



AN SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGE VISIT

BASSE BOARD GAME CARDS

1. You are invited in to house number 4 by a boy called Musa. Musa came to the SOS Children's Village when he was 15 months old. Today he is seven years old, and lives in house number 4 with his SOS mother and six SOS brothers and sisters. He shows you the kitchen of the house, and the bedroom he shares with two of his SOS brothers. The rooms are tidy but cosy, and Musa proudly shows off his collection of books and shows you that he can read quite well already! Stay and listen while he reads – miss a go.

2. As you are walking through the Children's Village, you see lots of children wearing blue school uniforms walking towards a big building just outside the Children's Village. You follow them, and are invited into the SOS School by the Head Teacher. While showing you around, Musa explains that it's an SOS Primary School. At the moment there are 209 pupils - from the Children's Village but also from the surrounding villages. You look into a classroom where a maths lesson is in action, the children happily using bottle tops to count with. You leave feeling really happy that the children get such good education. Go forwards two squares!

3. On your way back to the guest house, you bump into one of the SOS Aunties, Ramatoulie. She is sitting on the porch of one of the houses together with the youngest member of the Children's Village, eight-month old Kebba Siga. Ramatoulie tells you that the job of an SOS Auntie is to help the SOS mothers out when they are very busy, especially the SOS mothers who look after many small children. Ramatoulie tells you that she helps the SOS mothers in three different houses, and that she hopes to become an SOS mother one day. Skip forward one square

4. Two little girls come running up to you and ask if you want to meet their little brother. They take you over to the SOS Nursery of the Children's Village. This is where the younger children are looked after during the day so that the SOS mothers can tend to cleaning, laundry and cooking for all their children. The SOS Nursery is also open to other families who live nearby, which means that parents can drop their children off in the morning to go out and work. You help feed the babies, and with 160 little ones to tend to, this takes a while! Miss a go!

5. Henry Mendy, Village Director at the Children's Village in Basse, introduces you to little Mariatou and five-year-old Daoda. He tells you about what it was like when the Children's Village opened a year ago. Some of the children had never seen a fan or a glass window before. Toilet flushes and light switches were also part of the weird things some of the children discovered for the first time on their arrival in the Village. Little Douda had a big problem with the toilet: 'Do we really have to use this thing making a scary sound and looking like it's going to swallow us if we get too close' she used to ask. When reminded of it now, she just laughs before she runs off to play with Mariatou. Run with them! Go forwards two squares!

6. In the playground in the middle of the Children's Village you start chatting to one of the SOS mothers. You ask her why she became an SOS mother, and she tells you that she came to the Gambia from Senegal after her own two children had both died from a virus. 'Being an SOS mother has given my life a purpose again after my difficult experiences. It feels so good to hear children call me 'mummy' again. I need to be their mother just as much as they need me!' she says before she goes back to her house to finish the laundry before the children return from school. Go and help her out – go forwards two squares.

7. On the way back to your guest room, you bump in to the gardener in the Children's Village. He shows you around some of the family house gardens, where he has helped the SOS mothers and the children to plant tomatoes, sweet potatoes and maize, to make sure that the SOS mothers can cook cheap and healthy meals for the children. He tells you that working in the SOS Children's Village isn't just about gardening, but also about teaching the children and supporting them. Many of the older children in the Children's Village are now considering becoming gardeners too, he tells you proudly! You dropped a watering can – go back two squares and pick it up.

8. When you're sitting in the shade of the trees in the Children's Village with your book, you are joined by Alieu. He is 27 years old, and tells you his story: 'I was born in Sierra Leone, and was taken in to the SOS Children's Village in Freetown there. During the war in Sierra Leone, I was moved to safety in the SOS Children's Village Bakoteh, in the west part of the Gambia' He went on to study computer hardware maintenance, sponsored by SOS Children, and is now working in the Basse area. The best thing about SOS Children is that it is a family; everywhere you have brothers and sisters and a warm welcome and a place to stay. Stay in the shade with Alieu for a bit – miss a go.

