

July 2020 - Version 5.0

**HOW TO APPLY THE INTERNATIONAL POLICY SUPPORT DOCUMENT:  
“PROVIDING QUALITY SPONSORSHIP SERVICES: A joint effort of the  
international sponsorship network”**



PUTTING POLICIES AND QUALITY STANDARDS INTO PRACTICE

## NA GUIDE FOR SERVICING INTERNATIONAL SPONSORS

### KEY USERS

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Mandatory for:   | Sponsorship coordinators at national associations<br>Sponsorship co-workers at programme level<br>National heads of finance (chapters 3.1.3 and 11)<br>National PDB focal points<br>Regional donor services coordinators and advisors<br>Co-workers at Individual Giving |
| Recommended for: | National directors<br>Programme directors<br>Sponsorship co-workers at promoting and supporting associations   |

### RELATED POLICIES

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Basic policy:     | <a href="#">Strategy 2030</a> , <a href="#">Brand Book</a>   |
| Core policy:      | <a href="#">SOS Children's Village Programme Policy</a> , <a href="#">Child Protection Policy</a> , <a href="#">Gender Equality Policy</a> |
| Quality standard: | <a href="#">Good Management and Accountability Quality Standards</a>   |

### RELATED DOCUMENTS, TOOLS, SYSTEMS

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <a href="#">PSD: Providing quality sponsorship services: A joint effort of the international sponsorship network</a> |
|  | <a href="#">Guide for PSA sponsorship co-workers</a>   |
|  | <a href="#">DSapp user guide</a>   |
|  | <a href="#">Crisis communication</a>   |
|  | <a href="#">Global glossary</a>  |
|  | <a href="#">Storytelling Guide</a>   |
|  | <a href="#">Protecting Children's Privacy</a>  |
|  | <a href="#">Code of Conduct</a>  |

### RESPONSIBLE FOR CONTENT

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Function:   | <a href="#">Fund Development International Competence Centre</a> |
| Department: | <a href="#">Individual Giving</a>                                |

### DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

|                    |                                       |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Approved by:       | Head of Fund Development              |
| Original language: | English                               |
| Intranet address:  | <a href="#">PSA and NA PSD guides</a> |

### CHANGE HISTORY

| Version | Date         | Changes  |
|---------|--------------|--|
| 5.0     | July 2020    | Digital content guideline, update visitor's guide to include family strengthening settings, change from word to character count, updated departure notice and photography section.   |
| 4.0     | January 2018 | New sponsorship system (DSapp); scale-out of digital touchpoints; updated consent form, updated sponsor communication and social media usage.<br>Structural change into one joint policy support document and two guides for PSAs and NAs. |

## NA GUIDE FOR SERVICING INTERNATIONAL SPONSORS

|     |               |  |
|-----|---------------|--|
| 3.0 | 17 June 2016  | Management Team approved as working paper. Documents valid by 1 July 2016 as Working Paper.  |
| 3.0 | July 2016     | Additional text types of sponsor communication handed over to NAs, programmatic developments within family based care, updated visitor's guide.  |
| 2.0 | October 2014  | Updated staffing recommendation, further clarification on social media policy and data and child protection, incorporation of storytelling in donor communication, money gifts disbursement regulation and monitoring. |
| 1.0 | December 2011 | Document approved by SMT.  |

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## 1 Aim of the NA user guide

This document together with the PSA user guide:

### [GUIDE FOR PSA SPONSORSHIP CO-WORKERS](#)

details the general framework regarding international sponsorships as described in the policy support document:

### [PROVIDING QUALITY SPONSORSHIP SERVICES: A joint effort of the international sponsorship network](#)

Together, the documents describe common standards valid for international sponsorship products, services and processes, and serve as a reference tool for all sponsorship co-workers at NAs, PSAs and Individual Giving (IG). They are for internal use only.

Also, please refer to the [Storytelling Guide](#) for more direction and details on sponsorship communication.

## 2 About sponsorship

### 2.1 What is the purpose of sponsorships?

Sponsorships are our flagship product and provide most of our SOS Children's Villages with a strong and reliable source of income. More than one-third of our net income worldwide available for international work is raised through international sponsorships.

By sponsoring either a child<sup>1</sup> or a village, sponsors have the opportunity to build a unique, long-term relationship to our organisation, gaining insight into the daily lives of children, families and communities in different parts of the world. With the support of our sponsors, we are able to give children who are at risk of losing parental care or cannot live with their own families the chance to grow up feeling safe, secure and loved. Additionally, they go to school, attend job trainings, and receive support as they transition into independent living.

Sponsors make a difference in the lives of the children supported by our programmes by helping us to provide families for children. Their contributions help to cover the costs of a programme, meaning that children and young people from both the SOS Children's Village and the surrounding area benefit directly. As a result, sponsorships are successful when the best interests of the children are secured and when our supporters feel connected to our programmes.



Sponsorships are stable, long term and crisis-resistant. On average, sponsors support our work for nine years and give approximately 350 EUR annually (2019). In 2019, sponsor attrition was on average 10%.

### 2.2 What about local sponsorship programmes?

In our effort to support more and more children, we as an organisation constantly seek additional income. Local sponsorship products can be a great fundraising opportunity. In order to hinder neither international nor local fundraising, we apply a coordinated approach.

Before starting a local sponsorship programme, make sure to check out the **compulsory rules of engagement** in the appendix chapter 12.4.

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<sup>1</sup> In this document, we mean child to include children and young people up to the age of 23.

## 2.3 Who is involved in sponsorships?

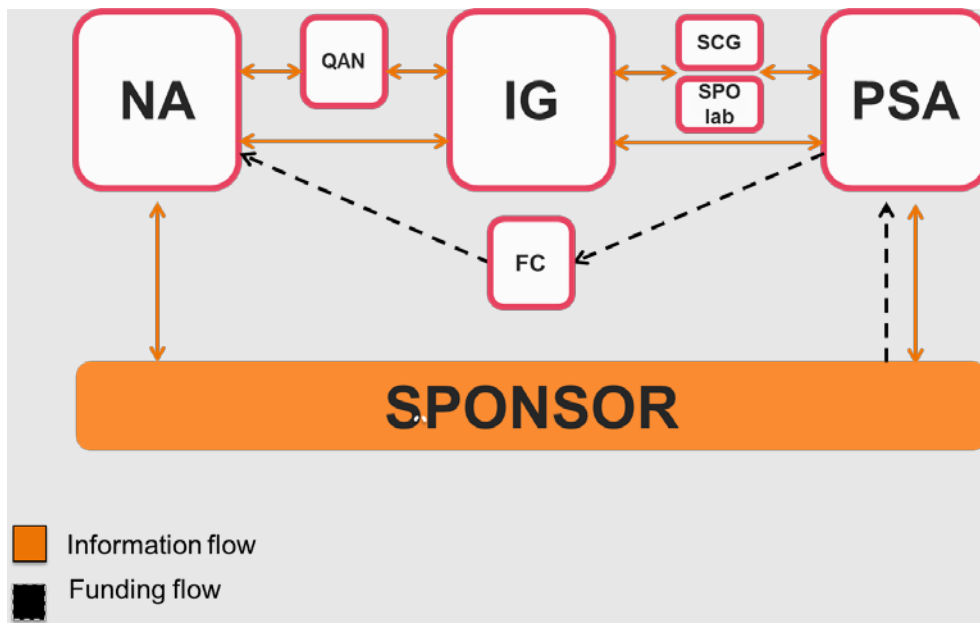
Taking care of our sponsors is the joint responsibility of national associations and promoting and supporting associations, strongly supported by the IO's Individual Giving department.

Strong communication skills as well as a service and fundraising mind-set are essential for sponsorship co-workers at all levels, always keeping the best interest, rights and integrity of children in mind and protecting their personal data. The common goal is to make our supporters feel valued and informed about our work and how they help to provide families for children. While sponsors have different contact points at the PSA and NA levels, sponsorship services link into one another smoothly. The whole organisation speaks with one voice.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Promoting and Supporting Associations (PSA)</b></p> | <p>The PSAs recruit sponsors through various channels and adapt their fundraising and service strategies to their market. Being in the same country, the PSAs are the sponsor's first point of reference. The PSA sponsorship coordinators listen to the sponsors, and are fundraising and service minded.</p>  |
| <p><b>National Associations (NA)</b></p>                  | <p>The NAs are the sponsors' second point of reference. The national sponsorship coordinator plays a major role in making the sponsorship programme successful by providing high-quality sponsor communication, both when it comes to child profiles, sponsorship letters, and departure notices as well as to enquiries and complaints. They also coordinate the production of digital material. The NAs ensure that children's data are up-to-date and that child and data protection standards are met.</p>  |
| <p><b>Individual Giving (IG)</b></p>                      | <p>IG, a department of the International Competence Centre FD located in Vienna, Austria, coordinates the sponsorship programme on an international level, performs quality management and ensures a balanced distribution of sponsorship funds. IG links sponsors to a child or an SOS Children's Village and supports PSAs with high-quality donor services.</p> <p>By drawing up village and country descriptions, IG contributes to the welcome pack for new sponsors. Besides enquiry and complaints management, issues, crisis situations and major programme changes are monitored with regard to communication. Other tasks include promoting child protection, providing systems support, and clearing new villages for the sponsorship programme.</p> <p>IG supports product development and knowledge sharing between member associations and guides the Quality Assurance Network (QAN), focusing on constantly maintaining and improving the service level provided to sponsors.</p> |
| <p><b>Quality Assurance Network (QAN)</b></p>             | <p>The Quality Assurance Network on Donor Services (QAN) is a team of regional donor services advisors and coordinators (RDS) guided by the team leader of the IG Quality Management team (IG-QM).</p> <p>The network trains and provides functional support to national sponsorship coordinators (NSPO) ensuring delivery of high-quality services for international sponsors. Regional donor services advisors facilitate knowledge sharing between NSPOs, supervise the implementation of standards and guidelines and provide first-level support on sponsorship software (DSapp).</p> <p>RDS monitor the quality of NA sponsor communications and the functional performance of NSPOs, and give input to the annual sponsorship quality feedback. They monitor issues and crisis situations and support NSPOs in handling complex or sensitive direct communications with sponsors.</p>  |



|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Finance and Controlling (FC)</b></p> | <p>The FC departments FC-NAs, FC-PSAs and STS (Shared Treasury Services) are relevant counterparts for several processes for sponsorships, such as sponsorship bookings, payments and transfers, clearance of SOS Children's Villages for sponsorships and linking needs and funds.</p>  |
| <p><b>Sponsorship Core Group (SCG)</b></p> | <p>The SCG is a team of PSA and QAN representatives, hosted and guided by IG. The SCG gives feedback to IG as a sounding board, supports in defining sponsor messages or working out concepts. It supports the continuous improvement of sponsorship services and collects and develops topics for the policy support document. The results are brought to decision and consent with all PSAs and/or relevant boards, depending on the matter.</p> |
| <p><b>Sponsorship Lab (SPO LAB)</b></p>    | <p>The SPO LAB is an ongoing innovation platform consisting of agile teams which research, develop and test new products and features. The teams are driven by a shifting group of interested PSAs and coordinated by IG.</p>  |



International sponsorships: information and funding flow

## 3 Together for our sponsors – the national sponsorship team

A strong and empowered sponsorship coordinator guides a network of designated co-workers in every SOS Children's Village who support sponsorship services at village level. The services they deliver together as a team are the major factor in retaining sponsors in the long run.

The sponsorship coordinator plays a vital role in international fundraising and is the main point of contact for international sponsors. Regular services, as well as responding to sponsors' queries, questions and concerns, are their first priority. All their actions support and strengthen donor loyalty and retention.



All sponsorship co-workers (see 3.1 roles, responsibilities and systems) have job descriptions that clearly describe their responsibilities in sponsorship work.

All co-workers sign a declaration of compliance with data protection requirements and respect prevailing IT security guidelines set by the General Secretariat. All personal information of children, co-workers and sponsors is treated with confidentiality and respect; failure to do so is subject to disciplinary and/or legal action by the NA. The [Code of Conduct](#) sets clear behaviour expectations with the intention of fostering respectful and dignified conduct towards children, co-workers, associated persons and the communities we cooperate with, and to keep the children within our sphere of influence safe from any kind of abusive behaviour.

### 3.1 About us – roles, responsibilities and systems

#### 3.1.1 Sponsorship coordinator

As a national sponsorship coordinator (NSPO), you are service minded and professional. Your first priority is regular, high-quality services for sponsors, and you take responsibility for the quality of services delivered. You oversee, organise and structure sponsorship work in the country. You help to monitor the disbursement of child money gifts to make sure the funds are disbursed appropriately. Together with your network of co-workers at programme level, you develop an annual plan and follow up on it. You provide regular feedback to your co-workers at programme level and give input to their performance appraisal. You visit every children's village (CV) annually. You provide training and guidance for other staff involved in sponsorship activities (e.g. sponsorship co-workers at programme level, programme director, SOS mothers, social workers, teaching staff, etc.). Within your NA, you are the recognized expert and main point of contact regarding sponsorships, both internally and externally. You are acknowledged for the part you play in the organisation's international fundraising.

A compulsory child safeguarding training is part of the sponsorship coordinator's orientation and training.



[Job description reference paper](#)  
[Draft orientation training](#)

##### 3.1.1.1 Stand-in

Your direct superior designates an experienced co-worker who is trained to stand in for you in your absence (e.g. annual leave, maternity leave, sick leave, etc.).

#### 3.1.2 Sponsorship co-worker at programme level

A specific co-worker is designated to support sponsorship work at programme level by the direct superior. They co-operate closely with the sponsorship coordinator and are their main source of information. They organise sponsorship work at village level. They collate information for child and village sponsorship letters, registration forms, departure notices, digital content, etc. from other staff (e.g. programme director, SOS mothers, social workers, teaching staff, etc.)

##### 3.1.2.1 Stand-in

The direct superior designates an experienced co-worker who is trained to stand in for the sponsorship co-worker at programme level in their absence.

### 3.1.3 National head of finance

The national head of finance ensures that all money gifts for children are deposited into a bank account opened in name of the NA. They ensure that interest gained on this account is appropriately distributed to all children involved. They maintain the correct credit balance for each child, administer pay-outs and answer questions on money gifts. Biannually, they import the money gift records into Dynamics NAV. They ensure that sponsorship contributions and money gifts are audited as part of the association's overall financial audit.

### 3.1.4 National PDB focal point

Since basic information on children (First name, last name, gender, date of birth, house, programme and siblings information) is directly imported to DSapp from PDB, PDB focal points provide crucial information for the international sponsorship programme. They ensure that all data is accurate and reliable and that all updates are processed in a timely manner.

### 3.1.5 Other important stakeholders in sponsorship services

National directors are responsible overall for successful sponsorship services and are accountable to the board of directors. They are also important sources of information. Other main contacts for all information needed in sponsorship services are programme directors, SOS mothers, social workers, teaching staff, etc.

### 3.1.6 Volunteers and freelancers

National associations may want to recruit volunteers, freelancers or agencies for producing materials for sponsorships, including photos, videos and stories.

