

Sponsorship program
for children in need from
the Arken Church Bible Centre, Sweden.



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The comprehensive goals of the program:

- ◆ Spread the Gospel about Jesus and His power to reconcile and restore a human being (spirit, soul and body), restore the relationship to the creation and to the world around us.
- ◆ Work for a Christian view of humanity with equal human dignity regardless age or sex.
- ◆ Together with our partner organizations we want to be a part of changing the world around us, so that the most vulnerable groups in society could develop and be restored.
- ◆ We want to be a part of creating environments where vulnerable groups of people can find conditions for positive change, and where they through their personal gifts and talents can become a resource to their society and in their country.

Arken Church is giving support to individual sponsor children, and to groups of sponsor children. The group sponsorship is called Agape.

(In the following document the Partner Organization is mentioned as PO and Arken Church is mentioned as AC).

1. Who is qualified for help?

The priority is given to poor children (under school age or going to school) and their families (single mother / father / or relative) in great need, such as children living in slum areas, street children, orphans, disabled children etc.
Priority is given to development countries in south and to eastern Europe.

2. Who shall decide if the child should get help?

The PO is following their general admission procedures when a child/family is seeking help.
In case the child/children are living with their relative/family/single parent and the family situation changes to the better so they can support themselves, the support should be changed to another needy child.

3. What type of help / support should be given?

On a daily basis the support should provide food, clothes, shelter, health care, education and social interaction, recreation and development.
The long term goal is to prepare the children for a responsible adulthood with possibilities to earn their own living.

The following support can be given from AC by a special agreement between PO and AC.

- Support the organizational development and development of the local management by planning and arranging different courses that are carried out during team visits. The subjects differ depending on specific needs in the PO. Such a course should always be planned in cooperation between PO and AC so that it can meet the specific needs in the organization.(Examples of different

subjects: basic health care for children, pedagogical play, childrens emotional needs, basic administration including the use of computers, childrens spiritual development, healing of the soul, how to pray for children, etc.)

- AC can send a voluntary worker that can stay for a longer period of time, working together with the local management and the children. The plan for voluntary workers are made in cooperation between PO and AC and a special agreement for the specific period of time is signed beforehand.

- AC can send teams that are arranging different activities with the children, arranging meetings/conferences on the subject of healing and restoration, and training youth leaders and pastors in this area.

4. Conditions for the children (living together with family/relatives):

Our goal is that every child should get at least one nutritious meal per day and clean water. This is often given in the schools, and that is also a reason why we find it very important that children supported from AC attend school.

We wish that the children should also be provided health care.

Concerning disabled children living with their families and not able to attend school the support should provide basic physical needs such as nutritious food, diapers etc, health and dental care and support the families to help the children develop in activities and social interaction.

The spiritual input is made when AC is visiting the project arranging children meetings and meeting the families. The PO are regularly arranging parties (for example Christmas) and meeting the children together with their families. On these occasions the Gospel is preached in different ways.

5. Conditions for the children (living in children homes/centers):

Basic needs among the children (physical, hygienical, emotional, spiritual and social) should be met.

The support should provide an environment that is more like a home than an institution. We wish that the children centers mainly are in the size of "family homes".

The number of employees (in the local management/staff) should be coordinated with the number of children so that their need of fellowship and close relationship is met. This is especially important for children that have no or very rare contact with their family/ relatives.

We wish the children to get nutritious food according to a planned menu adapted to their age and activity level.

Basic hygienical needs should be met such as access to clean water, toilets and showers, a comfortable place to sleep (bed, mattress), wash clothings etc.

Basic health and dental care should be provided.

We wish that the children every day have the possibility to worship, read the Bible (or listen to the Word) and pray. They should be supported in developing their own relationship to God and personal gifts and talents should be encouraged.

As the children are growing up they should be taught bigger responsibility according to their age, helping in the home and helping the younger children. They should be given support in homework and studies as well as daily chores

and play/leisure.