9. Oumo Tall is the National Director of the SOS Children's Village in the Gambia. She invites you for a drink of lemonade in her office and tells you a bit more about what it's like to be a National Director. It means that she has the main responsibility for budgets and making decisions for the two Children's Villages in the Gambia. It seems a difficult job. Sit and think about it for a while, miss a go.

10. Henry Mendy, the Village Director, invites you for dinner in his little house in the middle of the Children's Village. He starts the meal with a Muslim prayer – he, like most of the SOS mothers and children in the Children's Village, is Muslim. They meet on Fridays to learn more about their faith, and also about the Christian SOS mothers and children are driven to a nearby church on Sundays. Henry says he is proud of the mix of people in the Children's Village. He has SOS mothers and children who are both Muslim, Christian and non-believers, and who come from countries like Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria as well as the Gambia. You have a big meal - go back one square

11. Henry Mendy, the Village Director, shows you to the staff room in the school in Children's Village. He tells you that he used to be the Head Teacher of the SOS Secondary School in Bakoteh, where the other SOS Children's Village in the Gambia is, so he's still very interested in education. Now, he works closely with the PTA of the SOS School in Basse particularly to get more girls to come to the school. Many families in The Gambia choose to only send their sons to school. Henry tells you that the PTA currently has lots of adverts on the radio to encourage parents to send their girls to school. You stay to listen to one of the adverts – miss a go.

12. On the veranda of house number 7 you meet one of the boys who is helping his younger sister with her home work. He tells you that all the children at the SOS school learn French. Even though the official language of the Gambia is English, French is good to know since the Gambia is surrounded by Senegal, where French is spoken. You don't know any French so can't help – go forwards two squares.

13. In the middle of the Children's Village there is a strange looking tree. You ask a group of children what tree it is, and they tell you it is a mango tree. It was planted there by a man who gave a lot of money to pay for the construction of the Children's Village, and now the tree offers shade and mangos as it grows alongside the children! You eat a juicy mango which gives you lots of energy – go forwards three squares.

14. Ousman, one of the boys who live in house number 1 invite you to join his SOS family for lunch. His SOS Mother has cooked some stew with fish and chicken, and serves it with rice and a delicious peanut sauce. Peanuts are the main crop that is grown in the Gambia, and the main thing that is sold to other countries. There are peanuts in everything: sauce, stews, cakes and bread! Enjoy a bag of roasted peanuts for desert with Ousman – go back one square.

15. SOS mother Yatunde shows you around the house that she shares with the 6 children she looks after. When she is showing you her kitchen, you notice that she has several large buckets stacked under the sink. You ask her what they're for, and she tells you that during the rainy season, she collects water in the buckets to use for washing clothes in – that way she doesn't waste drinking water unnecessarily. She also tells you that the children like the rainy season, because it means that there are lots of frogs around! They have to be really careful and check inside their shoes before they put them on, or they might squash a frog! You say goodbye to Yatunde and frog leap two squares forward.

16. On your walk through the Children's Village, you see a white bus approaching. Out of the bus comes lots of children dressed in football t-shirts. The Children's Village has invited children from the neighbourhood for a football tournament today. The Children's Village has the only good grass football pitch in the area, so it's a popular place to visit even for children who live outside the Children's Village. You're invited to join one of the teams – dribble two squares forward.

17. Oumo, the National Director for SOS Children's Villages in The Gambia, tells you about a family she helped: a young mother came to the Children's Village with her baby, and asked Oumo to take the baby. Oumo asked her why, and she explained that the baby would not eat, so it would die if it wasn't taken in. Instead of taking the baby in, Oumo made sure that the mother was given milk formula to feed her baby, and food parcels to strengthen the mother. The mother and baby visit the Children's Village every month, and they are now doing very well. Go visit them – go forwards two squares.