The national association always acts in accordance with the [Child Protection Policy](#). In this specific case, this includes a non-disclosure agreement in all contracts, as well as a training on the internal child safeguarding guidelines. Volunteers should also be required to provide a police record check, if possible.

### 3.1.7 Sponsorship Systems: DSapp Donor Services Application

DSapp is an application based on Microsoft Dynamics 365 CRM. The connected database is stored on a server in Innsbruck, Austria. It facilitates the easy exchange of data between IG and NAs and makes the work of the sponsorship team easier.



From 2020 onwards all NAs have the possibility to use DSapp also for the exchange of data between the National Office and the programmes. This feature can be enabled individually per programme.

The main purposes of the software are to

- Manage data of children registered in the international sponsorship programme
- Assist services for international sponsors.

The use of all modules and functions of DSapp is **compulsory**. This enables us to systematise and speed up enquiries and complaints management by making information readily accessible to different stakeholders.



Click here for the [DSapp Workspace!](#)

## 3.2 Quality needs adequate human resources: a staffing recommendation

Donors have a right to receive the best services we can offer them. In order to ensure that your national association is able to deliver sponsorship services according to the standards set forth in this document, we suggest calculating the minimum staff required according to the following method.

The staffing recommendation is based on the assumption of a well-functioning network of skilled and regularly trained co-workers in the programmes, who assume sponsorship tasks and reporting duties as a part of their daily work. This network and its processes are managed, trained and organised by the NSPO and their team, who in turn are supported by the regional and global sponsorship support networks.

This recommendation takes into account the major factors influencing the workload of the team dealing with sponsorships at the NO level: the number of sponsorships and number of children in the sponsorship programme, the distribution between the different types of sponsorships (child and village) as well as the number of correspondence languages.



Since communication to sponsors has evolved in the last years and now includes producing digital media (photos and films) along with written sponsorship communications, the effort of digital content production is now also considered.

All these considerations are summarised in two key indicators: the child and sponsorship real value equivalents, respectively.

### 3.2.1 The child real value equivalent (CRVE)

The number of children active in the sponsorship programme has a direct influence on the number of individual child progress letters that need to be written, and impacts the amount of digital content to produce. The number of languages in which letters need to be written specifically impacts the effort in producing written sponsorship communication. It is therefore necessary to consider all those aspects in this calculation.

The CRVE is the sum of the multiplication of the number of sponsored children with their respective language factor (the number of languages offered for sponsor communications) and the number of active children multiplied with the digital content factor:

| Number of correspondence languages | Language factor |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 (English only)                   | 1               |
| 2 (English and one other)          | 1.5             |
| 3 (English and two others)         | 2               |
| 4 (English and three others)       | 2.5             |
| Digital content factor             | 0.5             |



#### An example:

**Country A** has 180 children in the sponsorship programme and offers only English as a correspondence language. The CRVE is:  $(180 \times 1) + (180 \times 0.5) = 270$

**Country B** has 230 children in the sponsorship programme and offers English and Spanish as a correspondence language. 150 of these children have sponsors in both languages, their language factor is 1.5. The other 80 have only English-speaking sponsors. The CRVE is:  $((80 \times 1) + (150 \times 1.5)) + (230 \times 0.5) = 420$

### 3.2.2 The sponsorship real value equivalent (SRVE)

In general, child sponsors require more attention and effort than village sponsors. Hence, the number of child sponsors directly influences the workload. This is why the multiplying factors for child and village sponsorships are different.

| Type of sponsorship | Sponsorship factor |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Child sponsorship   | 1                  |
| Village sponsorship | 0.5                |



#### An example:

**Country A** has 3,000 sponsorships, of which 2,500 are child sponsorships and 500 are village sponsorships. The SRVE is:  $(2,500 \times 1) + (500 \times 0.5) = 2,750$

**Country B** has 3,000 sponsorships, of which 2,500 are village sponsorships and 500 are child sponsorships. The SRVE is:  $(2,500 \times 0.5) + (500 \times 1) = 1,750$

### 3.2.3 Putting it all together: the staffing recommendation

Once you've calculated the real value equivalents for both child and sponsorship factors, use the following tables for an indication of the minimum number of full-time-equivalent employees needed for international sponsorship services in your national association.

Calculate the average between the FTE (full-time equivalent) recommendation for the CRVE and the FTE recommendation for the SRVE you have just figured out for your NA – that's your staffing recommendation.

| CRVE    | Recommended FTE | SRVE      |
|---------|-----------------|-----------|
| 0-100   | 0.5             | 0-1000    |
| 101-200 | 1               | 1001-1750 |
| 201-300 | 1.5             | 1751-2500 |
| 301-400 | 2               | 2501-3250 |
| 401-500 | 2.5             | 3251-4000 |

| CRVE     | Recommended FTE | SRVE      |
|----------|-----------------|-----------|
| 501-600  | 3               | 4001-4750 |
| 601-700  | 3.5             | 4751-5500 |
| 701-800  | 4               | 5501-6250 |
| 801-900  | 4.5             | 6251-7000 |
| 901-1000 | 5               | 7001-7750 |



#### Examples:

**Country A** has a CRVE of 270 corresponding to 1.5 FTE and a SRVE of 2,750 corresponding to 2 FTEs. The staffing recommendation for country A is 1.75 FTEs.

**Country B** has a CRVE of 420 corresponding to 2.5 FTEs and a SRVE of 1,750 corresponding to 1 FTE. The staffing recommendation is 1.75 FTEs.

In the final evaluation, be mindful of any other additional tasks the sponsorship services personnel is required to perform at your NA. The staffing recommendation describes the minimum requirements; please adjust it to your local realities. For example, do sponsorship staff translate at official functions or assist in other activities not related to international sponsorship services? These must be added on top of this recommendation!

## 3.3 Where to look for assistance: the international support network

Whenever you have questions on sponsorships or find it hard to reply to a particularly difficult request from a sponsor, you can rely on an international support network.

### 3.3.1 Administrative and organisational issues

For all administrative issues contact your IG donor services coordinator in Vienna or your regional donor services advisors; they are always there to assist you. Get in touch if anything happens that might affect sponsorship services (e.g. issues with postal services, technical issues, staffing issues, etc.).

Your regional donor services advisor will support you with any questions you may have, particularly also regarding how to write sponsorship communications.

Get in touch with your IG counterpart:

- If you have any questions regarding sponsors' queries in DSapp.
- When a **PSA needs to be involved** to solve the issue. This concerns:
  - **Sponsor data changes** (e.g. address, name, bank details)
  - **Questions regarding donations** (money gifts, sponsorship fee, etc.)
  - **Questions about a sponsorship which no longer exists** (e.g. the child has already left, contact with formerly sponsored child)

- **Further explanation on the sponsorship programme and our guidelines** are needed (e.g. gifts or photos from the sponsor are inappropriate, sponsor wants to make special arrangements for gifts or visits)

You can also check the [sponsorship workspace](#).

### 3.3.2 DSapp support

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>RDS</b>                | Your Regional Donor Services Advisor can support you with questions related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ processes</li> <li>▪ questions related to how to accomplish certain tasks in DSapp – e.g. child to-dos, enquiries, letters to sponsors, etc.</li> <li>▪ questions related to information coming from PDB</li> <li>▪ general setting of DSapp</li> <li>▪ filtering and exporting data</li> </ul> |
| <b>DSapp Service Desk</b> | Please contact the DSapp service desk ( <a href="mailto:dsapp@sos-kd.org">dsapp@sos-kd.org</a> ) if you experience any technical issues while working with DSapp. Proactively contact the service desk if you receive an error message.<br>In case you have problems with data quality (e.g. different data in PDB and DSapp) or sending information to IG, please contact the DSapp service desk regarding this too.    |
| <b>IG-QM</b>              | The Quality Management team should be contacted for all content questions – e.g. consent forms, letter structure and content, etc.   |

### 3.3.3 Support on digital content production and upload

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>RDS</b>                 | Your Regional Donor Services Advisor can support you with questions related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ regional deadlines</li> <li>▪ content themes</li> <li>▪ technical requirements</li> <li>▪ obstacles to meeting your deadline</li> </ul> <p>Your RDS monitors the progress of each MA’s annual content production and upload to the IG DAM in each country in the region. The RDS regularly checks the pending space for each country, and accepts or rejects content based on the technical requirements and content guidelines. The RDS will contact you about any issues that might need to be addressed.</p> <p>If there are any barriers that prevent you from completing your content production or upload according to your region’s required deadline, please proactively contact your RDS. He or she will help you resolve the issue, or escalate it to QM if necessary.</p> <p>When you have completed your digital content upload for the current cycle, please proactively contact your RDS so they know when you have finished.</p> <p>Your RDS will also participate in giving annual feedback to NAs who produce digital content, in cooperation with QM.</p> |
| <b>IG DAM service desk</b> | Please contact the IG DAM service desk ( <a href="mailto:IG.DAM@sos-kd.org">IG.DAM@sos-kd.org</a> ) if you experience any technical issues while completing your annual upload. Proactively contact the service desk if you receive an error message that is not known (the solutions to known issues can be found in the IG DAM wiki).  |
| <b>IG-QM</b>               | The Quality Management team monitors the global sponsorship content production, and cooperates with the RDS in identifying and supporting the resolution of issues in NAs that affect the quality of their digital content services. QM sets global standards and supports their implementation in the regions and NAs. QM team members provide annual quality feedback on digital content in cooperation with the regions.  |

## 4 Communication is key – how we communicate with sponsors

In all our communication with sponsors, we are honest, transparent and professional. We depict a lively and genuine picture of the children in our care and life at the SOS Children's Villages.

We talk honestly about challenges and difficulties, focusing on the measures SOS co-workers are taking to improve a particular situation.

**We safeguard the children's right to privacy and their dignity. We do not forward sensitive information about the children to sponsors or anyone outside SOS.**

Through our communication, we show sponsors that they make a difference in the lives of many children. We share our plans for the future with them and invite them to participate in and support the development of our organisation in order to help even more children. We assure them that their financial contributions are used effectively and spent reliably.

### 4.1 Who communicates with sponsors?

Contact with sponsors is managed by the national sponsorship coordinator. As national sponsorship coordinator, you are the intermediary between sponsors and the children or villages they support. All correspondence with sponsors takes place through you. You are the window into the SOS world for over 400,000 sponsors. The language that you use and the topics you touch on create the picture most of them have of the SOS organisation.

The address of the national office is used in all letters and on envelopes in any correspondence with sponsors.

### 4.2 The Storytelling technique helps us to write engaging communications

All co-workers involved in sponsor communication tell stories – stories of children we support. Our stories provide insight into the lives of these children. We want sponsors to trust us, feel connected to the children and be excited to help us give every child a loving home. We want to thank donors and let them know that without them our work would not be possible. A good story reaches the donors' hearts and minds – and will inspire them to keep supporting us!

The goal of applying the Storytelling technique is to create emotions. Your child profiles, data update and transfer texts, mid- and end-of-year letters as well as your departure notice texts are the link between the sponsor and the child or the programme they sponsor. In writing, you follow the guidelines laid out in the Storytelling Guide to make sure we speak with one voice.

The [Storytelling Guide](#) provides a variety of tools, guidance and inspiration, as well as basic storytelling techniques and practical examples.

### 4.3 How we protect personal data and personal rights to privacy in sponsor communication

In **chapter 9** you can find further information on child and data protection issues in general. Here, we describe how to protect data and privacy in sponsor communication.

A description of a child can be both written and spoken words and statements about a specific child. The basic rules below apply to all communication with sponsors, donors and visitors.

#### 4.3.1 First names only

The sponsor only knows the child's first name, and not their family name. In order to protect the child's privacy, keep it that way.

### 4.3.2 Keep it positive - and true!

While you focus on the positive things, you also make it a point to be honest and truthful. You do not make up stories that are not true. Your aim is to empower children, not to present them as victims.

You use positive terms and emphasis on the positive traits in the children, rather than on the negative. You talk about challenges and room for improvement in a positive, constructive way and focus on measures taken to improve the situation. You do not dwell on the negative nature of a child's past attitude or performance.

### 4.3.3 How to communicate misbehaviour, crime or runaways

Be careful not to explain the type of misbehaviour in detail, especially when it comes to involvement in criminal activities or convictions of crime. These are highly sensitive data that cannot be shared.

You place no guilt on offender or victim, neither child nor co-workers. Instead, you explain the circumstances that led to the current situation.

### 4.3.4 How do we communicate illness or death of a child?

Medical diagnoses are highly sensitive information and therefore you must handle this data with extreme care. You do not reveal a child's medical diagnosis to sponsors.

By describing illnesses, physical and mental challenges in a general, vague and unspecific way, you protect the children's right to privacy. You emphasise measures taken to help the child recover or cope with the daily challenges.

If a child passes away, you preserve the good memory of the child and underline what is being done to help the SOS family to cope with the loss. The reason for death can be included in the departure text, but no details about the circumstances that led up to the child passing away.

### 4.3.5 Stories of individuals in village letters

In village letters, you change the names of the beneficiaries to protect their privacy. You state clearly that you have changed the names, e.g. at the end of the letter, as a footnote or as a PS.

By changing the names, you can share stories about specific children and families, describe their difficulties and challenges, their history and background and create human touch stories without infringing on the rights of the individuals.

## 4.4 Photographs: A picture says more than a thousand words

Photos say more than a thousand words. They arouse feelings, convey messages and tell stories. Children's pictures remind us of our own childhood, and this gives them special emotional power. Communication with sponsors comes alive using attractive, clear and expressive photos.

Our photographs show children in their everyday life. Children are central to our work and, therefore, the main theme in our pictures. The basic mood in our photos is a positive one, with scenes that are authentic, natural, expressive, realistic, and of high quality.

We respect the children in our photos and approach them on their own level. Our photos always respect their right to privacy and their dignity. You never show extreme suffering or children in distress.

Bear in mind that the cultural background of the person viewing a photo influences their perception and emotion. A photo which is perfectly fine in one part of the world can raise negative emotions in another.

Photos for child registrations or child profile updates and photos for sponsorship letters have slightly different requirements. The ones marked \* below apply to photos for child registrations only; the others apply to all sponsorship photos.

### 4.4.1 Technical requirements

- Minimum size is 1600x1200 for 4:3 photos,
- Colour pictures only



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- 1800x1200 for 2:3 (4:6) photos
- Ratios can be 2:3 (4:6) or 4:3
- File size between 0.5MB and 5MB
- File format: jpg, jpeg
- Portrait or landscape, both acceptable
- No shooting dates or other information printed onto picture
- No scans of hard copy pictures
- Subject of the picture is sharp and clear
- No add-ons and fancy effects (photo shopped cartoon characters, frames, etc.)
- Well-balanced exposure (not over- or underexposed)

### 4.4.2 General considerations

- Children fully clothed / appropriately dressed
- Never show situations of distress / pain
- Taken at eye level
- The background and surroundings should be clean, no junk or trash in the background
- No hazardous / dangerous things around
- Show the everyday life of the children and the community they live in

### 4.4.3 Child photos

- One child alone, unless it cannot stand / sit yet (until the age of 2 ½ years or so)\*
- Show at least ¾ profile, make sure the eyes are open and visible\*
- Can but don't have to show the entire body
- Natural pictures of children in action – show everyday activities of a child

In some national associations, there may be restrictions on how many 'identifiable' images of a child can be shared with sponsors. If you are faced with strict data protection laws that severely limit the use of identifiable images, you may find the 'non-identifiable' style of images a useful way to communicate about programmes while protecting individual privacy.

