

SOS Children and you



**SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES**

A loving home for every child



Making a difference

In times of crisis, we all need someone to turn to. However much families try to support each other, when they're weakened by chronic poverty, they can be quickly overwhelmed by disease, conflict or natural disasters.

That's when you can make all the difference.

SOS Children is a global authority on nurturing and supporting families. We provide direct care for orphaned and abandoned children, and we work with local communities to keep fragmenting families together.

We need your help to keep this crucial work going. From sponsoring a child or an SOS Children's Village to funding family support, health and education, there are many ways that you can get involved.



Helping families to support themselves

Where family life is at risk, SOS Family Strengthening Programmes reach into disadvantaged communities to strengthen families and prevent child abandonment. It's an increasingly important part of our work.

We help vulnerable families to help themselves; we provide extra care for children plus training and support for carers. Typically these are situations where the main carer is chronically ill, the household is headed by a grandparent or older sibling, or adult carers have died young.

Elizabeth, 56, had supported her grandsons for several years after their parents died. They lived in an unplanned settlement in Kitwe, Zambia, with no public services, running water or sewerage. Elizabeth's income from selling garden vegetables wasn't enough for food or education.

The turning point was a visit from the SOS Children community team from Kitwe. We gave Elizabeth training and a loan to invest in her vegetable business.

Her yields increased so she could feed her grandsons and send them to school. She increased her profits

ten-fold and is paying the loan back: *"I thank God for SOS Children and couldn't believe my family was one of the lucky ones to be helped."*

Could you help us to keep other vulnerable families together when times are tough?



Improving healthcare and saving lives



We build SOS Medical Centres which specialise in providing high quality, affordable healthcare tailored to the needs of local communities. The centres offer treatment, antenatal and postnatal care, immunisation and education programmes, as well as counselling services.

In some parts of the world, rates for infant mortality and life expectancy are improving. Other countries lag behind. That's why SOS Medical Centres are so crucial to safeguard the wellbeing of vulnerable children, AIDS-affected families, pregnant women and newborn babies.

Making childbirth safer

Maternal death devastates families. Mother and child clinics at three SOS Medical Centres in Belén, Hohenau and San Ignacio, in disadvantaged parts of Paraguay, are making childbirth safer. With the benefit of maternity wards, incubators, an operating theatre, and an ultrasound unit, the new mothers can give their babies a better start in life.

The mothers also receive advice and training in family planning, hygiene, parenting skills and nutrition. The clinics have made a significant contribution to the reduction of Paraguay's infant mortality rate, which has decreased by one percent in each of the past six years.

Promoting immunisation

Worldwide, half the children who die before their fifth birthday die from preventable diseases like pneumonia, diarrhoea and measles. To prevent the spread of disease, we make vaccination programmes and treatment for opportunistic infections a priority.

