GoSponsor – Child Sponsorship Procedures

**Keep this document for future reference.** Herein are the expectations for how each part of the child sponsorship program will be handled by both your overseas mission and stateside representative in cooperation with GoSponsor (Global Outreach thru Sponsorship). Topics covered include:

- Basic Elements of Child Sponsorship
- Child Sponsorship Financial Standards
- Overview of Responsibilities
- Field Resources and Capabilities
- Photographs
- Child Updates, Departures, Completions and Reinstatement
- Child/Sponsor Communications
- Overseas Visitors

**Four Basic Elements** are the focus of sponsorship and equally important for each child. Your mission agrees to provide, or assure the provision, for each child in the Sponsorship Program the following:

1) **Nutrition:** Adequate nutrition based on local standards: Children will receive what they need to live healthy lives. For missions running their own schools, a portion of kitchen staff salaries as well as equipment may also be included (to determine cost per child divide by the number of children served.)

2) **Education:** A quality education will be provided through schools that meet the standards set by the mission. The cost for the sponsored child's school uniform, school supplies and textbooks may be included. For missions that are running their own schools, a corresponding portion of salaries may also be included for teachers.

3) **Medical:** Basic medical care will be provided for all children in the program. Immunizations and health/hygiene programs should be accessible as needed. For missions running their own clinics, a corresponding portion of the cost for care may also be included.

4) **Spiritual and Social Development:** Teaching and discipleship will be made available through the mission and it’s churches. Children will learn about who Christ is and the salvation He offers.

**Child Sponsorship Financial Standards**

Children in the program are sponsored at a rate of $35.00 per month. GoSponsor retains $5.00 of all sponsorship income to cover administrative costs of running the program. The remaining $30.00 will be transferred overseas by the stateside representative and shall be used to cover the basic elements listed above. To preserve the integrity of the program, these funds shall not be used to cover any other programs or expenses without expressed consent of GoSponsor.

To insure needed funds are consistently available, GoSponsor will monitor individual sponsor commitments and will follow up with sponsors who fall behind. Sponsors who fail to maintain their commitments will be replaced in time as more reliable sponsors can be sought out.

**Overview of Responsibilities**

To serve God is to serve others. We will be partnering together for the sake of those we serve. GoSponsor was established to help our smaller missions overseas to help others through financial sponsorships. We are committed to our task and to you, which means we also have responsibilities.

**GoSponsor responsibilities include:**

- Promote partnerships with individuals and churches for the GoSponsor program
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• Promote partnerships with individuals and churches for the GoSponsor program
• Promote sponsorship program online and with partners
• Collect and distribute sponsorship funds in a timely manner
• Bear the stateside burden of accounting and communication with sponsors regarding the program
• Receive required information from the mission and prepare children for sponsorship
• Provide the mission with periodic reports of children in the program, noting sponsorship status
• Provide letter templates as requested for children to write to their sponsors at designated times
• Regularly provide a report of any gifts received from sponsors for specific children
• Communicate and follow-up with sponsors as needed: When support is falling behind, when changes to a child's status or bio occur, when there are questions about program
• Collaborate with the mission on logistics and funds for short-term mission teams visiting the field and meeting sponsored children

GoSponsor shall collaborate with the mission’s liaison overseas at times. This is a critical role to insure that the sponsorship program runs smoothly. This individual should have a knowledge and understanding of both cultures and be able to effectively communicate with GoSponsor, the stateside representative, and the team of nationals as well.

Our main responsibility together of course is the children. Of primary importance is that all sponsored children have access to the four foundational elements listed above: Adequate nutrition, quality education, medical care, spiritual and social development. Your mission must be able to demonstrate how the children receive this care.

Your mission is responsible for the operations of specific aspects of the program. These guidelines must be agreed upon by both the overseas mission and the stateside representative handling the funds. The responsibilities listed below are explained later in further detail.

Specifically Your Mission’s Responsibilities include:

• Provide an accounting of where and how all sponsorship funds are used.
• Provide GoSponsor with periodic reports of children in the program, noting eligibility status.
• Provide quality photos and required biography information for all children to GoSponsor.
• Provide regular status updates and biography changes on children, including notification of children who have left the program.
• Provide a mailing address to which sponsors may send letters or gifts to sponsored children.
• Receive and review letters and gifts from sponsors for appropriateness and distribute to children.
• Coordinate the writing and sending of letters from the children 2 to 3 times a year.
• Report of any gifts received from sponsors for specific children, plus take a “thank you” photo of the child with the gift when received and send to GoSponsor. Purchase equivalent gift for child if cash gift is sent.
• Insure that children sponsored through GoSponsor are only sponsored through GoSponsor. Any additional funds received must be reported before the next scheduled allotment from GoSponsor.
• Collaborate with GoSponsor on logistics and funds for short-term mission teams visiting the field and meeting sponsored children.
• Help promote partnerships for the GoSponsor program with individuals, churches and online.