### 4.4.4 Village photos

- For all village photos:
  - Only outside photos are accepted.
  - They should show the everyday life of the children in their local environment.
  - They should focus on the children, with SOS buildings and co-workers in the background.
  - Remember you need consent for everybody in the photo who can be recognized. Please do not take photos of people without their written consent. People who did not sign any consent should be unrecognizable or not depicted at all.
  - If children are depicted in front of their family houses, avoid that the street name and house number are both visible.
  - No pictures of buildings alone /only adults/ "celebrities" from inside or outside our organization
- If the Programme Unit is integrated in the community (or you struggle to take a photo due to environmental constraints):
  - In this case, the photos should show the children in a neutral place (public park or playground).
  - Remember to respect the privacy of neighbours and other people in the community.

### 4.4.5 Don'ts

- Children dressed in military style or camouflage clothing
- Children playing with (toy or real) guns or warlike material
- Electronic devices such as cell phones, tablet PCs, gaming consoles...conveying an image of luxury in the programmes
- Showing brands (like Coca-Cola, or even SOS Children's Villages or other branded clothing or items)
- TV or PC turned on in the background of a picture (A child/young person actively working at a PC can be ok, depending on the overall quality of the picture)
- Showing children exclusively cleaning or doing chores
- Showing children in clothing displaying offensive messages (examples are: OMG, WTF, sh\*t, f\*ck y'all)
- Showing children making hand gestures that could be misunderstood, like a peace sign, victory sign, etc.

- Showing caretakers using mobile phones or other devices without interacting with the children in the photo. If the family is taking a selfie together it is okay, but please do not show an adult caretaker visibly preoccupied with a device and not paying attention to the children.
- Also, do not re-use the same image multiple times. For example, please do not re-use a photo from the digital diaries in a letter, or use a photo that was included in a letter as a profile update photo.

### 4.4.6 Every photo needs a caption

When embedding photos in sponsorship letters, you find a fitting caption for every photo.

Research has shown that your reader will look at the pictures first, before looking at the actual text. The photo gets the reader's attention and the caption makes sure to keep that attention. Also, without captions, readers will come to their own conclusions about what they see. They might misinterpret the content of the picture and your message.

Captions should be crisp and clear, short and interesting. Sometimes, a quote can make a good caption! They do not describe in detail what is shown in the picture, but put it in a more general context.

When embedding photos of sponsored children, you mention their first name in at least one caption, so that the sponsor is not left guessing as to the identity of the person in the photo.

#### Good Practice

##### **Which subjects could my photos show?**

Your photos can depict creative activities like children at play, playing sports or doing arts and crafts. Educational activities such as children reading, writing, doing their school homework or cooking can also be a nice option!

##### **Looking for ideas to get relaxed photos?**

Seek out the child's favourite place with them or ask them to bring a favourite toy. Crouch down to their eye level. Talk to the children to take their mind off being photographed.

##### **Put yourself in the position of the children!**

In your workshops, ask the co-workers that usually photograph the children to take pictures of each other. They will realize what makes them feel uneasy or uncomfortable; in turn they learn how to create a relaxed atmosphere when they are taking photos of children.



For further information on picture language used within the organisation, please refer to the [Brand Book](#).

## 5 A new sponsorship begins

### 5.1 Registering an SOS Children's Village to the sponsorship programme

This is possible once:

- A new SOS Children's Village has started operation
- A minimum of 20 children have moved in with their SOS families
- Sponsorship staff at the national office and village level are available and have been trained
- A picture of the village is available and has been sent to IG
- A village description is available

And

- If the village has a long-term need for international subsidies above USD 70,000 annually

The sponsorship coordinator fills in the clearance form on the collaboration workspace and sends it to IG. IG checks with the Finance and Controlling department that all relevant information (addresses, name, bank details, etc.) is available and correct and releases the SOS Children's Village for sponsorships.

You can find the [clearance form](#) on the collaboration workspace in the "Forms" section.

In order to register children in units other than SFC and YC to the sponsorship programme, these units need a separate clearance. Find more information in chapters 5.2.1 and 12.2. The [clearance form for these other programme units](#) is available on the collaboration space.

Special regulations apply to sustainable path countries. They enable these countries to keep sponsorship funds stable as per the sustainable path agreements and for the NA to build up to three months of financial reserves even if there is no open financial need at the moment.

### 5.2 Registering a child to the sponsorship programme

#### 5.2.1 Prerequisites

Children **younger than 15 years** can be registered to the sponsorship programme, provided that their **legal guardians have given written consents (one consent for the use of the children's personal information and one for grant of usage rights)**, and that they will stay with SOS for at least six months. Biological children of SOS co-workers cannot be admitted to the sponsorship programme.

International child sponsorships are only offered in family-like care programmes. This applies to children living in **SOS Family Care (SFC)** (incl. within CVs and SOS families integrated in the community) **and Youth Care (YC)**, as well as children living in **Small Group Homes (SGH), Other Alternative Care (OAC)** and **Foster Family Care (FFC)** **if the criteria described in Appendix 12.2 are met.**

This means that children living in family strengthening (including kinship care), short-term placement and foster care settings where SOS is only a service provider are not eligible for child sponsorships.



Before registering children from forms of care other than SFC or YC for the first time, please check back with IG-QM ([IG-QM@sos-kd.org](mailto:IG-QM@sos-kd.org)); all cases will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for the time being.

This includes children with special needs. Please be aware that all children are equally eligible for sponsorships; those living in SOS Children's Villages specifically designed to cater to special needs children will however only be issued sponsorships upon the explicit wish of the sponsor.

### 5.2.1.1 Consent forms for use of personal data and grant of usage rights

During the admission process, we ask the legal guardian to provide written consents to the use of the child's personal information, photographs and works of art for the sponsorship programme. **You do not register children to the sponsorship programme if the consents have not been granted.**

A legal guardian is a person who has the legal authority or duty to care for the personal and property interests of another person. While we are usually granted physical guardianship of the children we care for in the care agreements or court orders that are the legal basis for welcoming a child into an SOS family, very often, we are not automatically declared full legal guardians of these children. There may still be a relative who is legally in charge, or the court or another official body takes up that role. Please check the situation in your country thoroughly, and ensure that the person signing the sponsorship consent form is indeed the child's legal guardian.

There are two consent forms; one form for the use of personal data and one form for the use of works of art and other granted usages rights. Both consent forms are signed before the child is registered into the sponsorship programme.



In order to be able to register a child into the sponsorship programme, it is compulsory to upload a copy of the two consent forms onto DSapp. You also have to upload the consent forms again by renewal of consent and if a child is re-registered. All consents must be uploaded into DSapp – also for the children already in the sponsorship programme.

The **consent forms are renewed (co-signed) by the child** twice, when they **turn 13 and 18**. The child is well informed about what their personal data are used for. If the local legislation foresees other age limits, the consents can be adapted to the local legal situation.

The renewal or co-signature of the child does not require the legal guardian to sign the consents a second time. You keep the signed consent forms in the child's file and upload them onto DSapp.



You can find [reference papers of the consent forms](#) and a [guide](#) on how to fill in the consent forms on the collaboration space.

### 5.2.1.2 Withdrawal of consents

The consents can be withdrawn at any time. Children are informed about their right to withdraw consents and the resulting consequences. If consents are withdrawn, the child must be de-registered from the sponsorship programme. From the age of 13, the child can withdraw the consents directly. Before the age of 13, the legal guardian of the child must sign the consents withdrawal form.

The [consent withdrawal form](#) template is available on the collaboration space.

While it is important to inform children of the possibility of withdrawing consents, the benefits of being part of the international sponsorship programme should also be clearly explained. When consent has been withdrawn, the child's data can be deleted immediately in DSapp.

### 5.2.1.3 De-institutionalisation and short-term sponsorships

In many countries, national laws on children in alternative care are changing. Reuniting children with their biological family becomes the first priority and adoptions are frequently considered. Individual cases of children are reviewed regularly, and reintegration is actively sought. This leads to children who will stay with SOS on a short or mid-term basis only.

We believe that, still, all children fulfilling the basic requirements are eligible for sponsorships. Children who will stay with SOS for at least six months can be registered to the sponsorship programme. If a reintegration process is ongoing, this is clearly stated in the registration form.

Also, in all your communications with sponsors (welcome letters, bi-annual letters) you keep them informed about ongoing reintegration processes. They show the success of our work with families of origin. You should liaise closely with P/S about planned integrations, and keep IG informed of any developments.

### 5.2.2 Registration form and photo

Children newly registered to the Programme Database (PDB) are automatically imported to DSapp and displayed in the “Open Child To-Dos” section. Based on the basic criteria described in 4.2.1, you decide whether a child can be registered to the sponsorship programme.

If a child is eligible for the sponsorship programme, you:

- get the legal guardian’s consent in writing
- write a child profile
- upload a child photo
- upload the consent forms onto DSapp
- add the nick name (if available)
- transcribe the child’s name from the local language into English (if the local language does not use the Roman alphabet)

If the child is not eligible for the sponsorship programme, you reject the registration.

### 5.2.3 Child profile

The child profile, as the first introduction between the sponsor and child, is one of the most valued communications in the initial phase of sponsorship. The texts you provide in **English** via DSapp are sent on to sponsors by the PSAs without translation or significant editing.

Every child profile is a text **unique** to the child; it is **engaging and appealing**. All information is authentic and child-specific. You do not invent fictional stories or quotes.

Child profiles consist of two paragraphs describing the child.

#### 5.2.3.1 The first paragraph – introducing the child

Share an insight to a key characteristic, hobby, achievement or experience (etc.) of the child. This can be done by writing a small anecdote of the child’s life in the village, by presenting an extraordinary event or some situation that is typical for the child. Let the sponsor into the child’s world; make them feel like a part of this moment. This paragraph is **300-400 characters long** (including spaces).

#### 5.2.3.2 The second paragraph – describing the child further

The second paragraph of a child profile describes the child in a way that illustrates their personality and day-to-day life in their SOS family. The main description is **650-900 characters** (including spaces).

#### Obligatory topics (if applicable)

- Full name of the village (SOS Children’s Village *[name]*)
- Personality
- Approximate time of admission (early/mid/late YYYY; do not refer to seasons)
- Family and important relationships: biological and SOS siblings living in the village, SOS mother, friends
- Education (type of school, not school grade/year; do not specify school marks)
- Type of care (SOS family / foster family / youth care programme / etc.):
  - Classical SOS family → ... is living in the SOS Children’s Village *[name]*
  - Integrated SOS family → ... is living with his or her SOS family in the community
  - Youth facility → ... is living in the youth home / youth house
  - Foster family → ... is living with his or her foster family in the SOS Children’s Village *[name]* / in the community

**Additional topics** (space permitting and if relevant) include: Adaptation process (this should be written about in a sensitive way, avoiding upsetting or unnecessary details), interests and hobbies.

Only reference the child's health in a vague manner and if potentially relevant for the future. If it is visible in the photo, it is not necessary to say anything more about it in the child profile. Never mention the name of the disease – only that one is present and what is being done to overcome or cope with it.

Please read the [Storytelling Guide](#) for more important information on how to write child profiles.

### 5.2.3.3 The data protection paragraph

The data protection paragraph is generated by DSapp and will be added to your text automatically. It reads:

#### **Automatically generated standard paragraph:**

*With your support we work hard so that your sponsored child can grow up in a safe and secure home. SOS Children's Villages follows the UN Guidelines in valuing every child's right to privacy and safeguarding their best interests. To support these guidelines, we also work closely with relatives and social authorities. For data protection reasons, we limit access to information about the children and their family. This is why we only use the first name of the child as well as a child ID. Please use both the name and child ID when you write to us. Thank you!*

### 5.2.4 Ordering updated child profiles and child photos

IG continuously monitors the global potential for child sponsorships and ensures availability of child profiles and photos for the daily sponsorship matching. We cannot cover the demand for new sponsorships with newly registered children alone; hence, updated profiles for the existing children are required.

#### **About profiles and photos:**

- **Profiles** can be used for matching up till one year after the date they are written.
- **Photos** can be used for matching up till one and a half year after they are submitted. It is therefore important that the photos uploaded are somewhat recent.

#### 5.2.4.1 The standard bulk order process

In February and July, IG selects children with sponsorship potential based on open financial need, PSA priorities and recruitment plans, expected number of departure notices, as well as efficiency criteria.

IG uploads a list of children whose updated child profile and/or photo is required to the "Open Child To-Dos" section in DSapp (request priority normal) and, additionally, sends an e-mail notification. You then have **eight weeks** to upload all requested child profiles and photos.

- **For bulk order taking place in February, photos from the last EOY letters can be used if they show only the one child**
- **Photos taken for digital content cannot be uploaded for any photo orders**

#### 5.2.4.2 The campaign bulk order process

Part of a successful sponsorship campaign is the quick delivery of the welcome pack to the new sponsors. PSAs align their campaign plans with IG well in advance and together agree on focus villages or countries before the campaign plans are finalized.

As with the standard bulk order process, IG uploads a list of children whose updated child profile and/or photo is required to the "Open Child To-Dos" section in DSapp (request priority normal) and, additionally, sends an e-mail notification. You then have **eight weeks** to upload all requested child profiles and photos.

#### 5.2.4.3 The single profile order process

In special cases a sponsor wants to take on a sponsorship for a specific child, but the profile and/or photo are outdated, IG requests an updated profile and/or photo via the "Open Child To-Dos" section in DSapp (request priority high). As with any other urgent enquiry or complaint, you have a maximum of **two days** to upload the requested child profile and/or photo.

#### 5.2.4.4 Ongoing photo orders

IG continuously monitors the child potential situation. When it becomes clear that there are child profiles that are recent enough to be used for new sponsorships, but the photos are too old to be used – then IG uploads

photo orders into the “Open Child To-Dos” section in DSapp (request priority normal). These photo orders may be placed throughout the year, and they serve to maximise the child potential and get the most sponsorships out of ready profiles.

To make this process as efficient as possible, you can submit photos that you already have in your system – as long as the photos are less than 6 months old.

### 5.3 How we welcome new sponsors

You post a welcome letter to every new sponsor within one week of being notified about the new sponsorship. You take this opportunity to thank the sponsors for their support. You introduce yourself as national sponsorship coordinator and reassure them that they can turn to you with any question they might have.

Other possible topics for the welcome letter include basic information on visits, possible postal restrictions, cultural specifics (e.g. in our country, people do not celebrate birthdays), nature of care options and whether families live integrated in the community etc. Also, indicate your e-mail address so that sponsors can contact you easily.



In countries where de-institutionalisation is the main reason for children to leave the care of our organisation, you inform the sponsors about this fact from the start so that reintegration does not come as a surprise later on.

