

On the anniversary of the earthquake in Pakistan, we remember the thousands who tragically lost their lives. Our hearts go out to the survivors. Within minutes their families and homes were destroyed and many were left with nothing.

The most vulnerable of these survivors are, of course, the children who have been orphaned. Bewildered and with no one to turn to they have found comfort and security in SOS Children's Villages in Pakistan.

SOS, with its 30 years of experience, integrity and professionalism in Pakistan, is the only charity appointed by the government to take these children and though we cannot replace their loved ones, we can rebuild their lives, giving them a mother, a family and a future. We can restore their hopes and dreams.



Unaccompanied children

This year also marks the 10th anniversary of our Pakistan Supporters' Group which has been raising money and arranging sponsorships for children. We would like to thank our generous and loyal supporters, through whose donations the children in the care of SOS have been blossoming into well adjusted, confident and happy individuals with so much to give.

As we look forward to the future, and the numerous plans for construction we need your help more than ever before. We would like to deliver the same care and attention to the earthquake orphans and all the other children, old and new, in our care and with your help we can achieve this.

Our best wishes to you and your families for a peaceful and blessed Ramadan.

Unaccompanied children

The SOS 'search and rescue' team has located unaccompanied children who were orphaned or separated from their families on 8th October. 187 unaccompanied children are currently in our care; SOS Children has been asked by the Pakistani government to care for all children left unaccompanied by the earthquake. **Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf recently said in an interview that "SOS Children's Villages is the best custodian of our Kashmiri children"**.



Children in an emergency shelter playground

Of these 187 children, 39 have found a new home at **SOS Children's Village Sialkot, 60 miles north of Lahore, which opened in March 2006**. Three of the children are now at a care centre for children with physical disabilities and learning difficulties, and the remainder of the children are at our emergency shelters in Rawalpindi and Islamabad or in existing Children's Villages in and around Kashmir.



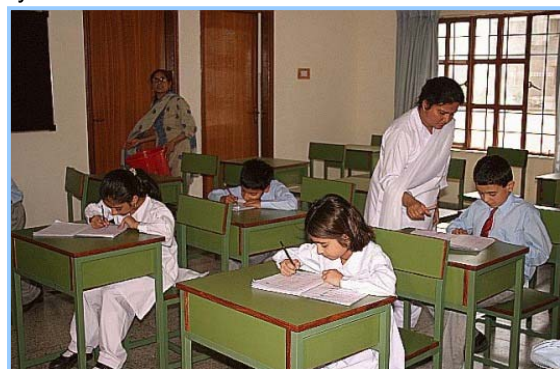
A number of children that were at our emergency shelters have been reunited with their parents, and these were very touching and special occasions for the families.

Two new SOS Children's Villages

As mentioned, a new Children's Village has just opened in Sialkot, and more children will continue to find a loving home here.

SOS Children received some good news in June: **we were given prime land in Islamabad by the government to build a new SOS Children's Village.** Approval to give us this land was voted for unanimously at a cabinet meeting chaired by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shaukat Aziz. We can now give more orphaned and abandoned children the care they need.

SOS Children's Village Muzaffarabad was badly damaged by the earthquake, but none of the children were hurt. Demolition began on 1st July and will take four months as no explosions can be used; the land is too unstable following the earthquake. Youth homes will be constructed for older children from surrounding Children's Villages on this site. It is hoped a new Children's Village will be constructed in or near Muzaffarabad once land has been found.



Children from the emergency shelter in Rawalpindi at the SOS school in the city

Schools

Since the quake struck, SOS Children has distributed over 1,100 waterproof tents, of which 100 serve as an emergency shelter for survivors in Muzaffarabad, 200 were used to set up 25 tented schools in Ghari Dopatta, and others were distributed to families in need. **Before the earthquake, there were 11,500 schools in Kashmir; 10,000 were destroyed. This is why it was vitally important that we helped set up new schools.** We have sufficient teachers for these new tented schools.