In addition, the mission shall provide a liaison on the ground to communicate with GoSponsor. This is a critical role to keep the sponsorship program running smoothly. This individual should have a knowledge and understanding of both cultures and be able to effectively communicate with GoSponsor, the Stateside representative and the overseas mission as well. Furthermore, the mission may elect to select a local national to help coordinate and carry out the sponsorship program.

Mission Field Resources and Capabilities

Photography: The field must have regular access to a quality digital camera to provide child profile photos and any thank you pictures for sponsors. It must produce a large and clear image to be used by GoSponsor. (See section on Photos for specific image needs)

Computer abilities: The field should have regular access to a reliable computer to keep track of child sponsorship information. This computer will be used to log, send, and receive vital information...
Computer abilities: The field should have regular access to a reliable computer to keep track of child sponsorship information. This computer will be used to log, send, and receive vital information necessary for the program. You will need access a spreadsheet program that is compatible with Microsoft Excel; a hard drive large enough to store spreadsheets and child profile photos; intermittent internet access for communication with the stateside representative and GoSponsor via e-mail and downloads or uploads. We can discuss alternatives with you if any of these are not possible.

Preparing a child for sponsorship

The process for each child must include gathering necessary biographical information and profile pictures for each individual child. This information is to be sent to GoSponsor via the stateside representative for processing. The information provided for each child is critical to getting a sponsor for the child, and plays an important role in the development of a relationship between the child and sponsor. As such, it is crucial that specific, accurate and complete information for each new child be collected. The steps are as follows:

1) Complete a child sponsorship form for each new child. Please include the date it was prepared and by whom, then submit for approval to your stateside representative. Due to cultural differences please indicate clearly which name is the child’s first (given) name by which they are called. List any “nickname” in quotes. List also their date of birth (approximate if unknown). Include a quality photo of the child in .jpg format suitable for duplication (see Photo Guidelines – Size and Uploading).

2) The Stateside Representative shall verify all information for accuracy and quality. Enter the information on the spreadsheet and e-mail as an attachment to GoSponsor along with a copy of the original form. Include the photo of the child that meets the guidelines provided.

3) If follow up is needed because of a missing picture, biography, or class/age information, the needed materials must be submitted before sponsorship can begin. If longer than 90 days, all of the child's information must be re-checked for accuracy, and an updated photo may be required.

GoSponsor is now ready to start the sponsorship process. We will assign the child an ID number after all information is received, enter them into the database, and then email confirmation back to the mission. (Any children who are missing information or a picture will not be made active or available for sponsorship until the profile is complete in order to provide the most up-to-date and quality information to our sponsors and partners.) Your child will be assigned a sponsor as one becomes available and you will be notified along with their first donation.

Photo Guidelines

Photos are one of the most valued items a sponsor has in relating to their sponsored child, therefore, we want to be sure these photos are appropriate as follows:

1) A child's dignity shall be observed at all times. Do not take a photo of a child that has immodest or revealing clothing or clothing with offensive words or pictures.

2) Take all photos in portrait (vertical) format. Unless the child has a physical disability that requires him/her to be seated, the child must be standing in the photo.

3) The child must be the only person in the photo except when it is absolutely necessary to have an adult hold a very young child in place. In those cases, make sure that person appears fully in the image and list the identity of the person. This should only be necessary on rare occasions.

4) Centered in the camera frame, leaving adequate space between the child's head, arms, and feet within the picture frame. Unacceptable Photos include: Feet cut off & additional people in photo.

5) Acceptable Photos include: Head-to-toe picture with the child in the center of the frame.

6) Be sure the child's eyes must be open and facing the camera so that their facial features are distinguishable.

7) Used flash for every picture, even in sunlight, to insure that the child's face is clearly visible.

8) Placed subject in front of a light background so they may be clearly seen. The photo should show the environment behind them in which the child lives, if possible. Please do not use backdrops or stand them in front of a blank wall.

Photo Size and Uploading: Photos must be a minimum of 1200 pixels wide by 1600 pixels high with a resolution of 72 dpi. Images larger than this will be accepted, but images smaller than this will not.
Photo Size and Uploading: Photos must be a minimum of 1200 pixels wide by 1600 pixels high with a resolution of 72 dpi. Images larger than this will be accepted, but images smaller than this will not. Each photo must be saved in .jpg format and saved as the child's last name, comma, first name. Photos should be shared with GoSponsor as an e-mail attachment. If needed, a Dropbox account may be established for this purpose. GoSponsor may delete photos for space; so images should be backed up by the mission.

Updates on Sponsored Children

Accurate child information is essential to maintaining credibility and integrity with sponsors. Providing updated news about the child's life helps foster the relationship with the sponsor and keeps them engaged. Child information that is either found to be incorrect or is out of date should be quickly and accurately revised according to the standards that follow:

Photo Updates - Each child needs a new photo taken every year using the photo guidelines from this manual and resubmitted to GoSponsor within 1 year of the previous update. We will either send the updated photo to the sponsor, or notify them of them has been updated and is on their online account, or will be sent to them.

Biography Information: Each child will also have their biography information updated every year and submitted to us using their GoSponsor ID number. Please include their new grade level in school and verify all information for accuracy and quality before it is submitted. GoSponsor will either send the updated info to the sponsor, or notify them that their child's bio has been updated online.