#### We recommend!

##### **New sponsors assigned during sponsorship mailings**

Sponsors coming on board during the two main mailings will have to wait around six months for the next update, so you should add the last periodic letter to the welcome letter. This way the new sponsors are welcomed with an update right away.

Sponsors signing up between the mailing of the end-of-year letters and 15 December receive a copy of the end-of-year letter. Sponsors assigned between the mailing of the mid-year letters and 15 July receive a copy of the mid-year letter.

Welcome letters include an additional item which illustrates the village the sponsors are supporting or their sponsored child lives in. This could be anything from a photo, a drawing of a family house, a child's drawing of an SOS family, etc. You choose one item per village and add it to the welcome letter. You also add a paragraph to the welcome letter, explaining the additional item. Make sure to change and update the item used every six months to a year.

#### Good Practice

##### **Be creative! Define and design an item that will connect the sponsor emotionally with the village the sponsored child is living in.**

You can pick a particularly nice child's drawing and make colour copies, provided that you have the consent on the use of works of art and other granted usages rights. Some villages might organise painting or drawing competitions which you might be able to make use of. Or you can come up with something different. It is up to you. Make sure to describe the item in your letter and explain its connection to the SOS Children's Village.

##### **Be mindful.**

Many sponsors worry not only about the wellbeing of children, but about sustainability and global pollution as well. You might want to consider avoiding plastic give-away items, which could be considered as contributing to ever-growing landfills.

## 6 We keep our sponsors regularly updated

You update the sponsors regularly through our bi-annual sponsorship letters.

All your sponsorship letters include at least two embedded photographs (that is: colour-printed on the same paper as the letter), and every photo has a caption, explaining the content of the picture. With every letter, you show the sponsors the difference their contribution makes in the lives of many children and families. You apply the storytelling technique to all your sponsorship letters.

Whenever you refer to the sponsored child in sponsorship letters, you use only the child's first name and omit the family name.

You sign all sponsorship letters, as the sponsors recognize you as their main point of contact. Even if your job title is different from National Sponsorship Coordinator, please use the latter as the default job title when signing a sponsorship letter.

### Good Practice

#### A sponsor with several sponsorships

If a sponsor has more than one sponsorship, you can either put all letters per reporting period in one envelope, or edit the letters before printing, so that they are all in one Word document.

Details on minimum character counts, topics and writing style are described in the [Storytelling Guide](#).

| Type    | Mid-year  | End-of-year  |
|---------|---|--|
| Child   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mid-year child progress letter (including two embedded photos of the sponsored child)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>End-of-year village sponsorship letter (including two embedded photos)</li> <li>End-of-year child update paragraph</li> <li>Child photo (separate, mountable photo of the sponsored child alone)</li> </ul> |
| Village | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mid-year village sponsorship letter (including two embedded photos)</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>End-of-year village sponsorship letter (incl. at least two embedded photos)</li> <li>Village photo (separate, mountable photo)</li> </ul>   |

### 6.1 Mid-year child progress letter

The child progress letter sent at mid-year is the most important and the main information a child sponsor receives. You send child progress letters to all child sponsors every year in May or June, and **by 30 June** at the latest. The letters are **at least 2900 characters, including spaces**. You present a mix of more factual information (e.g. how the children developed over the past year, their likes and dislikes, their plans for the future and their challenges, etc.) and anecdotes or stories on exciting experiences the children had throughout the last year.

You make sure that there is continuity in the letters over the years and explain major changes and challenges as well as measures taken. This includes moving to another SOS Children's Village, SOS family, SOS youth care programme or the change to another family-like or family-based care model. This way, you enable sponsors to understand the development of the children they are supporting.



You explain clearly if children are about to leave the care of SOS or will be departed from the sponsorship programme within the next year. This way, a following departure notice does not come as a surprise to the sponsor. This includes children in a reintegration or adoption process as well as young persons about to reach 23 years, which is the maximum age for sponsorships. You do not give an exact departure date, though, as this might lead to further enquiries in case the



departure is postponed.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to: general well-being, daily routine, education, hobbies, sports, favourite subject, aspirations and plans for the future, activities partaken in, etc.

All photos embedded in mid-year child progress letters must show the sponsored child.

## 6.2 Village sponsorship letters

The sponsors' contributions enable us to help children grow up in loving homes and families. Show them how many children and families we help and what we do to help them. You give individual examples to help the sponsors understand how their monetary support can affect and save the lives of the children and families we support.

### 6.2.1 Mid-year village sponsorship letter

You send a letter to all village sponsors in May or June every year and **by 30 June** at the latest. It is **at least 2900 characters including spaces**.



You tell stories about families receiving support through any of our programme units. At the same time, the mid-year village sponsorship letter is your time to experiment and try out new approaches – as long as you keep the basic idea of telling stories about families and giving examples of individual children and their families.

### 6.2.2 End-of-year village sponsorship letter

You send a village sponsorship letter to all sponsors, both child and village sponsors, towards the end of the year and mail it **by 30 November** at the latest. The end-of-year letter starts with an introduction text followed by the main text and has **at least 2700 characters including spaces** (introduction at least 200 characters, main text at least 2500 characters). There are different introduction texts for child and village sponsors.

With the end-of-year letter, you give sponsors an overview of the major achievements at village level for the last twelve months. At the same time, you describe our plans for the future and how we want to help even more children and families. You are not limited to the SOS family care unit and are free to tell the best stories of different programme units. You don't have to cover all programme units in every single sponsorship letter. You could consider talking about new programme units or ones that are particularly relevant (eg. support given to children who will be reintegrated). The embedded photos match the written content. You show sponsors the different aspects of our work and the variety of assistance we offer to children and families. This should include a few facts and figures on the impact of the programme, throughout the letter.

Your stories should **be centred on a group of people**, such as a family, a school class, a group of siblings, etc. Only one story per letter can be about a single person! If you choose to use such a story, it **MUST** be placed at the end of the letter in order to separate it well from the child update paragraph and avoid confusion.

It includes season's greetings (either a separate card or special greetings within the letter).

Every sponsor receives a "real" photo (a separate print-out and mountable) with the end-of-year village letter – child sponsors receive a photo of their sponsored child while village sponsors receive one of the sponsored village.

## 6.3 End-of-year child update paragraph

When you collect information for the mid-year progress letters, you can also collect input for the additional paragraph to be used in the end-of-year letters. You choose topics which do not outdate quickly. The child update paragraph is an individual text, specific to each child and has **at least 200 characters including spaces**. The related letter to-do is created with the end-of-year campaign in DSapp and mail merged into the end-of-year letter. The paragraph is approximately five to ten lines long.

The child introduction text is followed by the end-of-year child paragraph. The child paragraph ends with an “outro”, a transition sentence to the remaining content, so that the sponsors can easily understand where the child update begins or ends.

**Good Practice**

**Looking for topics which can easily be set aside for the end-of-year letter?**

Was there a memorable event and why was it special to the child? What makes the child laugh? What was the nicest thing they have done? Special moments? How is the child described by others? Favourite colour/game/sport/hobby/subject at school/food/music/hairstyle/football team, etc. And many, many more!

## 6.4 Digital Child and Village Diaries



The Digital Diaries are a digital touchpoint where we can share photos and videos with sponsors directly from the locations they support. The photos and videos should show natural scenes from the everyday lives of the children in SOS programmes and the villages they live in.

The digital content we share with sponsors centres around three **core content themes**:

### 6.4.1 Content theme: Caring relationships

Photos and videos for this theme should focus on the connections that the children and young people in our programmes make with others. This can include a carer, like an SOS parent or aunt, siblings, neighbours, friends, educators, even pets. Any relationship that is important to the child can be included under this theme.

### 6.4.2 Content theme: Connection with community

Photos and videos for this theme should show the relationships that the children have with the world around them, and their connection to a secure and supportive environment. Since the homes in SOS locations can take many different forms, it is ok to show a diverse picture of the kinds of environments the children live in; whether it is in a village, in an integrated home in the local community, or with a foster family. Show the interaction the children have with the communities around them, which can be a trip to the market, playing football in a local park with friends, or going on an outing to enjoy the natural world.

### 6.4.3 Content theme: Personal growth

Photos and videos for this theme should show children and young people exploring their interests, passions, and developing their skills and potential as they grow. For very young children, this may focus on small accomplishments; learning to tie a shoe or to ride a bike, to read or help others – and as they get older, to show the skills they develop that will help them to grow into independent adults.

NAs participating in digital content production provide an annually updated set of content pieces as defined, which PSAs make available to sponsors.

### 6.4.4 Deliverables

| Child Diary   | Village Diary   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Photos</b></p> <p>Two photos must be child-specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>One</b> ‘Caring relationships’</li> <li>• <b>One</b> ‘Connection with community’</li> </ul> <p>Two group or community photos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Sharing in personal growth’</li> </ul> | <p><b>Photos</b></p> <p>Four photos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>One</b> ‘Caring relationships’</li> <li>• <b>One</b> ‘Connection with community’</li> <li>• <b>Two</b> ‘Sharing in personal growth’</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Video</b></p>   | <p><b>Video</b></p>   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>One</b> 30-second video. The video theme will rotate each year:</p> <p><b>2020</b> Connection with Community<br/> <b>2021</b> Personal Growth<br/> <b>2022</b> Caring Relationships</p> | <p><b>One</b> 30-second video. The video should fit a specified theme, which will rotate each year:</p> <p><b>2020</b> Connection with Community<br/> <b>2021</b> Personal Growth<br/> <b>2022</b> Caring Relationships</p> |
|---|---|

An updated child profile picture will be requested once every five years.

The annual upload schedule for NAs to IG-DAM is:

| Region     | Upload to IG-DAM by |
|------------|---------------------|
| EUCM, LAAM | 31 August           |
| ESAF, WCNA | 30 September        |
| ASIA       | 31 October          |

Your digital content collection will need to be planned and carried out in advance, so it can be uploaded by the deadline. It is possible that children might be newly registered in the sponsorship programme after you have already collected the content for your upload.

In these cases, please collect the required photos of newly-registered children by 15 January.

So for example, if you have a deadline of 30 September 2020, but a child was registered in August 2020 and you were not able to include this child in your normal content production process, please upload the required photographs for that child by 15 January 2021. For this initial upload, you will not be required to include a video. You can then include the child in the regular production for the next upload cycle.

Photos and videos that are uploaded as part of your annual campaign must meet the required technical specifications.

Find more information in the [Storytelling Guide](#).

## 6.5 Child data changes and transfers

We keep sponsors updated if a child's personal data (name, date of birth, gender) is changed or a child moves to another SOS Children's Village.

You enter a short explanatory text in **English** in DSapp. You write up to 350 characters including spaces. In difficult cases, when more explanation is needed, you can exceed the upper limit.

This text will, much like child profiles and departure notices, be sent on to the sponsors by the PSAs without translation or significant editing.

### 6.5.1 Child data changes

Child data changes entered in the PDB are automatically imported to DSapp and displayed in the "Open Child To-Dos" section. You transcribe the child's name from local language to English (in case the local language does not use the Roman alphabet), and provide a short text about the correct data.

For any information that should not go directly to the sponsor, please use the internal remarks field.

#### Good Practice

We now know that the correct *first name / date of birth* of your sponsored child is XXX.

In **special cases**, you add an additional explanatory sentence. Special cases include:

- Date of birth differs more than two years from last information

- First name is altogether wrong or has changed completely (i.e. not only spelled wrongly, or an additional name added)
- Several changes back and forth

### 6.5.2 Individual child transfer

Child transfers to other programmes entered in the PDB are automatically imported to DSapp and displayed in the “Open Child To-Dos” section. You provide a short text in **English**, including the reason for the transfer and an explanation on how the transfer is an improvement for the child, while bearing in mind the child's privacy.

For any information that should not go directly to the sponsor, please use the internal remarks field.

#### Good Practice

We would like to inform you that your sponsored child X has moved to the SOS Children's Village XXX.  
(add a short explanation)

### 6.5.3 Transfer of a larger group of children due to programmatic change or programme closure

When several children move due to a programmatic change in a village or if a programme closes, you work closely with IG and develop an explanatory text together **before** the changes are made in DSapp and the text is forwarded to the PSAs.

Ideally, the sponsors have been prepared in previous sponsorship letters on the upcoming changes.

### 6.5.4 Temporary absence

Children who run away or are placed in other care for more than one month are considered "temporarily absent". If children are absent for more than three months, they need to be withdrawn from the sponsorship programme. This also applies to children in medical treatment or military service.

Temporary absences entered in the PDB are automatically imported to DSapp and do not have to be processed by the NSPO. This will automatically block temporarily absent children from being issued additional sponsorships. After three months, if the child is still marked as temporarily absent, DSapp will create a departure child to-do. You check back with your programme colleagues on the status. If the programme co-worker confirms that the child is still absent, please send the departure notice. If the child is no longer absent, the programme co-worker has to remove the temporary absence flag in PDB. This will cause the departure child to-do in DSapp to be deactivated.

For details on departures, please refer to chapter 8.

## 7 Other communication and contacts with sponsors

Upon taking over a sponsorship, every sponsor receives the NA's correspondence address. Please make sure the postal and email addresses in the footer of your letters are the ones that you want sponsors to use for their correspondence.

### 7.1 How to handle letters and parcels addressed to the child

You screen all correspondence from sponsors addressed to the children for inappropriate content in order to prevent them from any possible harm. Only if a letter is considered to be acceptable, with regard to the country's culture, religion and social standards, is it translated and forwarded to the respective child.

If written content, photos or gifts are inappropriate, dubious or culturally unacceptable, you flag the item while registering it in DSapp and inform your IG donor services coordinator via a DSapp enquiry. IG will take the matter up with the respective PSA, who will, in turn, educate the sponsor accordingly.

Before you hand over parcels to children, you systematically remove the sponsors' family names and addresses, e.g. by blacking them out. Children only know the sponsors' first names and country of origin.

You register each letter and parcel in DSapp and you add a text to thank the sponsor if a thank-you letter is required (for all letters and parcels, but not for postcards or greeting cards). In DSapp, there is a possibility to mark any child protection issues when you register the receipt of the letter or parcel in the system. See section 9.2.1 on how to deal with child protection issues.

You inform sponsors immediately if a parcel cannot be retrieved from customs due to high customs expenses, so that they know the reason for their parcel being returned.



In order to reduce workload and mailing costs, receipt of post cards and greetings cards need not be confirmed.

### 7.2 How we reply to sponsors' questions

Every enquiry from a sponsor is an opportunity to make the sponsor even more enthusiastic about the work of SOS Children's Villages. According to the **service recovery paradox** defined by McCullough and Bharadwaj, a customer's satisfaction will be equal or even greater when a customer has experienced a problem which has been resolved satisfactorily, than if there had been no issue.

However, the **service recovery paradox** will only work if:

- The problem is given **importance** and the organisation **responds quickly**
- The issue is **resolved efficiently** and to the supporter's satisfaction
- **Thanks, empathy and apology** are communicated

This is why, we react to sponsors' complaints quickly and competently to show them that we take their concerns seriously and value their commitment. Generally, it takes us a maximum of one week to send a reply to sponsors.