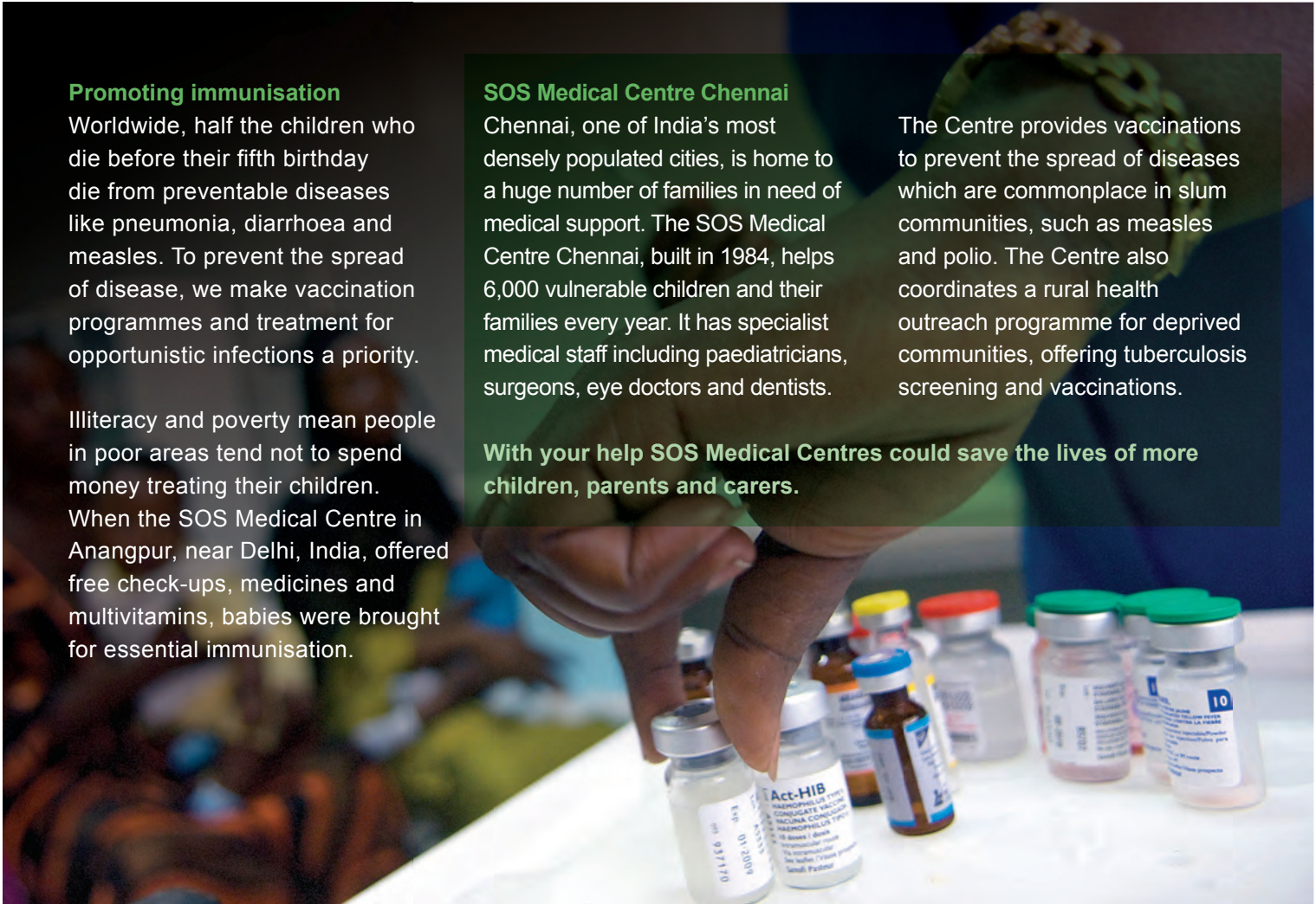
Illiteracy and poverty mean people in poor areas tend not to spend money treating their children. When the SOS Medical Centre in Anangpur, near Delhi, India, offered free check-ups, medicines and multivitamins, babies were brought for essential immunisation.

SOS Medical Centre Chennai

Chennai, one of India's most densely populated cities, is home to a huge number of families in need of medical support. The SOS Medical Centre Chennai, built in 1984, helps 6,000 vulnerable children and their families every year. It has specialist medical staff including paediatricians, surgeons, eye doctors and dentists.

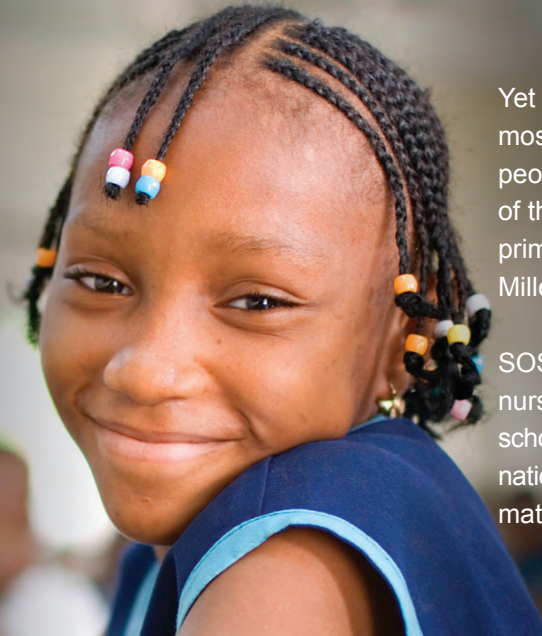
With your help SOS Medical Centres could save the lives of more children, parents and carers.

The Centre provides vaccinations to prevent the spread of diseases which are commonplace in slum communities, such as measles and polio. The Centre also coordinates a rural health outreach programme for deprived communities, offering tuberculosis screening and vaccinations.



Bringing learning within reach

Millions of children have responsibility for providing their family with income. As a result, they are kept out of school. Lack of basic education keeps generation upon generation in the same poor living conditions.



Yet basic education is one of the most effective ways of helping people to help themselves out of the poverty cycle. Universal primary education is one of the eight Millennium Development Goals.

SOS Children builds and runs nursery, primary and secondary schools where teaching follows the national curricula, including literacy, maths and IT-based learning.



Eight-year-old Gover from Tarija, Bolivia, explains:

“I was lucky because I entered the SOS School when I was six. But my younger brother can’t start school because he has to look after our elderly father who can hardly walk. Our mother left long ago and we

scrape by on the little money we earn selling bags at weekends. It’s only during school playtime that I feel able to have fun and really enjoy myself.”