Personal Life Information: Please notify GoSponsor if a significant personal event occurs in the life of the child, such as: Death of a family member; Change in the primary guardian of the child or any other significant life changes.

Children No Longer in the Program (NLP): If a child is no longer participating in the program, the date and reason for the child's departure must be provided. The sponsor will be informed that the child is officially no longer in the program.

Bereavement: In the event of a child's death, it is of the highest importance that accurate information is reported immediately to GoSponsor. Details such as the date of the child's passing, information about the death and, if possible, how the family is being supported should be included. It should also be noted if the child has siblings in the program so their sponsors can be notified.

Graduation: A child's graduation is a huge accomplishment for each child, and this exciting time in the child's life needs to be shared with their sponsor so they can celebrate with the child. The mission will notify GoSponsor when a student is expected to graduate. This should be sent 8 weeks in advance or as soon as possible. Following confirmation that the student has passed their exams and graduated, they should be guided in writing a letter to their sponsor about their graduation, their future plans, gratitude for their sponsorship, and what this program has meant to them. This will be sent to GoSponsor and to their sponsor.

Child Reinstatement: In the event that a child returns to the program, new class and biography information must be gathered for the child and a new profile photo must be taken. The child's ID number will remain the same and must be noted on the recruitment spreadsheet with the update class and bio information. Once the updated photo, class and bio information is received by GoSponsor, the child's record will be updated and reactivated for sponsorship. If the child was previously sponsored, a letter will be sent to the most recent sponsor of record to notify them of the child's return.

Letters from children to their sponsors

Your Mission will be responsible for various aspects of both sending and receiving of letters as a joint effort between the mission and GoSponsor. This may involve a small cost to the mission in time, materials and postage, which is all part of ministry. A letter from a sponsored child is the most tangible item a sponsor can receive from our program. As such, it is extremely important that letters are written and handled with quality in order to better nurture this relationship. Each child should be encouraged to write at least two letters during the year.

Letter content might include any new personal information about the child, new activities or skills the child is learning, questions for the sponsor, and any prayer requests. Whenever possible, it is important for the child to acknowledge letters and photos previously sent by their sponsor and respond to any comments or questions received. For younger children, fill-in-the-blank letter templates may be
child is learning, questions for the sponsor, and any prayer requests. Whenever possible, it is important for the child to acknowledge letters and photos previously sent by their sponsor and respond to any comments or questions received. For younger children, fill-in-the-blank letter templates may be provided for children to fill in basic information on their interests, favorite activities, etc.

If the letter is written in a language other than English, an English translation must be written below, or next to the child's hand written text. All letters must be reviewed by the mission for appropriateness prior to being sent. This includes looking for any comments, remarks, drawings, or questions that could be misinterpreted or of concern to a sponsor.

**Letters and Gifts to Children from Sponsors**

GoSponsor also encourages sponsors to nurture the relationship with sponsored children through written correspondence as well. Each mission must provide us with a local mailing address to which sponsors may send letters and small gifts for their sponsored child. All letters and gifts received in the field shall be logged to create a historical record of the letter or gift being received. You should review all incoming letters and gifts for appropriateness prior to being distributed to the intended child.

Anytime a gift is given to a child, a digital photo of the child with the gift shall be taken and sent to GoSponsor within 14 days. This photo will serve as an acknowledgement and thank you, and will be sent to the sponsor.

**Visitors to Mission Field**

In the event that a supporting church, short-term mission team or sponsor wants to visit, the mission should be prepared to help arrange the visit and coordinate necessary details. This may include, but is not limited to, assisting in the arranging accommodations and transportation for the visitors. Additionally, the mission shall be responsible to facilitate a meeting between the sponsor and their sponsored child on such trips. The mission should communicate with the visiting team leader and GoSponsor for the names and ID numbers of children that are to be seen. Whenever possible, this information should be obtained one month in advance of the team's arrival, and the status of each child should be verified to make sure they will be present. If the children will be required to travel a distance to meet with their sponsor, these arrangements should also be made well in advance.

In the event a sponsored child will not be available or has become ineligible for sponsorship, the mission agrees to notify the home office at least 14 days prior to the visiting team's scheduled departure so that individuals may be told that their child will not be available for a visit.

**Sponsorship During a Mission Trip**

Many times, an individual visiting a mission may want to sponsor a child during their visit. If a potential sponsor meets and forges a special bond with a child during their visit, the mission must verify that the child is available for sponsorship before confirming with the potential sponsor.

For any individual who selects a child to sponsor on the field, the mission must obtain the sponsor's name, address, phone number and e-mail address from the sponsor. This contact information along with the full name of the child to be sponsored must be sent to GoSponsor within 7 days after the departure of the visiting team. GoSponsor will follow up to complete the details of these sponsorships.

In the event your mission decides to handle a sponsorship directly, GoSponsor supports your new venture, and this will conclude our services as your sponsoring organization. Please consider the cost and be sure you can maintain your own sponsorship program from that point on. If you are ready for this next big step, then we wish you well.