



**World Orphan Week presentation on the global orphan crisis.
Suitable for secondary school students
January 2011.**

<p>Slide 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 17 million orphans in the world.• What is an orphan? Different definitions.	<p>For comparison: there are 12 million children in the UK.</p> <p>Single orphan: has lost one parents. Double orphans: has lost both parents. Social orphans: parents alive but unwilling/unable to look after the child. Biological orphan: parents dead.</p> <p>The 17 million refers to double, biological orphans.</p> <p>It's important to remember that some of these orphans are successfully looked after by extended family or their own community, but many are not.</p>
<p>Slide 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce Elsie, an orphaned at 2 years old in the Gambia, West Africa.• Initially Elsie was looked after by a kind neighbour, who couldn't afford to continue looking after her.	<p>(Show the Gambia on a map). Say that it is a peaceful country where English is the first language. The geography of the country is dominated by a river, which provides source of both income and food for many Gambians. It is a country with a relatively low HIV/AIDS prevalence, at around 1%, but with high levels of poverty.</p> <p>Elsie's biological parents died when she was two – it is unclear why, but they were very poor and probably wouldn't have been able to afford doctor's appointment or medicine.</p> <p>The neighbour had 6 children herself, and struggled to look after Elsie too. She alerted the social services to get someone else to help Elsie.</p>
<p>Slide 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It's not just sad that children	<p>Being an orphan as such isn't</p>

<p>like Elsie are orphaned – it is dangerous too! (cont.)</p>	<p>necessarily a problem. I'm sure you can all think of someone who is growing up with a loving adult who isn't their biological parent. But research shows that children who are orphaned and where no alternative carer (like grandparents, older siblings, adoptive parent) can step in instead, children are at increased risk of experiencing a number of problems.</p>
<p>Slide 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's not just sad and dangerous when children aren't looked after – it's illegal too! • Most countries have national laws ensuring the care of orphaned children, but there are also larger frameworks. • UN Convention for the Rights of the Child. 	<p>The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child establishes that all children have the right to be looked after in a family-like environment. Signed by all but 2 member countries: USA and Somalia.</p>
<p>Slide 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millennium Development Goals • Progress – but too slow. 	<p>8 goals to be achieved by 2015. Includes halving extreme poverty and hunger, halting the spread of HIV and lowering maternal mortality.</p> <p>By watching television and following the news we can easily get the impression that the situation is getting worse around the world, but this is only true in part. For example, maternal death rates were down by 1% between 1995 and 2005. Teenage pregnancies, which often lead to babies being abandoned, are also down slightly across the world – but not in the UK! Despite this it seems unlikely that we will reach the MDGs in time for 2015.</p>

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- Right, but what's all this got to do with us?
- Compassion and empathy for others is what makes us human.
- We have a duty to care for others.
- Because it benefits us!

We all have our own issues and things to think about, and it is perhaps more difficult to feel sympathy for people we will probably never meet, living in places we can't imagine and probably will never visit.

It is through cooperation and supporting each other that the human race makes progress.

In this country, much of our wealth is built on what we have received from other countries, be it material resources or knowledge and skills. We still reap the benefits from this, therefore you might argue we owe it to offer the same to those now in need.

Poverty makes the world a less good place for all of us. In a global economy countries are intimately linked together and we would all benefit if others had a better standard of living. When people have access to a safe home, an education and a stable income innovation and creativity flourishes. Who knows what Elsie can become, given these things? She could grow up to be a scientist inventing a new medicine, or the president of her country? Or maybe a bus driver, enabling hundreds of school children to get to school, or a café owner, paying tax which will benefit many others. All these options are great successes.

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- Suggestions on what we can do to help orphaned children around the world:
- Push for change!

Get involved on a political level by putting pressure on governments to work harder to reach the Millennium Development Goals, for example.

<p>(cont.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy responsibly • Give to charities which are working with these issues. 	<p>You can do this by writing to your local MP. When you can vote, make sure you vote for a party with clear, constructive policies on international aid. Become active in a campaigning or lobbying group to put issues around children's rights on the agenda. Become a politician yourself!</p> <p>Use your consumer power. Make sure you buy fair trade when you can. This ensures that the workers who produced the items received a fair salary, so that they can support their families. You can also think carefully about buying produce from countries which deserve your support. Are their governments taking children's rights seriously? If not, boycott items from their country!</p> <p>There are many charities, non-governmental organisations and grassroots movements, small and large, which do excellent work around the world, and some which does some less good work. Research them carefully before you donate!</p>
<p>Slide 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is Elsie now: living in the SOS Children's Village in Basse, the Gambia. • An SOS Children's Village is a group of houses where orphaned and abandoned children are looked after by SOS Mothers. • Additional facilities to support the wider community: nursery and school 	<p>SOS Children is one of many charities working with vulnerable children.</p> <p>The Basse Children's Village consists of 12 family houses, each providing a home for between 7 and 10 children with nobody else to care for them. Each house is headed by an SOS Mother: a local, trained woman with no children of her own who makes a commitment to raise a generation of children. She is supported by 'SOS Aunties', who divide their time between a few houses each.</p> <p>When we build a new SOS Children's Village, we also think about what other facilities would benefit the wider</p>

	<p>community. In the case of Basse, we found that educational provision was poor or non-existent. Therefore, we built a primary school in connection to the Children's Village, which has capacity for 420 children aged 6-12. We also built a nursery for younger children.</p>
<p>Slide 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About SOS Children: 508 Children's Villages around the world. 78,000 children in our care. 	<p>SOS Children works in 124 countries across the world. While our primary aim is to provide children with loving homes in our Children's Villages, we support many vulnerable families outside the Children's Villages by providing medical support and income generating activities for adults. While the governments in some countries provide some support for our work, we do depend on the kindness and generosity of our supporters around the world who donate to us.</p>
<p>Slide 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new SOS Children's Village in Chipata, Zambia. 	<p>There are still many more SOS Children's Villages needed. These are images from the construction of a new SOS Children's Village in Chipata, Zambia. This is a region where 65% of families live in poverty, and where students are expected to pay for their own uniforms and books, resulting in many not attending school. To help, SOS Children is also extending and improving a local community school.</p>
<p>Slide 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are the first generation in history which can see an end to poverty in your lifetime! 	<p>This talk should have reminded you that there are millions of children around the world who aren't receiving the most basic right: a loving, caring family environment. Without this, their chances to succeed in life are severely diminished.</p> <p>We are so used to seeing poverty in the news and media that it perhaps seems like something constant, which almost has to be there. But this is not</p>

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the case. Poverty can be eliminated, and it can be eliminated relatively fast. For the first time in human history, we now have the knowledge, infrastructure and capabilities to end poverty. Your generation is the first one which can accomplish that. Make the most of it – your support for SOS Children is a good start.