When confronted with more difficult or challenging requests from sponsors, be aware that support and assistance is always available from your coordinator at IG. Sometimes it might be best if the promoting or supporting association in the sponsor's home country responds, particularly when it comes to questions regarding sponsorship contributions or money gifts a certain sponsor has given. Your IG donor services coordinator will help you find the best solution.

#### Good Practice

**When you write to a sponsor, please make sure your reply includes the elements mentioned in the following graphic.**



### 7.3 Enquiries via IG

Some sponsors address their questions to the promoting or supporting association in their home country. Their queries are forwarded to you in the DSapp “Enquiries” section.

Please provide your answers via the selected channel **in five working days** for standard enquiries and **within two working days** when an urgent reply is needed. If you cannot answer the query in the timeframe, let your IG donor services coordinator know by email that the enquiry has been received and that you are dealing with it.

When sending copies of the sponsorship letters to the sponsors by email, you remove the surname of the child for data protection reasons.

### 7.4 Enquiries to IG

The DSapp “Enquiries” section also allows you to send enquiries to IG. There are five different categories:

- Communication channel
- Correspondence language
- Address change
- Postal return
- Visit
- Child protection issue tick-box (see chapter 9.2.1)
- Other

You will receive an answer by email within **five working days** for standard enquiries and **within two working days** when an urgent reply is needed. If IG cannot answer the query in the timeframe, they will let you know that the enquiry has been received and that they are dealing with it.

### 7.5 Contact with sponsored child

All correspondence between sponsors and children is carefully screened, registered and, if necessary, translated. While we want to create an emotional bond from sponsors towards children, the child's best interest always remains our focus.

Children have the option of writing to their sponsors if they wish. However, bearing the number of sponsors in mind, we do not put any pressure on them to do so.

#### 7.5.1 Social media and other digital channels

The world is going mobile and donor behaviour is becoming digital. Social media and freely sharing information is a growing part of our everyday lives, and people love to post information on what they care about. We want to meet sponsors in the channels they use and their wish to share their excitement and at the same time protect the privacy and integrity of the children in our care. We do this by developing our channels and content streams and by inviting sponsors to be our partners in protecting the rights of the children at SOS Children's Villages.

In the [Protecting Children's Privacy](#) policy support document you can find guidance on how to communicate about children in our care.



Sponsors are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with their role in keeping the children in our care safe from abuse and exploitation. This way, they can understand why we do not support direct communication between sponsor and sponsored child.

##### 7.5.1.1 Communicating via social media

It is SOS Children's Villages policy that children and sponsors should not communicate directly via email or social media platforms. To protect the safety of sponsors and the children in our care, PSAs ask the sponsors to only communicate through the proper channels via SOS Children's Villages.

If we become aware of sponsors and children directly being in touch, the PSA will contact the sponsor, explain our policy and ask for compliance.

The NA makes sure to raise awareness around proper use of social media and educates children and young people to understand the reason for the cautious policy of SOS Children's Villages.

In addition to protecting the child's privacy and rights, PSAs should inform sponsors of the advisability of protecting their own privacy and data (e.g. addresses) to avoid unrequested contact (begging, stalking by family members of the child in the sponsors' country of residence, etc.). Children will only be provided the first name and country of their sponsor and any mention of specific address will be removed from communications that are provided to the child.

New sponsors only receive their sponsored child's first name. This improves the protection of children and young people since it makes it harder to find and identify them on social media platforms.

##### 7.5.1.2 Use of a sponsored child's personal details

The children in our care have a right to privacy and should grow up without fear of retribution for family background, beliefs, or parental status.

Sponsors are active participants in the growth and well-being of the child they sponsor and are at times provided special access to delicate information about the child's life that should not be made public, especially on the internet or social media websites where information can be seen and redistributed indiscriminately worldwide.

These are our guidelines for what can be shared with an external audience about a sponsored child:

| What sponsors can share:   | What sponsors are not allowed to share:   |
|--|---|
| <p>Photos or videos of the sponsored child on social media or other open channels (e.g. “Here is my sponsored child in Peru”). The photos or videos <b>MUST NEVER</b> mention real first/full name and/or programme location.</p> <p>Share drawings made by the sponsored child without mentioning programme location.</p> | <p>Photos and videos of the child on social media sites or per email if it includes real first/full name and/or programme location.</p> <p>Family member’s names, or protected information such as religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, or health status of the sponsored child and his or her relatives.</p> <p>Personal or private detailed information about the child they sponsor or their past.</p> <p>Personal vacation photos of their visit, where the child they sponsor can be easily identified without contacting their SOS office for permission.</p> |

Sponsors should be aware that they are given access to private and personal information about a child, which is a special benefit of a child sponsorship and at the same time needs to be treated sensitively and with great care.



It is the responsibility of the PSA to inform sponsors about the above guidelines in order to protect the integrity and privacy of the children in our care and follow suit if unpermitted sharing is discovered.

### 7.5.2 Contact with former sponsored child

Sometimes, sponsors and former sponsored children / young adults would like to stay in contact. This is possible if the young adult has reached legal age and is interested, or in the case of a child still under the legal age, if both the child and their legal guardian agree. To arrange the contact:

- Both sponsor and young adult / legal guardian of an underage child agree to exchange their addresses.
- If the former sponsor wants contact with the former child / young adult, PSA asks NA via IG whether there is still contact with the former sponsored child – if this is considered to be in the best interest of the child or young adult.
- If the former sponsored child / young adult wants contact, NA can help to initiate this – if this is considered to be in the best interest of the child.

The national sponsorship coordinator only hands out a postal or e-mail address upon the explicit agreement of sponsor and formerly sponsored child / young adult. Once contact is established, all further correspondence between sponsors and former sponsored children / young adults is carried out directly and without the involvement of SOS.

## 7.6 Visits

### 7.6.1 Sponsors visiting

Sponsors are welcome to visit their sponsored children if both child and SOS family agree. They are asked to announce their visit at least four weeks in advance and to respect the maximum duration of one day per year.

Upon receipt of an announcement, you, as the sponsorship coordinator, suggest a day and time for the visit and send the **Visitor’s Guide (see Appendix 12.3)** to the sponsor. The most frequent questions which the sponsors have may include:

- How to reach the SOS Children's Village? (Exact location, e-mail and phone number including country and area code)



- What to bring as a gift for the sponsored child / the SOS family / the whole SOS Children's Village?
- How many children of which age groups are in the sponsored child's SOS family?

Visiting sponsors are always accompanied at all times by a sponsorship co-worker who can competently answer all questions on sponsorships. Accompanying colleagues should not try to answer questions they cannot answer, especially about money gifts. In these cases, please collect the question, forward it to IG, and the sponsor will then get his reply through the PSA.

**The safety, security and integrity of the children in our care are our main concern. Hence, you take precautionary measures. You inform visitors about dos and don'ts; the minimum standards are described in the Visitor's Guide.**



Sponsors are not entitled to accommodation at the SOS Children's Village guest houses, family houses or other SOS Children's Village premises during their visit.



Visits to children living in foster families, families of origin or SOS houses outside the SOS Children's Village are arranged to be hosted within the safe boundaries of the SOS Children's Village, in another SOS facility, or a neutral or public place within the community. Sponsors' visits to private households are not tolerated.

You request any unannounced visitors to announce future visits. If you cannot accommodate an unannounced visit, the NA can decide to decline and turn the visitors away in a friendly, but firm manner.

### 7.6.1.1 The Visitor's Guide

In 12.3 of the Appendix, you find the Visitor's Guide, which you adapt to your needs and the cultural conventions in your country; you also insert your NA's letterhead. You send it out to sponsors interested in visiting for information. Upon every visit, sponsors have to sign the agreement on the bottom of the document.

#### Good Practice

##### **Get to know your sponsors!**

You can invite visiting sponsors to the national office for a short conversation if the sponsors' travel schedule permits. You, the sponsorship coordinator, are the best person to answer their questions about children, villages and the organisation in general. This way you guarantee the right information and avoid misunderstanding.

##### **Educate all co-workers at village level on data protection and privacy!**

Things we do not report on should also not be revealed to visitors. This includes information on sensitive data and on third persons who have not consented to the use of their personal information (e.g. biological family).

Also, when asked about the receipt and/or usage of money gifts, the village co-workers should be aware that they cannot answer this question and need to refer back to you.

##### **Cash donations**

Every visitor leaving a cash donation receives a receipt. Money gifts for children are added to the children's savings, donations for the CV are used for covering running costs.

### 7.6.2 Invitations for children

Invitations for children who are not yet legally adults to visit their sponsors abroad are declined. The SOS Children's Village organisation opposes sponsored children visiting sponsors in foreign countries. We want to prevent disappointment due to unrealistic expectations on both sides and to protect the children from possible harm.

### 7.6.3 Non-sponsors visiting

If visitors are interested in sponsoring, you ask them to leave their name and postal and e-mail address and forward the details to Individual Giving. If a visitor wishes to sponsor a specific child, you add the wish to your message to IG including the child's ID number. At the same time, you explain to the visitor that it might not be possible to sponsor the particular child as first and foremost we issue sponsorships based on need. Whenever possible though, IG will try to meet the visitor's wish.

### 7.6.4 Follow up on visits

You enter every visit on DSapp. After the visit, you type up a short report. This report is transported through to the PSAs' donor database, which enables a 360° view of all donor interaction at PSA side.

At the same time, you fill in a short text thanking the sponsor for their visit in the "thank you" mail merge field. This text will then be merged automatically as a post scriptum into the next periodic letter to the sponsor.

When following up the visit, there is also the possibility to inform about a child protection issue during the visit. In this case, an enquiry is created automatically; you then need to fill in a text detailing the issue and send it to IG. This will mean a thank-you text will not be merged into the next letter to the sponsor. See section 9.2.1 for further information on how to follow up on child protection issues.

## 7.7 Cooperation and roles in times of change, crisis or emergencies

In times of change or challenges, an efficient information flow throughout the organisation is particularly important. All of the circumstances discussed below will need a "special communication" to sponsors. These communications should all be discussed and agreed on with your RDS and IG.

### 7.7.1 Major changes in a village or country

#### Good Practice

You proactively work closely with other departments (including the management team) to receive information about changes planned to happen in the near future (the next twelve months) or have access to documents about planned changes. Plans sometimes evolve quickly, so it is important to stay in touch and make sure you are informed of any new developments.

You always proactively inform your regional donor service advisor and your IG donor services and IG-QM communications co-workers about major changes happening in a village/country as soon as these changes are known.

Examples of such changes are:

- Families moving to community-integrated housing
- Closure or partial closure of programme units in a given location/programme
- New programme units that are starting up
- National legislation that has a direct impact on our care model (e.g. de-institutionalisation or requested gender segregation in care model)
- A change of care model where children or young people move to a different kind of care setup (e.g. foster care)

### 7.7.2 Emergencies (including social and political unrest)

Per definition, emergencies are caused by external triggers, such as natural disasters, war, social and political unrest, public health issues etc. Emergencies have the potential to threaten the safety of co-workers and children in our care or have a direct impact on the daily lives of the children in our care.

You are always in close contact with RDS and IG and provide relevant updates in cases of an emergency.

### 7.7.3 Crisis situations

In a crisis situation, something has gone wrong due to human involvement. It can, but need not be an internal incident. In a crisis situation, the organisation's reputation is usually threatened, and we might face accusations of not having lived up to our own policies and guidelines.

You inform and support RDS and IG about sponsorship related issues of a crisis incident.

### 7.7.4 Crisis information flow throughout the organisation

When major critical cases occur concerning children in our care or the way that SOS Children's Villages are run, reputation risk alerts are issued to inform relevant stakeholders throughout the organisation. The risk alerts are authored by the regional offices (IOR) in cooperation with the member association with input from IG. The paper includes a position statement of the organisation to the case as well as the strategy and messaging for the sponsor communication if applicable.

### 7.7.5 Special communication about programme changes, crisis or emergencies in mid- and end-of-year-letters

Special communication means the inclusion of information about changes, emergencies or crisis incidents that have been agreed upon by IG, RDS and the NSPO beforehand.

#### Process for including special communication in sponsorship letters

- You inform your RDS and IG about programme changes or incidents which may need to be included in sponsorship letters as so-called "special communication." Close cooperation between you and your RDS about individual cases ensures a productive information flow.
- RDS and IG agree on a communication strategy for the inclusion of special communication – typically in March-April for mid-year letters and in September for the end-of-year letters.
- After a strategy has been decided, RDS or IG will support you with the messaging and the inclusion in the sponsorship letters. The final text will need to be approved by both the RDS and IG.



When we communicate about changes and developments in sponsorship letters we never use internal terminology (such as "de-institutionalisation", "sustainable path" or "villages of tomorrow") as it does not make sense to sponsors. Instead, we describe what kinds of changes/developments are happening, and focus on how they affect the children and families that we help. We do this in a reassuring manner, confirming how we are supporting children and families during these changes.

**Major changes** will almost always have to be communicated to sponsors in sponsorship letters. Knowing about programme changes well ahead means that we can prepare sponsors for coming changes through the inclusion of special communication in sponsorship letters.

**In case of emergencies**, the following sponsorship letters should generally always include at least a paragraph about how the children in our care have been affected, and how the village might have helped people from the surrounding communities as well.

When a **crisis incident** has been in the media and sponsors have or may become aware of it, it can be necessary to write about it in the mid-year or end-of-year letters. Such a paragraph informs about the events and their impact on the children and families; we also mention what measures SOS is taking to improve the situation. You are always supported by RDS and/or IG in this process.

#### Your role

If you have been confronted with a crisis or emergency situation in a village or you are aware of changes planned, please always share and clarify this with your RDS and IG before including something in the sponsorship letters. Only this way we can be sure that we all have the same level of information and that all parts of the global sponsorship communication are aligned accordingly.

#### 7.7.5.1 Flagging programmes in DSapp to stop print

DSapp offers the option to flag whole programmes. Flagged programmes are not included when printing letters to sponsors. Only after the special communication text has been approved and an authorized user has removed the flag(s), the connected letters will be printed. The flag can only be set by IG.

## 8 Departure notices: saying goodbye

### 8.1 When is a child withdrawn from the sponsorship programme?

When a child leaves the care of SOS Children's Villages, the departure needs to be entered in PDB **as quickly as possible**, that is: maximum 30 days after the child's departure. Departures entered in PDB are automatically imported to DSapp and displayed in the "Open Child To-Dos" section. You provide a detailed departure notice, including the reason for a child being withdrawn from the sponsorship programme, their education or training, their future plans and information on the intended use of the child's savings.

Children can stay on in the sponsorship programme until the **maximum age of 23 years** if:

- They live in SOS Family Care or Youth Care permanently.
- We have a valid consent to the use of their data for sponsorship purposes.
- Sponsors can be provided with regular updates and photos.
- Children who are still under the care of SOS and live at the school/college/university campus or at a flat rented by SOS while completing their education can also remain on the sponsorship programme as long as SOS covers more than 50% of their living cost.

This means that all children who do not live in SOS Family Care or Youth Care permanently are immediately withdrawn from the sponsorship programme. This includes being reunited with their biological family, being adopted, carrying out military service, moving to a non-SOS facility, starting to live independently, receiving a non-SOS scholarship that covers all expenses, or passing away.