SOS is building three new and permanent schools in Kashmir; a primary school and two secondary schools, one for boys and one for girls. Construction will commence once suitable land has been allocated to us.

A fun day out!

The children at the SOS shelter in Rawalpindi enjoyed a fun day out in the Murree hills to celebrate the end of their exams. They ran together in the hills and played lots of energetic games, before they sat down to a yummy picnic! Later on, they went to the Murree Theme Park and really enjoyed the rollercoasters in particular!



Enjoying the rides at Murree Theme Park

Child stories

1) Zameer's* story

Among the many children receiving care at the SOS emergency shelter in Rawalpindi are six siblings: four brothers and two sisters from Bagh in Kashmir. They have adjusted well to their new surroundings, and their carers have said that the younger ones are now happily running around and playing games.

But their story is heartbreaking. Five of the six siblings had been attending school when the earthquake struck on 8 October 2005. The youngest sibling, a one-year-old baby, had been with his mother at home. The mother had been caring for the children on her own following the death of her husband two years earlier.

As soon as the earth stopped shaking, the eldest child, fourteen-year-old Zameer, left the school and ran as fast as he could back to his family's house. However, he found nothing but rubble. The house, as most of the others on the street, had collapsed. Zameer said he was so shocked he could not move, instead he just stood there crying.

Then all of a sudden, between his sobs, Zameer heard the faint and feeble cries of his little baby brother from underneath the rubble. He immediately went looking for neighbours, who had also survived the disaster. With their help, Zameer was able to remove the rubble and reach the baby, who had been clinging on to the dead body of his mother. With great difficulty, the group also managed to pull out the mother and bury her.



Three young children

Zameer and his baby brother met up with the other siblings who had all survived the earthquake virtually unscathed. The group were given shelter in a tent at one of the emergency camps, before the SOS "search and rescue" teams found them and brought them to our shelter in Rawalpindi. They will all be given new, permanent, loving homes at an SOS Children's Village if necessary.

2) Nauman's* story

Nauman is the oldest of four brothers; his siblings are Javed, Ikhlq and Ashfaq. Two of their siblings live with their uncle. They are from a village outside Muzaffarbad.

Nauman, 10 years old, has a heart problem and has to take regular medication. He gets special attention at the Children's Hospital in Lahore. The second brother is Sajjad, who is eight years old. Ikhlq, who is six, attends Special classes and is a very energetic boy. He always laughs - no matter what is happening. His younger brother Ashfaq, who goes to primary school, is like him. He has an innocent look when you first meet him, but there is something else on his mind. It doesn't take long until he makes a joke, starts giggling, and gets a mischievous smile on his face.

*names have been changed to protect the children's privacy



Thank you

Thank you for your support: all this relief work would not be possible without you.

We will continue to provide support to all those people affected by the earthquake for as long as it takes.

For more information please contact Ayesha Khan or to make a donation, please complete the form below and return to:

[Ayesha Khan, SOS Children's Villages UK Pakistan Supporters' Group](#)

Address: 114 Rowlands Avenue, Pinner, Middlesex, HA5 4AP

Telephone: 020 8428 8221

Email: ayesha@khans.info

Websites: Pakistan: www.sos.org.pk UK : www.soschildren.org

Reg. Charity No: 1069204

Donation* _____ **Zakat*** _____

* cheques payable to 'SOS Children's Villages'

Sponsorship a child at £25 monthly or ___ children at £ _____ monthly

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To: The Manager of _____ Bank _____ Branch

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My account Number _____ Sort Code _____ / _____ / _____

Please pay to SOS Children's Villages UK Pakistan Supporters' Group at Habib Allied International Bank Plc, 161-163 Commercial Road, London E1 2DA (60-95-11)

Account No. 01058200 the sum of £___ monthly starting on (date) ____ / ____ / ____

Please quote the reference provided below and debit my account thereafter monthly until you receive further notice in writing. Signature _____

Affiliated to SOS Children's Villages UK Registered Charity No. 1069204

Reference No: _____ Child _____ Village/ House _____ DOB _____
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