as a village sponsor you will follow the every day life of all children living in the village.

All sponsors receive a welcome package containing a description and a picture of a specific child or sponsored village. In addition we also provide general information about the country and the sponsored village. 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.

HOW YOUR CONTRIBUTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Your contribution supports all programmes at a specific location. The contribution covers the living costs of the entire village, as well as all additional SOS programmes in the area. Most SOS Children's Villages run supporting facilities and programmes, such as Kindergartens, Hermann Gmeiner Schools, Social Centres and 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, our family strengthening programmes increasingly focus on helping families in the local community. The programmes provide support to gain skills and resources needed to become self-sufficient and give their children the care that all children deserve. While supporting our work, you help improve the living conditions of exposed children and their families in the local community (for more information see page 11).



THE SPONSORSHIP

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A SPONSORSHIP

As a village sponsor you follow everyday life in your sponsored village and take part in the lives of the children and as a child sponsor you follow your sponsored child while supporting the entire location.

All sponsors receive updates twice a year

Between June and September, the National Offices send out updated information regarding the development of the children and at the end of the year, you will receive a letter 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.

We care about child data protection, the same way we care about donor data protection. This is why we only use the first name of the children in our care since March 2019. By using only the children's first names, we maximize their privacy, protect their identity and safeguard them. The child ID is printed on the sponsorship documents. Please use this number whenever you contact us or send post to your sponsored child or village. This will ensure that, even if many children share the same first name, your letter reaches your sponsored child or that we can answer your request promptly.



BE OUR PARTNER IN DATA PROTECTION

PROTECTING YOUR DATA AND THE DATA OF THE CHILDREN



Since protecting the rights of the children in our care is an essential part of our work, we adhere to paramount 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.

SOS Children's Villages takes precautionary measures to guarantee the lawful use of personal data, both of our sponsors as well as of the children in our care.

We store data securely and we protect our systems against data misuse. Should you want to know more specifically about what GDPR measures are in place, please contact us at donor.services@sos.org and we will be happy to provide you with more detailed information.

As most personal data about minors is considered sensitive data, it needs to be treated with great care. It is confidential and must not be shared with others. SOS Children's Villages work in the spirit of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children. We are committed to creating and maintaining a caring and protective environment, ensuring that the children's personal rights are not infringed upon.

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 and to treat confidential data with care.



CHILDCARE FOR MORE THAN 70 YEARS

SOS Children's Villages was founded in 1949 to help orphaned children in the aftermath of World War II. Since then our work has spread worldwide.

Today, SOS Children's Villages offer a range of care options from the family-like care concept over small group homes, foster care, kinship care and family strengthening programmes.

We work close in alignment with our international gatekeeping policies, ensuring the most suitable care setting for children without adequate parental care.

We advocate and partner for each child's right to grow up in a supportive environment.



WRITING TO A CHILD OR VILLAGE

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 have contact via e-mail. When writing, 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.
- Kindly consider that 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 inadequately clothed may cause offence and are not recommended.

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

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 coworker in the respective national association.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

In all countries where SOS Children's Villages operate, 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.



DID YOU KNOW THAT.....SOS Children's Villages is active in more than 130 countries and territories and supports children and their families through more than 500 SOS Children's Villages, close to 600 SOS youth programmes, and more than 600 family strengthening programmes throughout the world. Around 65,000 children have found a new home in one of our villages, and 198,000 children are being taken care of in our kindergartens and day-care centres or have access to education and/or vocational training in one of our schools. Today, we support over 1.2 million children through care, education and health.

SENDING GIFTS TO A CHILD OR VILLAGE

SENDING PACKAGES

If you want to send a gift, we suggest small gifts that fit in an envelope and can be enjoyed by all children in the family. This could be stickers, balloons, hair slides and ribbons, colouring books or something similar. We recommend that you do not send big and valuable parcels as many of our villages are situated in countries with unreliable postal services and parcels often get lost or damaged on the way. Furthermore, the additional custom fees (affecting all parcels above 2 kg) oftentimes exceed the value of the actual gift. Please note that SOS Children's Villages cannot cover tax fees nor take responsibility for tracking lost packages.

We strongly advise against sending cheques or cash with letters or parcels.

FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMMES

Together with local organisations and governments, SOS Children's Villages work to strengthen vulnerable families to prevent family breakdown and separation of the child from the family.

Our family strengthening programme work includes kinship care, where children are supported to live with their extended family. We partner with the state and other stakeholders to provide access to basic health care and quality education to enable children and families to become self-reliant.

We actively support family re-unification and help families to overcome trauma and rebuild their lives.

MAIN FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMME SERVICES

ESSENTIAL SERVICES

- Education
- Psycho-social services
- Improvement of living conditions

BUILDING CAPACITY

- Support in developing parental skills
- Support in securing a stable income
- Support children's developmental needs

STRENGTHENING SUPPORT SYSTEMS

- Support community members to self-organise
- Strengthen existing infrastructure
- Establish and/or strengthen cooperation with government

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Family strengthening programmes aim to prevent children from losing the care of their family. Many parents lack basic necessities – money to pay the doctor or the school, or perhaps strength, health, and faith in the future. The family strengthening programmes are designed to enable families to support themselves in the long-term and cope with life independently.

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 provide an exact age due to global differences in education and training systems, the children's interests and personal development, and their specific cultural conditions. Before becoming independent, young people in our care 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.

When your sponsored child leaves the care of SOS Children's Villages, you will be informed immediately. Along with the departure letter, we will give you the opportunity to continue your commitment by taking on a new sponsorship. 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 at donor.services@sos-kd.org. 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 (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 contact us at donor.services@sos-kd.org.

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 Pyrkergrasse 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!**



PERSONAL DATA



In order to register your sponsorship, SOS Children's Villages 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 and correct or update any information. SOS Children's Villages ensures that everyone who has access to personal details works in strict accordance with data protection requirements (for more information see page 6).

Please inform us of any change in e-mail or postal address or a change in your personal data, to ensure that you receive all updates on your sponsorship.

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.

Email: donor.services@sos-kd.org

Website: www.sos-childrensvillages.org

Address: SOS Children's Villages
Brigittenauer Lände 50-54
1200 Vienna
Austria, Europe



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

SOS Children's Villages, Brigittenauer Lände 50-54, 1200 Vienna, Austria |
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