All children reintegrated into their families of origin have to be deregistered from the sponsorship programme, no matter if they are still supported by the organization (i.e. former YF2).

In line with the Inclusion Policy, this framework applies to all children. There is no differing rule for children with special needs.

The departure notice informs the sponsor that their sponsored child has moved on from the sponsorship programme. The texts you provide via DSapp are sent on to sponsors by the PSAs without significant editing; although some PSAs might decide to translate the text into their mother tongue.

Departure notices are the final step in a sponsorship and are a highly sensitive point in a donor journey. Whether or not sponsors will move on to a new sponsorship or quit their support altogether largely depends on the experience they have with the departure process.

### 8.2 The departure notice

Every departure notice is a text **unique** to the child; all information is **authentic** and **child-specific** and provided in **English**.

A departure notice is a single paragraph with **700-1150 characters** (including spaces). In difficult cases such as death, runaways and other cases including a lot of sensitive information, the text can be shorter in order to protect the child's privacy.

In general, the text covers the following seven topics. If any of these topics do not apply to this particular departure, you leave the topic out.

#### Obligatory topics (if applicable)

- What was the **reason** for withdrawing the child/young person from the sponsorship programme?
- Which **measures** were taken to ensure the departure went smoothly?
- What are the child's/young person's **living arrangements** like?
  - Do not mention exact addresses or locations, school names or other details making the child easy to find.
- Is the child/young person in **school or working**? What is the current status and his or her plans for the future? How does the young person make a living?

- Is **SOS Children's Villages still supporting** the child/young person financially or in any other way?
- Does the child/young person still have **contact** with his or her former SOS family or any co-worker, and if so, with whom?
- What were the **savings** of the child/young person spent on, or what are the plans for that money?
  - Use the term "savings" instead of money gifts.
  - Mention in the internal comments field if there were no savings.

If a major change has occurred in the life of the child between the last child progress letter and the departure notice, make sure you mention and explain this. Sponsors want to understand if, for example, a young person has significantly changed their plans for the future or form of education.

If there are special issues surrounding the case, make sure that the departure notice is aligned with any official communications guidelines such as crisis/incident communication or reputational risk alert papers.

### Late departure notices

If a departure notice is sent more than six months after the child left the care of SOS, it is officially considered "late" and requires additional information:

- Exact date of departure
- Up-to-date information: make sure to update the text to include things that have happened since the child actually left.
- Last letter sent to sponsors: which was the last report the sponsors received on this child?
- Support from SOS Children's Villages: when did it end? If support continues, please mention what SOS Children's Villages is still doing for the child.
- Savings: when were savings handed over or when will they be and what is the plan for their use?

### 8.2.1 Processing departure notices in DSapp

Departures entered in PDB are automatically imported to DSapp and displayed in the "Open Child To-Dos" section. You provide a departure text in English as described above.

### Sponsorship specific departure reasons

There are three sponsorship specific departure reasons which are not imported from PDB and where you initiate the departure from the sponsorship programme. These are

- Semi-independent living (SIL)
- Behavioural
- Consent withdrawal

**Semi-independent living:** To be used once SOS does not cover the majority of the young person's living cost any more.

**NOTE:** Please also use this departure reason to create a departure yourself if you know that a child has left for any other reason but a **departure is not coming in from PDB**. IG will put the correct departure reason before forwarding the departure to the PSAs.



**Behavioural:** When a child or adolescent stops taking part in the programme because he or she cannot be cared for adequately there (e.g. becomes a danger to him- or herself or others), and a different care option is needed or is better for the child. You provide a departure text and withdraw the child / young person from the sponsorship programme.

**Consent withdrawal:** The child / young person or their legal guardian decided to withdraw the consent to the use of personal information and photographs in the frame of the sponsorship programme. You provide a departure text and withdraw the child / young person from the sponsorship programme.

### Automatically generated departures

There are two reasons where departure child to-dos will be created automatically by DSapp. These are:

- The child has reached age limit
- Child info no longer available (temporary absence)
- Transfer to a programme unit not part of the sponsorship programme

**Has reached age limit:** DSapp creates automatic entries for all young people close to turning 23 in the “Open Child To-Dos” section. You provide a departure text and withdraw the young person from the sponsorship programme.

**Temporary absence:** Temporary absences entered in PDB are automatically imported to DSapp. After three months, DSapp automatically creates a departure child to-do with “Child info no longer available” as the departure reason. You check back with colleagues from Programme and Strategy on the status of the child. If the child has left SOS care, the departure needs to be entered in PDB. This changes the departure reason in DSapp from “Child info no longer available” to the one given by the PDB. If the child is still absent after three months, but PDB keeps the child in SOS care, you have to send the departure from DSapp. NOTE: Unless changed in PDB, for children that were set on temporary absence for more than three months, the departure reason will automatically be “child info no longer available” and cannot be edited.

**Transfer to a programme unit not part of the sponsorship programme:** DSapp creates automatic child departure to-dos for all children who are transferred from a programme unit in the international sponsorship programme to a programme unit NOT in the international sponsorship programme. You provide a departure text and withdraw the young person from the sponsorship programme.

### 8.2.2 Standard paragraphs for specific types of departure notices

Some departure cases are more difficult to explain than others, so it is important to proceed with caution when explaining them. This includes: withdrawal of consent, death, behavioural, reaching the age limit and runaways.

If one of these five departure reasons has been selected, DSapp generates a standard paragraph and adds it to your text automatically. In DSapp, the standard paragraph is displayed. You make sure that your text and the text of the standard paragraph do not contradict each other.



#### **Automatically generated standard paragraphs:**

Can be found for your information in the appendix of this document, chapter 12.1.

### 8.2.3 How to use the “Departure Remark Int” field

The “departure remark int” field gives you room for additional, internal information, which cannot and should not be directly conveyed to the sponsor, but can help PSA co-workers to have a clear understanding of the situation in case of enquiries.

Remarks are recommended in cases of death and runaways, as well as if the contents are problematic, e.g. when information strongly differs from the last sponsorship letter, when open sponsors' enquiries or complaints exist.

If a departure notice was not sent immediately, you explain in the remarks field why and how the delay came to pass.

Also, if there were no savings from money gifts to be distributed, you mention this in the remarks field.

See the Storytelling Guide for more information on how to use the remarks field!

### 8.2.4 How we handle replacement sponsorships

Sponsors are usually asked to start supporting another child when they are informed about the cancellation of a sponsorship. They are given a period of 25 days to let us know if they are not willing to do so. Only after this period, will you be informed about the new sponsorship. This is to make sure that you do not send a welcome letter to a sponsor who immediately cancels the sponsorship. You send out a welcome letter, thanking the sponsor for his or her ongoing support. If the sponsorship has switched to a child from a different village, you include the welcome item.

## 8.2.5 The departure notice matrix: Must-have topics according to departure reasons

|  | 1. Departure reason | 2. Preparation | 3. Living arrangements | 4. Education and work | 5. Support by SOS | 6. Contact with SOS | 7. Use of savings | 8. Standard paragraph | Internal remark required?<br><i>Please note that internal remarks are always required for late departures</i> |
|--|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Adoption   | x                   | x              | ⊕                      | x                     |                   | ⊕                   | x                 |                       | If no savings or other special case   |
| Attained self-reliance                           | x                   | x              | x                      | x                     | x                 | x                   | x                 |                       |   |
| Child pseudonymized                              | x                   |                | x                      | x                     | x                 |                     | x                 | x                     | Always  |
| Left care due to personal decision               | x                   |                | ⊕                      | x                     | ⊕                 | ⊕                   | ⊕                 |                       |   |
| Other  | x                   | x              | x                      | x                     | x                 | x                   | x                 |                       |   |
| Other alternative care (foster, kinship, kafala) | x                   | x              | x                      | x                     | x                 | x                   | x                 |                       | If no savings or other special case   |
| Residential care                                 | x                   | ⊕              | ⊕                      | x                     | x                 | x                   | x                 |                       |   |
| Reunification with family of origin              | x                   | x              | x                      | x                     | x                 | x                   | x                 |                       |   |
| Semi-independent living                          | x                   | x              | x                      | x                     | x                 | x                   | x                 |                       | Always  |
| Transfer to another facility                     | x                   | x              | x                      | x                     | x                 | x                   | x                 |                       |   |
| Programme unit closed                            | x                   | x              | x                      | x                     | x                 | x                   | x                 |                       | Always  |
| Behavioural                                      | x                   | ⊕              | ⊕                      | x                     | x                 | x                   | x                 | x                     | Always  |
| Child info no longer available                   | x                   | ⊕              | ⊕                      | ⊕                     | ⊕                 | ⊕                   | ⊕                 | ⊕                     |   |
| Consent withdrawal                               | x                   |                | x                      | x                     | x                 |                     | x                 | x                     |   |
| Deceased   | x                   |                |                        |                       |                   |                     |                   | x                     |   |
| Has reached age limit                            | x                   |                | x                      |                       | x                 |                     | x                 | x                     | If no savings or other special case   |
| Ran away   | x                   |                |                        |                       |                   |                     |                   | x                     | Always  |

### Legend

x = required information

⊕ = if possible or applicable

Standard paragraph required

Use only after consulting IG!

## 9 Our approach to data and child protection and child participation

SOS Children's Villages is a leading childcare organisation that promotes and supports high standards of data and child protection. We respond to growing demands for enhanced data protection and keep the best interests of the child in mind in all of our activities.

### 9.1 Data protection and information security

Data protection is about protecting people from the misuse of their personal information.

The right to privacy and the protection of personal rights is a right shared by all humans – be it a child, a family member, a co-worker or a sponsor. Hence, on all levels of the organisation, we take precautionary measures to guarantee the lawful use of personal data such as addresses, photos, personal background, etc. We store data securely and we protect our systems against data misuse. We encrypt data files containing personal data and information. We do not sell personal data to or trade it with third parties.

All of the children's and sponsors' personal data is registered at IG in Vienna, Austria; hence, both Austrian and European Union (EU) data protection laws apply. In addition, each NA adheres to national laws on data protection.

#### 9.1.1 Information security

In the era of globalisation, rising mobility and growing dependence of developed countries on ICT, the need for security is becoming more and more relevant.

Information security is not just an ICT problem, it is also a business issue. All staff who collect or process personal data (e.g. donor data, child information, etc.) must fulfil their obligations under the data protection act and various laws and regulations now make directors personally responsible should they fail to take the required steps.

Learn more on our [information security policy](#).

#### 9.1.2 Personal data



**Definition:** Personal data is any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person. An identifiable person is a person who can be identified directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identification number or to one or more factors specific to his physical, physiological, mental, economic, cultural or social identity.

This includes a person's name or telephone number, date of birth and photographs, audio and video.

#### 9.1.3 Sensitive personal data

Sensitive personal data means personal data consisting of information about an individual's racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, physical or mental health or condition, sexual life or orientation and judicial records. Since sensitive information can be used in a discriminatory way, it needs to be treated with even greater care than other personal data. Sensitive personal data is highly confidential and is never shared with others (e.g. donors, sponsors, visitors, etc.).

#### 9.1.4 Personal data and digital content

When collecting digital content, please also follow the pillars of responsible data collection as outlined in the [Protecting Children's Privacy](#) policy support document:

- Obtain informed and specific consent before any data, images or video is collected.
- Do not collect any more data than is required for the consented purpose.
- Data cannot be used for any purpose other than the one consented to.
- Personal data must be stored and transferred through secure channels.



Please use One Drive to share photo or video files with your team members. Do not use WhatsApp, text messages, WeTransfer, or other online file sharing services.

## 9.2 Child protection

SOS Children's Villages works 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 that not only prevents but also addresses child abuse and exploitation.



**Definition:** In its widest sense, child protection is a term used to describe the actions that individuals, organisations, countries and communities take to protect children from acts of maltreatment (abuse) and exploitation e.g. domestic violence, child labour, commercial and sexual exploitation and abuse, HIV, and physical violence to name but a few.

We aim to enable children to claim their rights themselves, instead of being objects of care or victims of circumstance. We make sure that their personal rights are not being infringed upon through our fundraising activities.

In our communication, it is therefore our highest priority to ensure that none of the child information given to sponsors can cause harm to his or her reputation, dignity, integrity and chances of further development.



We inform sponsors that they have to treat the information they receive about the children with discretion. They should not make their sponsored child's life public or pass the information on to third parties outside their immediate circle of family or friends (including social media see 7.5.1).

You can find further information on the official [Child Protection Policy](#).

### 9.2.1 Tick box for child protection issue on DSapp

In DSapp a marker can be set for sponsors who have acted against our guidelines (e.g. Visitor's Guide, Child Protection Policy). The reason for the implementation of this marker is the need to protect children from further harm through the sponsor.

Before the marker is set, the child protection issues must be discussed and cleared with IG QM and the PSA where the sponsor is registered. You can flag a visit or parcel entry directly, and then send an enquiry to IG describing the issue. If the issue is not connected to a visit or parcel, you send a separate enquiry, informing IG of the sponsor's misbehaviour. When the misbehaviour has been discussed with the PSA, the marker will be set in the system.

Marking a sponsor with the child protection issue marker will also require that the PSA terminate the sponsor's sponsorship(s). This person will also not be welcomed as a sponsor in the future.

## 9.3 Child participation

Article 12 of the UNCRC states that children are born with the right to express their views and opinions on all matters concerning their lives. We see children as key stakeholders and build a culture of participation within SOS Children's Villages. In this approach, we offer children and young people opportunities to have a say and to have their views and values taken into account. This also applies to the sponsorship programme:

- We give children access to their own child progress letters, if requested.
- Children decide whether they want to write to their sponsors.
- When the NSPO organises writing workshops or events to generate mail to sponsors, children decide whether they want to participate.
- Children can withdraw their consent from the sponsorship programme. Before this happens, the NSPO discusses the pros and cons with the child.
  - Seven years after consent has been withdrawn or become invalid, all child data is deleted from our systems automatically. If the signee insists, data can be deleted immediately.

- With the implementation of the two new consent forms from 2018, we now ask all children to co-sign their privacy consent from the age of 13. The co-workers sit down with the children, explain the sponsorship programme, answer their questions and ask them to co-sign their own consent. This is also child participation!

### 9.3.1 Child participation in digital content production

Member Associations should create their own methodology during their digital content production. Each MA should reflect carefully on what resources it has available, and what approach is most relevant for them.

However, involving children in decisions about the way their stories are told is good practice and highly recommended. Children and young people can be involved in the content production process in many different ways.

Involving children and young people could be as simple as holding a consultation session to explain digital sponsorship products, what kind of information will be collected, and how it will be used. You could ask for input on what kind of information and stories children and young people would like to share about their own lives. Children and young people should also be made aware of their rights to decline or withdraw their consent.

It is also possible to give children and young people the chance to try out a more 'hands-on' approach by learning to use cameras and to take photographs or videos themselves.

Reasonable efforts should be made to share the images and videos you collect with the children, young people, and adults featured in them. This way they can see how their images or stories are being used.

