



# SOS Children's Villages

*The world's largest orphan charity*

SOS Children



in a nutshell



SOS Children's Village Cebu, Philippines (Katja Snozzi)



# Welcome

How often have you seen pictures of children alone, in need and with no one to care for them and thought about how you could help give them security and support? This human response is at the heart of our work. We build homes and families for children in need, helping them shape their own futures and sharing in the development of their communities.

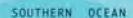
We are a non-political and non-denominational organisation, supporting children who have been orphaned, abandoned or whose families are unable to care for them. Over **60,000 children** currently live with their SOS mother and family in our unique **SOS Children's Villages** and Youth Homes in **123 countries** worldwide.

We don't, however, just create families. Through our schools and training centres, we work to provide children with the education and skills

training they need to become successful, contributing members of society. We also run community development programmes, providing important medical, skills training and counselling services, to help strengthen families and keep them together. And in times of war, famine or disaster, we are quick to provide emergency assistance to the most vulnerable and continue to offer long-term support, helping communities return to normality.

Around the world, SOS Children supports over **1 million children and adults** in our efforts to ensure children have a family for life.

Chief Executive Officer  
SOS Children's Villages UK



# What we do







SOS Children's Village Amazonas, Brazil (Paul Hahn)



# The SOS Children's Village

The SOS family has been at the heart of our work for over 50 years, giving children without the care of their own family the support and security they deserve.

Our villages provide every child with:

- a **mother** - every child has a caring parent
- **brothers and sisters** - family ties grow naturally
- a **house** - each family creates its own home
- a **village** - the SOS family is part of a community.

Girls and boys of different ages live together with their SOS mother in the SOS Children's Village, which provides a permanent home for a happy, positive childhood. An average of 15 family homes form the children's village, which is an integral part of the wider community.

SOS mothers and families are guided and supported by the village director, while SOS aunts help out with childcare responsibilities and daily life in the village.



SOS Children's Village Arusha,  
Tanzania (Seger Erken)





# The mother and her children

Each SOS mother builds a close relationship with every child entrusted to her, giving each one the **love**, **security** and **stability** that they need. Trained in childcare, she lives together with the children, guides their development and runs her household independently.

Each SOS mother is local to the country and recognises and respects each child's family background, cultural roots and religion.

Many of the children in our care have suffered traumatic experiences, which can sometimes affect their behaviour or health. The SOS mothers and aunts are given special training and support to care for each individual child and help them overcome their difficult start in life.

Natural brothers and sisters are never separated and children stay within the same SOS family, building ties that last a lifetime - just like any other family.



SOS Youth Home Addis Ababa,  
Ethiopia (SOS Archives)



## Youth Homes

SOS Youth Homes, located outside the children's village, offer teenagers a **stepping stone to independence**. SOS youth leaders support the youths as they learn to take responsibility for their own time, school work, household tasks and money. The teenagers regularly return to their SOS family for birthdays and other village celebrations.

Teenagers grow up together in the youth homes until they have completed their education and are fully independent.

### **SOS Youth Home, Bethlehem, Palestinian Territories**

There are currently 29 teenagers living at the three SOS Youth Homes in Bethlehem, which opened in 1986. They study at vocational training centres or universities and find jobs in the summer holidays. Many former SOS youths now work in and around Bethlehem as teachers, engineers and university staff.



SOS Family Strengthening Programme, Minsk, Belarus (Peter Lydén)



## Work with the community

Working with the wider community enables us to reach beyond the children in our villages and help many thousands more vulnerable children.

We work jointly with community members to provide education, healthcare, social support, particularly for families affected by HIV/AIDS, and emergency assistance that help strengthen families and other community members. Fundamental to our work is the belief that all people should be treated with **respect and**

**dignity**; we build our work on the core principles of human rights and the rights of the child, and ensure that all our projects are inspired by the people who benefit from them.

By helping people to help themselves, we aim to support communities' **long-term development**, reduce poverty and improve children's living conditions and welfare before families are forced to break up or even abandon a child.





SOS Nursery School, Cebu, Philippines (Katja Snozzi)



## Education

SOS Children builds and runs **nursery, primary and secondary schools**, which are open to children in our care and to those from the wider community. SOS Children offers scholarships to poorer students whose families could not otherwise afford to pay for their education.

SOS Nursery Schools provide access to early learning and supervised play facilities as well as ensuring children are properly cared for while their parents or guardians are at work.

SOS Primary and Secondary Schools teach according to national curricula, closely following

cultural and linguistic norms. A maximum of 30-40 pupils per classroom are taught by well-qualified teachers, who are almost exclusively from the local area.

### **SOS Secondary School, Yantai, China**

Our secondary school in Yantai, near Beijing in China, is the largest we've built to date and was constructed in response to an urgent appeal from the provincial authorities in 1993. Over 3,000 children are taught by 220 teachers. Its consistently high academic results recently earned the school official recognition as a 'Provincial Standard School'.



SOS Vocational Training Centre, Nairobi, Kenya (SOS Archives)



## Vocational Training Centres

SOS Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) equip people of all ages with the **practical skills** they need to earn a living and **lead independent lives**. The courses taught are tailored to match local and regional job prospects.

Our VTCs work in partnership with local employers to give students practical work experience. VTCs conduct research into the local job market and offer **career advice** and **micro-loans** to support graduates in starting their own business.