6. Conditions for the local management/staff:

It must be a dedicated Christian with a good reputation. It is preferable with knowledge in bookkeeping, basic administration and that the person is able to speak and understand English. Insight in nutrition and child care is a plus. The local management / staff have to treat the children well, be active in creating an atmosphere of love and mercy and teach them basic Christian ethics.

Compensation / salary for the local management / staff should provide their basic needs according to the standard of living in each country.

We recommend the PO to arrange seminars for the local management /staff regularly in order to encourage and develop their calling and personal gifts and increase their knowledge. Courses and seminars are also offered from AC (see point 3).

If the local management / staff in any way misuse their position financially, in their relationship to the children or in any other way, the PO must inform AC immediately, and vice versa. The PO is responsible for solving issues concerning own employees and AC is also responsible for solving issues concerning own employees, but common matters should be discussed together. Any costs in connection with staff problems/conflicts should be payed by respective organization.

7. For how long should the support last for the children?

Generally: until they have finished school and have found a way to support themselves. The age differs from country to country, but is generally between 16 – 20 years of age.

There are special conditions when the support can last longer. This is mentioned in the “Individual Cooperation agreement” for each specific project/partner organization.

If the PO doesn't send any reports within a period of one year, the support can be withdrawn.

8. How should the PO file the children's information?

The design of the admission cards and report cards differ in different partner organizations.

AC has made a suggestion of report card for new children: “Personal file for admission of sponsor child” (attached to this document).

AC has also made a suggestion of report card for update of ongoing sponsor children: “Personal file for update of sponsor child” (attached to this document).

A copy of the report card should be sent (e-mailed) to AC when a new child is asked for or when the ongoing children are updated.

It is important that the local management / organization save the information about the children in the office.

Each child should have a personal file. The filed information should be kept by the PO and be available to AC at any time.

Updated photos of the child should be kept in each personal file.

The suggest that the following information should be filed:

- name of the child
- birth date
- family situation and background
- which city/village/area the child is coming from
- information about closest relative
- information about possible inheritance (house, land etc)
- weight and length (should be checked at least once a year)
- nutrition/food
- vaccinations
- dental care
- medical care
- emergencies or accidents
- the health status of the child
- schooling (characters, grades from school)
- photo

During ongoing support only changes have to be reported to AC concerning the children.

9. What happens with the information in Sweden?

In general:

All incoming information is recorded in AC:s database system.

Information about new children is sent from the PO to AC when AC asks for new children.

The amount of new children sent to AC depends on what is agreed from time to time.

Regular information from ongoing projects is continually recorded and handled in AC:s database system (see point 11 Reports).

The database system is under construction. Our goal is that all PO in the future will be able to communicate with us over internet to the database when sending reports, photos and filing new information or updates of the children.

Raising new sponsors:

Part of the incoming information is handled in order to be sent to the sponsor (letter, sponsor card), some is internal information kept in the mission department in AC.

We are planning that in the future information from AC:s database system will be coordinated with the website, so that new sponsors can choose their child and apply as sponsors over internet. In some level this already exists. AC is usually raising new sponsors by advertising in the church, informing in meetings and conferences through application lists with photos and by Power Point presentations.

It will always take some time to raise the sponsors.

When a sponsor has applied they will receive an information card from AC with the name of the child, age, information about family/ background and living

conditions and a photo.

Regarding group sponsorship (Agape) the sponsor receives information about the group of children and the project including a group photo.

All new sponsors are recorded in AC:s database system and coordinated with the children in respective project.

10. Children´s lists

Coding:

The coding of the sponsored children is made in different systems in different projects/countries.

For the future we recommend this system of coding:

Country (first and second letter ex India = IN, Guatemala = GU, Uganada = UG), city/project (third and fourth letter ex Ambala = AM) and then the number of the child, that will be something like this:code INAM 001.

In new projects it is best for both parts to discuss the coding system when starting the cooperation in order to avoid confusion.

Updated lists:

AC is regularly, 1-2 times a year, sending updated lists to the PO over sponsors that are coordinated with the sponsored children. These lists should be checked up by the PO, any changes are marked and then the list should be sent back to AC. This is important in order to have the database system updated.

