

# Special Report for Donors

A Legacy of Caring

Fall 2019



## leaving a legacy of love

Your gifts have created meaningful impacts in the lives of children around the world. It is our pleasure to share a few of their stories with you today.

As you read this special report, know that your support has made these inspiring stories possible - and that a potential gift in your will could help create even more.

The power of your giving to SOS Children's Villages has transformed the lives of orphaned and abandoned children. Because of you, vulnerable children and youth are given safe homes, a mother's love, caring families and the tools they need to build their own bright futures.

Credit: V Tlokweg

## A heart that knows no bounds: A passionate SOS Children's Villages volunteer leaves a lasting gift



Credit: Mission Productions

Though living through the Second World War was not easy, Maria Virjee could always count on her mother's loving care. She knew that, sadly, many children had no one to rely on.

Maria was born in Vienna in 1936. Having grown up in Austria, where the first SOS Children's Village was created in 1949, she witnessed the importance of providing stable homes for children orphaned during the Second World War.

After moving to Canada in the early 1960s, Maria continued to donate to SOS Austria. When SOS Children's Villages Canada launched in 1969, she became a volunteer. As the organization celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Canada this year, Maria is still a proud volunteer, in addition to being a child sponsor.

A handful of years ago, Maria strengthened her commitment to SOS Children's Villages by leaving a gift in her will.

"It feels good to know that, after I'm gone, my bequest will be helping children throughout the world for generations to come," she says. "I share my story in the hope that it will inspire you to consider your own legacy, and a gift for future generations of children."

To hear more of Maria's story, please visit [www.soschildrensvillages.ca/legacy-giving](http://www.soschildrensvillages.ca/legacy-giving).

50  
years



SOS CHILDREN'S  
VILLAGES  
CANADA

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Charitable Registration # 13824 7259 RR001



# Arif's journey

Your gifts help children flourish



Credit: SOS Archives

The men who kidnapped three-year-old Arif Haque planned to sell him as a jockey for camel races in India.

Arif eventually broke free from his kidnappers at an airport. Though police rescued him, he spent the next eight years in Indian youth-detention centres.

SOS Children's Villages eventually intervened and brought Arif back to his native Bangladesh. The moment he arrived at a loving home in Dhaka is the moment everything changed.

"My first impression was that the SOS Children's Village was the safest place in the world," says Arif. "I could see my future. I felt I could do something with my life."

Thanks to the support and education you make possible, Arif is fulfilling his dream of becoming a doctor. He is grateful to donors like you who made his dream come true - and he is eager to pay your generosity forward.

"Once I was deprived, and I was helped. Now it is my responsibility to give back to society," he says.

Despite his busy schedule as a resident at Cairo University Hospital, Arif makes it a priority to care for those less fortunate. In 2017, he worked in the

Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh, helping to provide health services to children and the elderly. He organizes free medical camps every six months for Bangladeshis living in rural parts of the country. After finishing his residency in 2020, Arif hopes to open an orthopaedic centre catering to the poor.

Through a gift in your will, you can create so many more opportunities for children like Arif in the future.



Credit: SOS Archives



# A heartfelt thank you

## You turn nightmares into dreams

*Nobuhle Mohlala was nine years-old when she came to live at the SOS Children's Village Nelspruit in South Africa. Now 22, Nobuhle holds two bachelor's degrees, and is studying to become a clinical psychologist. She recently wrote a letter of thanks to SOS Children's Villages:*

"My name is Nobuhle Mohlala. I came to my SOS Children's Villages home in South Africa as a confused child who had just lost my mother, the one person who meant the world to me.

I do not know where to start, or end, in expressing how grateful I am to you. I am thankful to you for having created a safe home for me and taking away all the fears I had. Today, I pride myself on belonging to a loving family because of you.

You took away my nightmares and replaced them with dreams which I have, up to this moment, managed to fulfil, and continue to dream. Through my studies, it is my hope to one day help other children fulfill their own dreams.

And I am grateful because you have equipped me with enough skills to face the world head on.

It is my prayer that you will continue to show love and kindness to those after me, that they will seize every opportunity that you make available to them and realize their dreams.

Thank you."

***Nobuhle never forgets the generosity of donors who made it possible for her to achieve her dreams. Your legacy gift can open doors and provide encouragement for children like Nobuhle, when they need it most.***





# It's more than a village

## The SOS Social Circus program changes lives



Gabriela's tiny arms were covered in bruises when she came to live at SOS Children's Villages in Morelia, Mexico at just six months-old. Despite her SOS mother's unwavering love, Gabriela's history of abuse led her to feel insecure and unlovable. As a young girl she threw tantrums, didn't obey and often rebelled.

Her SOS mother, Maria Luisa, says Gabriela's life changed when she joined SOS Social Circus, a unique program pioneered by Canada's own Cirque du Soleil. Its primary goal is not to learn circus arts, but to assist kids with their personal and social development.

"The culture of circus is all about humans who work together, supporting each other," says Emmanuel Bochud of Cirque du Soleil. "Offering an innovative way for kids and youth to express themselves, to explore, to learn and to take risks is essential."

Gabriela enjoyed her circus acrobatics classes, and loved learning how to walk in stilts with her instructor Alfonso. "I learned that if you work really hard at something, you can be good at it. One day, I want to become a teacher so I can help kids just like me," says Gabriela.

Gabriela's success story is one of many. Your support has helped SOS Social Circus transform the lives of more than 700 children since its launch in 2014.

"The SOS Social Circus program teaches you to value yourself as a person, to not be afraid. I feel supported. I'm part of a team now," says Gabriela.

When you remember SOS Children's Villages in your will, you have the power to lift spirits and change lives for the next generation of children who need a second chance.



### WHY LEAVE A GIFT TO CHARITY?

People from all walks of life choose to leave a gift to a cause they care about. Right now, more than 1.5 million Canadians have decided to include a gift to charity in their wills. Any gift, big or small, can truly make a difference. It also provides tax benefits that can relieve the burden of estate tax on your loved ones.

### HOW DOES A GIFT IN MY WILL HELP CHILDREN?

With your gifts, SOS Children's Villages helps children with the greatest need. From infancy to adulthood, we are there providing support in education, social services, food, shelter and family.

### WHAT ABOUT MY LOVED ONES?

It's important to care for those we love. Many people come to realize they have enough in their estate to care for family members and also allocate a share to causes that are most important to them.

### DO I NEED TO CHANGE MY ENTIRE WILL?

Even if you already have a will, you can include SOS Children's Villages using a special legal clause called a codicil. Or, simply add your gift next time you update your will.

### DO I HAVE TO TELL ANYONE ABOUT MY DECISION?

Not at all. But if you wish to share this information with us, we'd welcome the opportunity to thank you personally.