### **SOS Vocational Training Centre, Lilongwe, Malawi**

The SOS Vocational Training Centre in Lilongwe offers 140 students, including those with disabilities, a practical education.

Currently 63% of the students are girls. Courses available include: IT, agriculture, electrical appliance repair, metalwork, home economics, textiles and construction. The students are also trained in commercial awareness to help them apply their skills effectively.



SOS Family Strengthening Programme, Pondicherry, India (Dominic Sansoni)





# Community Development Programmes

Working with the community, we aim to offer the **skills and support** vulnerable families need to provide for themselves and be able to care for their children.

Community Development Programmes (CDPs) and Family Strengthening Programmes (FSPs) offer specific assistance to some of the most disadvantaged members of society, including child- and grandparent-headed families, and those affected by HIV/AIDS. Through skills training, education, counselling, micro-loans and improved nutrition, families are better able to provide for their children and stay together through difficult times.

## **Child Soldier Rehabilitation, Malakal, Sudan**

Our rehabilitation programme in Malakal provides children with a basic education and counselling sessions to help them recover from the trauma of war and bring normality to their lives. Family retracing programmes, which reunite child soldiers with their families, have been as high as 96% successful.

## **Family Strengthening in Kiev, Ukraine**

In Ukraine, drug abuse and alcoholism are widespread and the HIV prevalence rate is the highest in Europe. SOS Children works with local communities providing food packages and counselling services to at-risk families to help prevent child abandonment.



SOS Medical Centre, Da Lat, Vietnam (Dominic Sansoni)



## Medical Centres

In areas where medical support is scarce or non-existent, SOS Medical Centres provide communities not just with immediate **medical treatment** that can mean the difference between life and death, but also **preventative** and **palliative care**.

Run by local professionals, the SOS centres help to **improve the general health** of the community by offering:

- immunisation and child nourishment programmes
- ante- and post-natal care
- support for HIV/AIDS-affected families
- education programmes.

### **SOS Medical Centre, Mogadishu, Somalia**

30,000 mothers and their babies receive care at Somalia's only fully functioning Obstetrics/Gynaecology clinic. The centre, which includes 19 treatment rooms, a delivery room and an operating theatre, provides essential medical support in one of the world's most troubled countries.



## Emergency Relief

Thanks to our **strong local rooting**, SOS Children is often one of the first NGOs to provide immediate **emergency assistance** in times of war, crisis or disaster. SOS Emergency Relief Programmes support children and communities by:

- ensuring the safety of any unaccompanied children
- providing safe shelter, blankets, medication and food
- tracing families and aiding reunification
- offering trauma therapy for children
- helping regain livelihoods through the provision of new equipment and retraining
- implementing long-term support through construction of new homes, schools and clinics.



Rebuilding livelihoods post-tsunami,  
Pondicherry, India (Dominic Sansoni)

### Kashmir Earthquake

Following the devastating earthquake that ravaged Pakistan-administered Kashmir in October 2005, SOS Children was given **legal guardianship** of all unaccompanied children.

Many children have been reunited with their families; others have found a new home in an SOS Children's Village. Many more, initially cared for in an emergency shelter in Rawalpindi, will benefit from two new children's villages and three new schools.



Kashmir earthquake emergency relief,  
Pakistan (SOS Archives)





SOS Children's Village Dar Bouazza, Morocco (Aldo Ellena)



## Why support SOS Children?

We are dedicated to helping generations of children enjoy a better life. We do this by nurturing **lasting relationships** with our donors, our co-workers and the communities in which we are rooted. We support, respect and learn from one another.

Since 1949, we have built a foundation of trust and cooperation with donors, governments and other partners. Our greatest responsibility is the well-being of children, which we strive to ensure through high standards of care and by reaching the most vulnerable. In doing so, we are committed to using all funds and resources wisely, with **consideration** and **full accountability**.

We can **guarantee** that **100%** of restricted donations are allocated to the chosen project; nothing is deducted for administration. Our work is driven by our in-country staff and not by a central headquarters, far removed from the work on the ground.

Unlike many other international NGOs, SOS Children is run by **local people** with a specific knowledge and understanding of their region; they are therefore directly responsible for the development of their own community.



## Support SOS Children

Join us in our efforts to give a million more children a family for life by 2016.

- **Sponsor a child or a village** - See the impact your donation has both on your sponsored child and/or on the SOS village where they live.
- **General donations** - However much you can afford, a regular, direct debit or one-off donation is vital to continue and expand our work.
- **Funding something specific** - Donations can also fund the construction or running costs of a particular village or programme, or purchase a specific piece of equipment.
- **Sign up to payroll giving** - Make a regular tax-free donation direct from your salary.
- **Legacy** - Help us give more children a family for life; leave a gift to SOS Children in your will.

- **Corporate partnerships** - Support a specific village or programme and create a lasting partnership between your organisation and SOS communities across the globe.

### Get involved

- Organise an event in aid of SOS Children: boat trip, dress down day, tennis tournament...
- Get sponsored to: run a marathon, shave your head, lose 10lbs, climb a mountain...
- Ask for donations instead of presents for your birthday or other big occasion.
- Make SOS Children your school, club or company's chosen charity.
- Raise awareness: link to our website, put a footer on your emails, speak about our work...



SOS community development, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina (SOS Archives)



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*Front cover: SOS Nursery School, Francistown, Botswana (SOS Archives)*  
*Back cover: SOS Children's Village Visakhapatnam, India (Dominic Sansoni)*