If the PO tells AC that a child has moved or the support of any other reason has ended, the reason should be noticed and then AC immediately sends the information to the sponsor so that they can be offered a new sponsor child. Such changes have to continually be communicated to AC from the PO preferably over e-mail.

Concerning individual sponsor children that of any cause are moving from a children centre/children home, the support for that child automatically will be completed.

Photos:

The PO needs to send newly taken photos of the children once a year together with updated information about the child's health situation, family situation and education (see point 8 Personal files).

Digital colour photos are preferred (150 dpi, size 15 x 12 cm) if possible. The photos of individual sponsor children are to be taken from a short distance and show face and half the body. It is easier to find new sponsors if the photo of the child is taken in their ordinary environment for example outdoors, in some activity, in the garden, together with animals or toys etc.

The photos of the children/groups of children are saved in AC:s database and a copy is sent out to the sponsor.

11. Reports

In general:

The support should continually be evaluated by AC.

Financial reports (see attached document "Financial agreement").

Regular reports from the PO about the work in the different projects are a condition to make good evaluations.

The reports can preferably be sent over e-mail in a Word-document or as a Power-Point presentation. Videos, CD:s, Dvd:s are also welcome. AC wishes to support the local organizations in buying necessary equipment such as computers and digital cameras, if this is needed for a regular communication over internet with the local management. AC sees a good communication with the local management/staff working closest to the children, as very important.

Reports are required (as below):

1st of February (see attached Form nr 1)

15th of October (see attached Form nr 2)

AC are planning (during the year 2009) that these reports will be sent automatically over internet to all PO on the dates mentioned above. The answers could also be sent back to AC over e-mail.

Visits:

AC should in addition on a regular basis visit the PO and evaluate the work. It is important to see the work “live”, meet and talk to the children, the leaders of the organization and the staff in order to evaluate and develop the cooperation.

Leaders of PO are also regularly invited to visit AC and during such a visit a time should be set aside to meet the leadership of AC and the staff at AC Mission department, in order to plan and discuss the work.

12. Communication with the children

Greetings from the sponsors to the children

Letters and postcards are sent to the address of the PO in the specific project, and they are forwarding the mail to the child/children.

Today we are not able to communicate with any of the children directly over e-mail.

Greetings from the children to the sponsors

We recommend that greetings from the child are sent at least once a year to the sponsor (sponsors). In cases where we have more than 1 sponsor per child (sometimes 2 or 3) we need “double” or “triple” greetings from the child. The report should include a short “Thank you for the support”... and tell a little bit about their every day life (for example: What does he/she like to eat? Where does he/she live? With whom does he/she play? What does he/she like to study in school? Which are the favorite subjects? Does he/she have any pets?).

If it is older children let them write the report (if possible) themselves in their mothertounge or in English. (Mothertounge has to be translated into English).

Drawings from the children are very appreciated.

The Swedish way of living differ a lot from the life in the sponsored childrens countries and the sponsors are very interested in knowing more about their childrens every day life.

Personal testimonies about what the Lord is doing in the childrens lives are also highly appreciated.

It is noted in AC database system when greetings are received from the children.

13. Gifts to the children

Children living in children center/children homes:

If the children are living in a children centre, the gifts (money) should be sent from the sponsors to AC and then a total collected sum is sent out to the children centre, so that a party could be arranged for all the children.

We recommend the sponsors not to send presents or money directly to the child (postcards are okay) in connection with the child's birthday or Christmas, but instead send the money to AC that is sending it out to the project.

Children living with their families/relatives:

To children living with families/relatives it is okay for the sponsor to send personal gifts any time during the year to the address of the PO and they will pass it over to the child/family.

We are never sending gifts directly to the child's home address.

In general

Due to high postage fees and the administration costs AC is not able to act as intermediary of personal gifts to the children.

(Exception could be made in cases when AC is arranging a team trip to a specific project).