You could give more children like Gover the gift of an education and future by supporting SOS Schools.

Developing skills for the workplace



Investing in young people as they make the transition into work develops the practical skills necessary for independence.

SOS Vocational Training Centres offer training programmes in a wide range of disciplines to people of all ages plus work experience, careers advice and microloans to help set up in business.

When you invest in SOS Children, you can equip a young person with the skills to live an independent life.

After growing up in the SOS Children's Village in Khulna, Bangladesh, Shajadul joined the SOS Bagerhat Agricultural Training Centre. He spent four years learning practical and theoretical farming skills and carpentry.

"Compared to school it was much better for me and I was motivated by learning so many new things about dairy farming, fishing, planning – you name it!" Now Shajadul owns a small plot of land and has three cows to start up his dairy production business, which he bought with help from SOS Children. He lives with his wife Ruma in a small house that he built. *"I am grateful for all the support I have received and want to prove myself. I am on my own feet and would like to keep it like that. Now I am very happy."*





together, and their SOS family gives them emotional stability and safety.

A typical SOS Village has 10-15 family homes and is an integral part of the wider community. In many of our Villages, the site also houses a nursery school, primary and secondary schools, a medical centre and a social centre, all of which are open to the local community.

Each child has a safe home in which to grow, learn and flourish. They have a life they couldn't have dreamed of without the help of SOS Children.

Creating strong, caring communities

Each SOS Children's Village has its own local character but all are united by a shared commitment to family life, education and strong community values.

Every child in our Villages has a mother, brothers and sisters, and a family home. The Village provides a permanent home for a happy, positive childhood. Siblings stay

By sponsoring a child or SOS Village, you can help to transform lives.

Nurturing stable families

It takes a very special person to be an SOS mother. Up to ten vulnerable children rely on her from infancy to adulthood.

In her decade as an SOS mother in Sarajevo, Bosnia, Zehra has cared for 12 children – so far. She recalls one of her most memorable moments.

“When Zoran and his older SOS brothers brought a big cake home for the family on his 13th birthday I thought the worst and asked how they had paid for it. But when I phoned the cake shop, the owner said: ‘My dear Zehra, I gave

them the cake – not because they are orphaned but because they are the most honest, sincere, polite and well-behaved teenagers I have met. That is so rare these days. You did a wonderful job raising them.’ By the time I hung up the phone I was crying like a river and so proud of my children.”

Women like Zehra build trusted, stable family bonds by raising at least one generation of children as their own, always keeping siblings together. SOS mothers are carefully chosen, thoroughly trained, paid a salary and given a housekeeping budget.

What used to be a vocational role for women with a good heart and common sense is being enhanced into a fully-fledged profession with a sound footing for the future.

SOS mothers give so much – could you give something to support them?





Rebuilding families in the wake of a crisis

SOS Children has a long-term presence in many developing countries, so we are well placed to help in times of crisis.

When natural disasters, wars, famine or disease outbreaks occur, children are at risk. In the chaos and confusion of emergencies, children can easily become separated from their families.

As well as providing children with shelter, medication and food, SOS Emergency Relief Programmes deal with the emotional consequences of an emergency by tracing and reuniting families, and offering trauma therapy.

Our expertise in family tracing brings families back together. Until that happens, or until arrangements for permanent care and welfare have

been made, we provide sustained support for vulnerable children. SOS Children makes a long-term commitment to emergency relief for children and families because we know that re-building shattered lives and communities can take a very long time.

When disaster strikes, you can help families get back on their feet.

Giving the next generation the support to succeed

Understanding what worked well in the past plays an important role in shaping plans for the future.

Sidibe was only a few months old when he arrived at the SOS Children's Village Abobo-Gare, Cote d'Ivoire, in the 1970s.


"Village life was great, especially the festive periods when everybody ate and celebrated together. In 1996 I moved to the SOS Youth Home where ten of us lived and we got on very well. I gained a diploma in mechanics, a national ID card and a good job. My work, which I love, allows me to give my family a decent life. I try to inspire in my children respect for others and am proud to be independent and responsible."

Sidibe's outlook reflects our follow-up study of more than 2,000 former SOS children from 40 countries. It confirms that SOS adults are typically satisfied with their lives, well educated, and able to establish relationships and families. They feel they are treated as equals in the wider community.

The findings strongly endorse our ethos, values and approach to giving vulnerable and disadvantaged children a firm foundation for the future.



Can we count on you to give more families a future to look forward to?



Your chance to change lives and give children a better future

If you'd like to find out more about SOS Children and how you could help to change a child's life and give disadvantaged families a better future, please get in touch.

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