## 10 The Quality Management cycle: How we learn from each other through continuous feedback

The Quality Management team at Individual Giving (IG-QM), together with the QAN, is in charge of the quality management of donor services for international individual giving products. Apart from driving an ongoing quality management cycle, the team's tasks include standard setting, systematic capacity building, quality audits, advisory services on child and data protection issues, etc.

### 10.1 You conduct biannual data monitoring

Twice a year, ideally before the two sponsorship mailings, you take active measures to ensure that all children's data is correct and that all children who no longer meet the requirements for the sponsorship programme have been withdrawn. You cross-check all children's data with your sponsorship co-worker at programme level. All required changes and departures then need to be processed in PDB and/or DSapp.

At the same time, you check that all children eligible for sponsorships are, in fact, registered to the sponsorship programme.



Delayed departure notices have a big potential to do lasting damage to the reputation of our organisation. Also, accepting donations for children no longer in our care can potentially lead to legal consequences. Therefore, up-to-date child data is of the utmost importance.

#### Co-signing of consent

The co-signing of the privacy and usage rights consents when the children turn 13 and 18 is done as a part of the bi-annual data monitoring process.

Make sure to make a list with all the children that turn 13 and 18 within the monitoring period (first and second half of a year) and make sure to bring their consent forms with you for co-signing as you do the regular data monitoring.

### 10.2 Annual quality feedback

In the second half of every year, Individual Giving and your regional donor services coordinator / advisor review the sponsorship work of the last twelve months. You then receive a form that gives an assessment, commending good practices and suggesting improvement where necessary. You discuss the form with your direct superior and together, you provide feedback and a set of clearly defined actions (if required) to IG-QM. Your input to the conclusions drawn is valuable; mutual feedback will improve mutual understanding and cooperation.

The regional donor services advisor follows up on agreed actions and makes sure that necessary improvements are implemented. Whether or not the action plan has been completed will be assessed in the following year's feedback form.

### 10.3 Collecting sponsorship letter mailing dates

IG-QM collects sponsorship letter mailing dates and makes the information systematically available to PSAs. Hence, if sponsors contact PSAs, they can give exact details on whether or not the letters have already been sent and provide copies. IG has access to the letters in DSapp. The process is:

- You inform [IG-QM@sos-kd.org](mailto:IG-QM@sos-kd.org) and your RDS immediately of anticipated delays.
- You provide actual mailing dates to your RDS, who provides them to IG-QM by 30 June / 30 November.
  - RDS follows up on delayed mailings.
- You mail all letters to sponsors by 30 June / 30 November.

### 10.4 Input to village sponsorship and child progress letters

IG-QM and regional donor services (RDS) advisors provide systematic feedback to your bi-annual sponsorship letters. You receive a checklist as well as additional comments on your letters, which will help to further improve and develop the quality of your sponsorship letters.

The letter rating in the quality feedback of the previous period determines how often you will receive input.

- NAs achieving a letter **score of 90% and higher**: Receive feedback to one letter a year, rotating between child / mid-year village / end-of-year village letter.
- NAs achieving a **score of 51-89%**: Receive feedback to two letters a year. This will be the child progress letter and one village letter.
- NAs achieving a **score up to 50%**, have a **new NSPO**, underwent a **quality review** and/or are/were **closed for quality reasons** (since the last quality feedback): Receive feedback to all three letters a year.
- Feedback to village sponsorship letters from IG-QM and/or RDS by 31 August / 28 February.
- Feedback to child progress letters from IG-QM and/or RDS by 30 November.

### 10.5 Sponsorship Quality Review: Product, process and system-oriented auditing

IG-QM and regional donor services advisors undertake quality reviews in specific countries. We suggest quality reviews to either countries with a low result in the quality feedback or facing other issues that affect service quality. NAs are also welcome to request a quality review.

Focussed work on processes and systems of one specific country helps to detect errors and maintain a high level of quality.

In order to combine the advantages of both auditing and capacity building, the agenda typically includes:

- **Introductions**: For different stakeholders, e.g. national management, upon need
- **Product workshop**: Capacity building with the national sponsorship coordinator (NSPO) and other co-workers involved in sponsorship work, according to the needs of the specific NA
- **Process definition**: A facilitated workshop in which the national sponsorship team define their own processes and responsibilities
- **Systems and resources audit**: Interview with other national stakeholders, e.g. HR, ICT, FIN, etc.

The quality review comes with a final report and a clear set of recommendations.

### 10.6 Consequences: When do we temporarily close a village / country for new sponsorships?

A village or country is temporarily closed for new sponsorships **if key service elements are not delivered** at the required quality, within the required timeframe or not at all **repeatedly**. It does not apply to isolated incidents or single mistakes.

#### 10.6.1 What is a key service element?

Key service elements of sponsorship services are:

- Consent availability
- Data compliance check
- Child profiles
- Child departure notices
- Welcome letters
- Sponsorship letters incl. photos
- Enquiries and complaints handling
- Delivery of ordered photos and/or profiles
- Delivery of digital content

Repeated non-delivery of any single element or combination of elements will lead to further measures.

### 10.6.2 A warning system before closure

Once a case of non-delivery of key service elements has been detected and investigated, IG-QM and your regional donor services advisor, together with your national director, define a set of improvement measures, such as data monitoring, recruitment and/or training of co-workers, etc.



The first case of non-delivery causes a warning issued by IG-QM to the national association, connected to a **probationary period of six months**. If a second case happens within this period, the country will be closed for new sponsorships and a new set of required actions will be set. It is irrelevant if the second case concerns the same or a different key service element.

IG-QM and your regional donor services advisor assist the national association, keep track of implementation of the agreed measures, monitor performance and conduct a systematic follow-up. Re-opening is based on their joint assessment of the situation. The financing PSA is informed at an early stage of the intention to close the country to new sponsorships and the final decision is communicated to PSAs by IG.

### 10.6.3 Other reasons

If there is no national sponsorship coordinator and no qualified stand-in and the national association cannot guarantee that new sponsors will receive the required services, the country is temporarily closed for new sponsorships.



If this happens shortly before or during one of the biannual sponsorship mailings, regional donor services advisor and national director find an alternative, temporary solution and follow up until all sponsorship letters have been sent.

At the same time, the regional donor services advisor provides the national director with the current version of job profile and job description reference papers. They also offer assistance with job interviews and recruitment tests.

## 11 Sponsorship funds

Please refer to the [Treasury Information Management policy support document](#) for details on objectives, principles, processes, tasks and performance parameters in the area of accounting, reporting and audit for the international treasury activities of the SOS organisation.

### 11.1 Money transfer

All sponsorship funds (sponsorship contributions, money gifts, legacies and other earmarked donations) are forwarded to each NA from STS. For more information on the money transfer, please refer to the [Transfers of International Funds policy support document](#).

No booking details are forwarded from IG to the respective NA, thus the NA cannot track individual payments. The funds are transferred after the balancing process between the PSAs and FC. To cover running costs during the financial year, sponsorship funds are paid out in advance in instalments according to a payment plan.

### 11.2 Sponsorship contribution

The regular payment of sponsorship contributions is the only financial obligation for a sponsor. Sponsorship contributions are earmarked to cover running costs of the SOS Children's Village (including SOS family care and all other units) in the sponsored location.

### 11.3 Child money gifts

Child money gifts are donations to the organisation, earmarked to be used for a specific child.

PSAs confirm the receipt of money gifts to their sponsors. Hence, no additional thank-you letter from national level is required. The amount of money gifts per child is accessible in Dynamics NAV and needs to be imported twice a year.



Not all children have money gifts or a significant amount of money gifts. In these cases, expenses which would usually be covered by money gifts have to be included in the NA's budget.

#### 11.3.1 How we use money gifts for children

We use all money gifts in the children's best interest.

We save these funds and use them to actively support the child when becoming independent. The funds are utilised towards settling the young people in independent life or to ease a transition back to the family of origin, which includes usage in the immediate time leading up to the child leaving the care of our organisation, during the independency- or re-integration process and immediately after. The remaining amount is then paid out. Ideally, all money gifts should be used up within 12 months after a child leaves the care of SOS. The exact use of the money gift funds is determined through the individual development plan.

We use the money gifts sensibly, as a long-term investment in the child's future. Among other things, this can include, advanced training or training tools to give better opportunities on the labour market, setting up a small business to provide a source of income, buying/renovating land or accommodation to solve the housing issue or marriage.

##### 11.3.1.1 Exceptions

In case children are not reachable for one year or have passed away, we redistribute their money gift funds to their biological siblings or, if there are no biological siblings in our care, their SOS siblings. In such cases, please inform your IG donor services coordinator.

In case children are reintegrated into their family of origin, we negotiate the use of the funds with their new main carer. If we cannot reach an agreement, we can hold the money in trust for the children until they legally become adults.

Only in exceptional cases do we accept money gifts earmarked for specific purposes other than outlined above. These exceptions have to be agreed upon with IG in beforehand. Possible examples of such urgent needs are expensive medical treatment (e.g. surgery) or educational fees for a child (e.g. additional course of high benefit). In such cases, the PSA forwards an enquiry to IG, who, in turn, clarifies the matter with the NA. If agreed upon, a special routine is activated where the Finance and Controlling department sends an RFT (request for transfer) to the PSA. This way, the donation is paid out immediately. The PSA can request thank-you letters for this type of donation from the NA.

### 11.3.2 How we administer money gifts for children

For all details on how to administer money gifts for children, please refer to the [Liquidity Planning policy support document](#).

## 11.4 Money gifts for villages

We use money gifts given for the benefit of a specific SOS Children's Village to cover running costs or budgeted investments, but not as additional income. Money gifts for SOS villages are not saved, but spent right away.

## 11.5 Legacies

Legacies to the SOS organisation, the SOS association of a country or to a particular child are usually handled by a notary public in the sponsor's home country. If you are contacted by a notary public directly, please contact your IG donor services coordinator. Usually, PSAs can help with the process.

Money from legacies for a child is booked as earmarked donation to the child. If the legacies are placed on the child money gifts account, the rules for handling of child money gifts in 11.3 will also apply to legacies.

## 11.6 Every country develops a national money gift disbursement regulation

Clearly defined rules and procedures on money gifts are the base for accountability towards the children in our care, their sponsors and the PSAs. Hence, every NA develops a binding national money gift disbursement regulation in which these rules and procedures are laid down.

The national money gift disbursement regulation is developed in accordance with the basic framework as described in this chapter. Click here for a [sample money gift disbursement regulation](#).

The regional donor services advisor provides advisory services in order to ensure that all national regulations are in line with the international framework as described below.

## 11.7 We monitor money gifts disbursement systematically

In order to keep the promise given to the sponsors, you monitor the disbursement of money gifts systematically. Hence, once a year you take active measures to ensure that disbursement or re-distribution of money gifts has been taking place throughout the year. You cross-check with the national head of finance and trigger any necessary reminders.

IG-QM provides a [monitoring tool](#) for this process. In August every year, you add to this tool the names of children who left the care of SOS in the previous twelve months. The national head of finance then updates the money gift amounts still available in the accounts for each of the children on the list. This ensures that you have a list of all open money gifts for all departed children.

You then control the entries to make sure that money gift funds are not kept indefinitely. When the maximum time for keeping a child's money gifts in trust is up and no other individual agreements are in place, you decide on the necessary actions. This includes initiating a process to remind children and young people of the availability of funds, to re-distribute funds to other children, negotiate use of funds with the re-integrated child's family of origin, etc.

You then forward this list together with information on initiated actions to your regional donor services advisor for further follow-up.



If there are accounts still open for children who left care of SOS many years ago, it should be solved in a separate process.



## 12 Appendix

### 12.1 Standard paragraphs for child departure notices

#### 12.1.1 Deceased

Sadly, we cannot protect children and young people from all hardships. Despite the safety that a life in an SOS Children's Village provides, accidents or diseases can still happen. When a child or young person dies, this is always a shock for the whole community. To help the families at the village heal, the psychological and pedagogical staff provide grief counselling and support during these difficult times.

#### 12.1.2 Ran away

Many children who live in an SOS Children's Village come from very difficult backgrounds. At the village, we provide support to enable children and young people to work through these experiences and to make it possible for them to live a secure childhood. However, we don't always know in advance how a child will react to life in the village. Sometimes, a child's previous experiences make it very hard for them to fully adjust to life in the village. When a child leaves without informing anyone at the village, SOS Children's Villages work closely with the authorities to ensure that the child is safe. If a child returns or needs support, we work with them to find the best possible solution.

#### 12.1.3 Behavioural

Many children who live in an SOS Children's Village come from very difficult backgrounds. At the village, we provide support to enable children and young people to work through these experiences and to make it possible for them to live a secure childhood. However, we don't always know in advance how a child will react to life in the village. Sometimes, issues that require special care beyond the capabilities of the co-workers at the village come to light after some time. In such cases, we work together with the child and the social authorities to find the best possible place for the child to live in. We strive to give each child a chance to develop well despite the difficult start they might have had.

#### 12.1.4 Consents withdrawal

All children have the right to have a say when decisions that shape their lives are taken. This includes that a child can decide to stop taking part in the sponsorship programme. To help children make informed decisions, the staff at the village discusses the purpose of sponsorships as well as their rights in the programme with all children. We respect these decisions. They will still receive support, financed through sponsorship contributions to the village, if and for as long as they need it.

#### 12.1.5 Has reached age limit

When a young person living in SOS Children's Villages reaches the age of 23, they have usually gone a long way into becoming independent adults. Ending the sponsorship is another step in encouraging the young person to take over responsibility for their life. Depending on their individual plan, SOS Children's Villages still support the young person for as long as they need it. This makes it possible for them to finish their education, establish a business, find employment or otherwise become able to lead an independent life. When a young person needs it, we offer a longer period of care.

## 12.2 Programme criteria for admitting children to the international child sponsorship programme

Up until 2018, only children living in “regular” SOS families could be registered to the international sponsorship programme.

With the evolution of more and more alternative forms of family-like and family-based care within our organisation, as well as the strategic goals foreseeing a significant increase in foster care and integrated SOS families, this practice needs to be evaluated and modernised.

This is a first draft of criteria to define if and when alternative forms of care can be integrated into the international child sponsorship model and which pre-requisites need to be fulfilled.

**Please note:**

If the NA is currently only working with traditional SOS families, the criteria need not be attended to in the child admission process.

For all other NAs with child admissions in new forms of alternative care, please contact the Quality Management Team at [IG-QM@sos-kd.org](mailto:IG-QM@sos-kd.org) to check the criteria together before registering new children to the int. sponsorship programme. During the first year, the criteria will be tested on new programmes on a case by case basis.

Adding alternative forms of family-like and family-based care to the sponsorship programme means that sponsorship communication needs to be adjusted on various levels – IG, NAs, PSAs. This work has already started with the updated storytelling handbook for NAs. Furthermore, IG will produce a small communication pack on villages of tomorrow for the PSA sponsorship network.

