



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES

A loving home for every child

"To whom it may concern"

SOS Children is a UK charity (Registered no. 1069204) which works in partnership with Wikimedia UK (formerly with Wikimedia Foundation) for the advancement of education for deprived children with poor access to information online, using the [Wikipedia Selection for Schools](#). This is a special static version of the English-language Wikipedia containing twenty million words and 34,000 images, equivalent to a twenty volume encyclopaedia, that fits on a single DVD, and can also be [freely downloaded](#). It includes over 5,500 articles of particular interest to schools or children, sorted by UK National Curriculum subjects, which have been manually selected from the English Wikipedia by volunteers working for SOS Children, and checked and where necessary edited to ensure their suitability for children, including those for whom English is not their mother tongue.

Our partnership has been specifically to provide schools with access to educational material, where online access is impractical. The majority of these schools are in the developing world but this also includes providing educational material to younger children in the UK where child protection limits online use, and also in venues worldwide ranging from refugee shelters in Austria through to school intranets in Australia. In total we have ourselves distributed without charge some three thousand discs and memory sticks, each capable of making multiple copies. These have gone to dozens of countries, and thousands of copies have been downloaded, so that we are not able to quantify the total numbers of copies in existence or use. We know that other organizations and individuals have made similar distributions, as anyone is free to do given the open source licences of the material. For example the Shuttleworth Foundation in South Africa offered every school in the country a copy. We estimate there have been some 5 million beneficiaries worldwide of this educational selection, with India the single largest location, and regard the project as very successful in terms of public benefit. The current 2008/9 version is the third produced since 2005, and we plan to release a further update in the future.

Andrew Cates
CEO SOS Children