If criteria and variables described below cannot be delivered or fulfilled, children cannot be admitted to the sponsorship programme.

|              | PROGRAMME UNIT                   | INCL. IN SPO PROG. | COMMENT  | SPECIAL NOTE   |
|--------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|--|--|
| FORM OF CARE | SOS Family Care (SFC, former CV) | YES (IN)           | This includes traditional SOS families, as well as SOS families integrated in the community.   |  |
|              | Youth Care (YC, former YF1&2)    | YES (IN)/NO (OUT)  | If SOS is main implementer and criteria met  |  |
|              | Small group homes (SGH)          | YES (IN)/NO (OUT)  | If SOS is main implementer and criteria met  | Communication materials need adaptation to match the different set-up (eg. No classic SOS mother). |
|              | Foster Family Care (FFC)         | YES (IN)/NO (OUT)  | If SOS is main implementer and criteria met  | Initial communications materials need to explain what this set up means in the local context.      |
|              | Other Alternative Care (OAC)     | YES (IN)/NO (OUT)  | If SOS is main implementer and criteria met. Incl. care in a non-family like setting in larger groups and/or buildings, supporting other service providers to improve quality of their care. | Exception made for TCV and THF   |
|              | Family strengthening (FS)        | NO (OUT)           | Includes kinship care.   |  |
|              | Education                        | NO (OUT)           | Includes kindergarten, school, vocational training etc.  |  |
|              | Health                           | NO (OUT)           | Includes medical care.   |  |

## NA GUIDE FOR SERVICING INTERNATIONAL SPONSORS

|                                  |  |                   |   |  |
|----------------------------------|--|-------------------|---|--|
|                                  | Emergency Response (ER)  | NO (OUT)          | Includes child friendly spaces, relief activities etc.  |  |
|                                  | <b>CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION</b>  | <b>ASSESSMENT</b> | <b>COMMENTS</b>   | <b>DEFINITION OF VARIABLE</b>  |
| <b>LEGAL</b>                     | Legal Consent  | MUST              | Consent is 100% prerequisite.   | Consent is in place for all children.  |
|                                  | Accountability for quality care with SOS   | MUST              | Accountability for the care quality in the family must be with SOS (as an organisation) or with an SOS employee (SOS parent/foster parent/legal guardian) fully accountable to the local SOS organisation. If this is not applicable, there must be a formal and written contract between SOS and the implementing partner/foster parent in place with clear roles in terms of supervision, support and monitoring. In the contract there must be an obligation for SOS to implement prevention measures, monitor and report on issues arising. | Document assigning legal care to SOS (or legal contract with implementing partner/foster care parent). SOS has possibility to influence and to take decisions on the care quality. SOS has access to families and is able to review implementation of SOS quality standards through regular home visits. |
|                                  | Contract with care giver in place that sponsorship is supported with necessary features                        | MUST              | Depending on the program form, roles and responsibilities and link to NO (NSPO) must be clearly defined. Good practices should be available.  | Written contract in place.   |
| <b>PRODUCT SERVICES</b>          | Sponsorship services as described in the "Sponsorship Services" policy support document can be delivered fully | MUST              | This includes: Communication elements from the NA (welcome pack, bi-annual reporting, once implemented: digital service elements), photos, letters/parcels, money gifts, enquiries and complaints.  | NA guarantees service set-up and delivery according to the policy support document (content and quality).  |
|                                  |  |                   | This also includes visits. Sponsors visits to private, external homes are out of the question. An alternative visits routine needs to be developed.   | A visits routine for external families has been implemented.   |
| <b>QUALITY STANDARDS OF CARE</b> | Binding character of quality care standards that can be demonstrated to sponsors                               | MUST              | We "sell" quality care in a family environment, including professional care and individual, tailored education.   | Caregivers have received initial training, followed up by continuing education, monitoring and supervision.  |
| <b>LONG TERM COMMITMENT</b>      | Average duration of stay in form of care   | MUST              | The programme unit is designed for medium to long-term stays.   | Min. 3 years average   |
| <b>FUNDING &amp; SUPPORT</b>     | Minimum regular financial support (per child) SOS is main implementer of programme                             | MUST              | It is important that we only include programmes and families where SOS contributes financially.   | More than 50% of the costs per child (denominated in USD) are covered by SOS (such as nutrition, clothing, health, education).   |
| <b>ADMISSION PROCESS</b>         | --   | MUST              | Fulfilment of criteria must be documented and program explicitly accepted by FDC/IO/IG. This is part of the standard program admission process into the international sponsorship program.  | Learning from admission will constantly be used to update the criteria in future PSD versions.   |

## 12.3 The 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.
- ✔ If the child you are visiting is living in a foster family, their family of origin or in an SOS house outside the village, the visit can only be hosted within the safe boundaries of the SOS Children's Village or in a neutral, public place within the community. Please understand that these private households will not receive sponsor visits.

**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 child's personal information 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 \_\_\_\_\_

## 12.4 Local sponsorships: Rules of engagement



### LOCAL SPONSORSHIPS - RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>TO BE WORKED INTO</b>  |  |
| Sponsorship Services – How national associations service their international sponsors |  |
| Servicing our sponsors for PSA co-workers   |  |
| <b>KEY USERS</b>  |  |
| Mandatory for:  | MAs that raise funds through local sponsorships  |
| <b>RELATED POLICIES</b>   |  |
| Basic policy:   | ONE Friend, Brand Book   |
| Core policy:  | SOS Children's Village Programme Policy, Child Protection Policy   |
| Quality standard:   | Good Management and Accountability Quality Standards<br>Fundraising Manual   |
| <b>RESPONSIBLE FOR CONTENT</b>  |  |
| Function:   | FDC International Competence Centre  |
| Department:   | Individual Giving  |
| <b>DEVELOPMENT PROCESS</b>  |  |
| Approved by:  | PSAs (feedback process), NAs (QAN), Management Team as an addendum to updates of the Policy Support Documents for Intl. Sponsorships |
| Original language:  | English  |
| Intranet address:   | [Link to document on the global Intranet ]   |

### INTRODUCTION

In our effort to support more and more children, we as an organisation constantly seek additional income. Local sponsorship products can be a great fundraising opportunity and can complement product portfolios especially for member associations striving for self-sufficiency. International sponsorships have been a key fundraising product for SOS Children's Villages for decades and currently contribute more than one third of net income available for international work. Our extensive experience in international sponsorships is a great treasure that can be used. Sets of international standards and guidelines have been followed for years to meet fundraising needs and sponsors' wishes, ensure efficient work flows and guard the best interests of the children in our care. In order to hinder neither international nor local fundraising, we apply a coordinated approach.

### WHY RULES OF ENGAGEMENT?

Without alignment we cannot use this opportunity to its full extent. Some reasons for global alignment:

- Being a leading childcare organisation, SOS Children's Villages promotes and supports high standards of data and child protection. We respond to growing demands for enhanced data protection and keep the best interests of the child in mind in all of our activities. The INGO Accountability Charter is just one more example why adherence to highest ethical and child protection standards are of paramount importance at all levels.
- We need to be transparent to sponsors; trust is our biggest asset. Therefore allocation of local sponsors in addition to international sponsors needs to be communicated (in line with PSAs' communication policies).
- International sponsors are often former citizens of countries where they sponsor a child with close contact to their home country. Unaligned mixed messages in their contact points at PSA and NA level related to international or local sponsorships confuse sponsors and considerably weaken the product.

- Sponsorships are our international flagship product. We need to take care of its great positioning as a premium to maintain global premium price points as well as a solid international product portfolio that blends well with local ones.
- Innovation comes from member associations, but inventing the wheel several times blocks dynamic development. There is a large treasure of experience related to sponsorships which can help implement local sponsorships faster and more efficient.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **FDC team at NA:** Ownership of the local sponsorship programme, responsible for running the programme in all respects, respecting the rules of engagement to ensure global alignment.
- **NA/National Director (ND):** Overall responsibility for local sponsorship programme in all respects.
- **Director FDC Region (RD-FDC):** Endorses local sponsorship programmes, approves & supports necessary processes with NA team. Supports NA as defined by regional FDC.
- **Regional Office/Regional Donor Services Advisors (RDS):** Monitoring implementation of agreed standards, participates in standard setting.
- **FDC International Competence Centre / Individual Giving (IG) / Quality Management (QM):** Sets & monitors global standards together with regions receiving regional overviews, keeps a global overview of national sponsorship programmes, sets globally needed standards for alignment (based on PSA input, approved by respective bodies), collects and shares best practices across regions.

### ! Compulsory to consider in set-up

| Responsibility  | Must | Recom-<br>mended | Responsible              |
|---|------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Sets minimum standards & overview of local sponsorship programmes (implementation of rules of engagement) | !    |                  | IG-QM, RDS               |
| Eligibility, decision to launch local sponsorships  | !    |                  | ND / Director FDC Region |
| Ensure data protection standards are followed   | !    |                  | ND / FR Director NA      |
| Ethical considerations including regulations on sponsors' correspondence and visits                       | !    |                  | ND / FR Director NA      |
| Clearly defined fundraising strategy and sponsorship product(s)   |      | ✓                | FR Director NA           |
| Clearly defined service packages offered to sponsors to ensure global alignment                           |      | ✓                | FR Director NA           |

## 1. First steps – Check of Eligibility !

### 1.1. Who to inform

- Please inform FDC director of the region & agree on processes and degree of cooperation.
- Director FDC Region informs IG-QM (Ursula Bedernik [ursula.bedernik@sos-kd.org](mailto:ursula.bedernik@sos-kd.org)).

### 1.2. Children eligible for local sponsorships, maximum number of local sponsors

- As of 1 January 2015<sup>2</sup> a similar model on local sponsorship applies as with international sponsorships allocating a maximum of 12 local sponsors per child.

<sup>2</sup> As per approval new regulations valid by 1 January 2015



## 2. Child and Sponsor Data, Child Protection, Consent !

### 2.1. Child and sponsor data

- Data protection is a priority. Please take your national data protection laws into account.<sup>3</sup> We highly recommend applying the data protection rules for international sponsorships (please see sponsorship policy support document for NAs and PSAs).
- Trust of the sponsor is our biggest asset: It is crucial to ensure that sponsors' data is protected well and children or mothers do not have access. Do not communicate sponsors' surnames and addresses to children and mothers. Even better, do not disclose children's surnames.
- For further considerations IG-QM will be happy to support.

### 2.2. Consent by the legal guardian

- Be aware that a signed consent form is a precondition to assign sponsors.

## 3. Ethical considerations !

### 3.1. Sponsors living close by the sponsored child

- Close proximity can lead to intensive and, sometimes, unwanted contact on both sides. It is also a major opportunity to position SOS as an organisation applying highest standards of child protection in fundraising activities. This greatly supports a positive brand perception, which is, in turn, of great value in recruitment and retention.
  - Therefore, if child sponsorships are offered, assign a child from a village that is as far away as possible to the location where the sponsor lives.
  - Define and communicate clear guidelines to sponsors in order to make sure sponsors do not interfere in daily life (e.g. maximum one visit a year, clear procedure to announce visits, no spontaneous visits possible, max. duration of visit, sign Visitor's Guide when visiting etc.).

### 3.2. Rights of the child

- The local sponsorship programme must be in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.<sup>4</sup>
- Apply the same guidelines as for international sponsors when it comes to things you ask the children to do for their sponsors, for example writing personal letters (please see the policy support document on international sponsorships for NAs).

### 3.3. Guidelines for co-workers and sponsors

- Develop guidelines for NO and village co-workers on how to deal with local sponsors.
- Develop guidelines for local sponsors and have them sign the Visitor's Guide before the visit.<sup>5</sup>
- Clearly inform sponsors that we do not accept any interference in the daily life of children.

## 4. Fundraising strategy


### 4.1. Products, Pricing, Administration Fees

- Clearly define your fundraising strategy, use sponsorships in the frame of a product portfolio and sponsorship products related to it. Local sponsorships should be offered as a premium product at a higher price than other committed giving products.


<sup>3</sup> Check needed on requirements to be allowed to process/forward personal data and photographs.

<sup>4</sup> The guiding principles of the Convention include non-discrimination; adherence to the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and the right to participate. These rights include protection from all forms of child abuse, neglect, exploitation and cruelty. Children are entitled to the freedom to express opinions and to have a say in matters affecting their social, economic, religious, cultural and political life (source: UNICEF website).

<sup>5</sup> The international Visitor's Guide can be adapted to your local situation (for example, visits restricted to office hours, announcing visits in advance etc.).

- Admin cost deduction should not be higher than 20% (same for international sponsorships).
- The actual price of a sponsorship depends on the country setting but should represent a premium positioning. Please seek an agreement with the Director FDC of your region on price levels to ensure global alignment. 

### 4.2. Synergies

- We seek additional income to care for more children. Local sponsorship products can provide us with an opportunity to support the generation of a parallel income stream without hindering current fundraising with international sponsorships. Therefore we need to ensure international sponsorships continue to be serviced well and align with local sponsorships.
- Sharing and applying of knowledge and skills related to the international sponsorship programme is a great way to raise efficiency. Please ensure overall resources for international sponsorships are not diminished and/or absorbed by local sponsorships.<sup>6</sup> 

### 4.3. Sponsorship payments


- Define the methods of payment and payment frequency you want to offer to your sponsors/donors.
- Define whether you want to accept money gifts from local sponsors and how to handle them. From our experience we recommend avoiding individual child money gifts in favour of other approaches that treat children more equally.

## 5. Services offered to sponsors

### 5.1. Transparency

- Transparency creates trust. Let the sponsors know what they can expect and what they cannot expect. Align your offer with international sponsorships service offers.<sup>7</sup>

### 5.2. Interaction with sponsors

- Define how queries/requests/complaints are handled.
- Implement the same regulations to deal with sponsors' correspondence and visits as with international sponsorships to assure similar treatment and avoid confusion at village level between international and local sponsors.
- If you have any international visitors who want to become sponsors, do not sign them up as local sponsors but refer them to the PSA in their country or to IG. 

## 6. Systems

- There are great systems available that cover local sponsorships handling. If you are looking for a database system to support local sponsorship your regional FDC team can support you. We recommend the use of FRnow/FRnow light (all workflows are built in the systems already and only need to be tailored).

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<sup>6</sup> It needs to be clear that we are looking at synergies (know-how of NSPOs used), but we must not divert resources from international sponsorships servicing to local sponsorships work: The introduction of local sponsorships must not have negative repercussions on international sponsorship servicing. This includes all forms of resources (money, human resources, etc.).

<sup>7</sup> For example the number of reports and photos they will receive each year and when they will receive them.

## 12.5 Abbreviations used in the document

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| DSapp | Donor Services Application: software to be developed for national associations to service sponsors; the successor to SPS.  |
| IG    | Individual Giving: a department of the FD International Competence Centre, located in Vienna, Austria  |
| IG-DS | Donor Services, a team of Individual Giving  |
| IG-QM | Quality Management, a team of Individual Giving  |
| IO    | International Office   |
| NA    | National association   |
| NO    | National office  |
| NSPO  | National sponsorship coordinator   |
| PDB   | Programme Database   |
| PSA   | Promoting and supporting association: member association that raises funds for the international work of SOS Children's Villages and recruits sponsors and all other kinds of donors |
| QAN   | Quality Assurance Network on donor services: a team of regional donor services advisors (RDS)  |
| RDS   | Regional donor services coordinator / advisor  |
| STS   | Shared Treasury Services, a department of Finance and Controlling  |
| UNCRC | United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child   |