



# STEPHEN'S CHILDREN

*Loving the Unloved*





The mission of Stephen's Children is to save lives, develop the spiritual and moral character of children, build their self-respect and restore dignity, and enable them to dream about a hopeful future that will transform them and their society.





## Love in Action

THE STAFF OF STEPHEN'S CHILDREN is made up of 2,000 volunteers and full-time personnel who are inspired by their Christian faith to be God's hands and feet in the world. Twenty percent of the staff grew up in the slums and garbage areas and have returned to Stephen's Children to be servant leaders. Every staff member goes through three months of rigorous training in which they are challenged, not to live for themselves, but for others. They read through the entire Bible, memorize scripture, pray, and catch the vision of Mama Maggie. Rigorous accountability, annual goal setting, and evaluation are part of their "engaged spirituality" as they seek to transform, both themselves and the people with whom they work.

Mama Maggie is the vision-setter, as well as the master delegator, challenging staff to dream and accomplish the impossible. Ten years ago, she started stepping back, spending more time in retreat at various monasteries, empowering staff and volunteers to carry out the vision of serving the poorest and most vulnerable in society.

A very solid organizational structure is in place. For every five or six educational centers there is an overseer who is a business person. Working with a local committee, they are responsible for fundraising, overseeing staff, writing reports, and evaluating outcomes. Likewise, individual staff members throughout all the programs write goals for each child they mentor, every six months evaluate whether the child is on track, and meet weekly with fellow leaders to discuss the progress and challenges of their children.

# Feet washing & holistic ministry

THE FEET OF EVERY CHILD who enters the pre-school programs are washed with soap and clean water by a staff member or Mama Maggie herself. They are then given a new pair of sandals, a towel, and encouragement to continue the practice at home. This is an opportunity for the staff to engage the child directly, one-on-one. It is also an expression of Jesus' example, who washed the feet of his own disciples.

Stephen's Children has a holistic philosophy to care for the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of everyone they serve. Over the last thirty years, their work now extends to all members of many poor communities.

Mama Maggie says, "If you want to help children, you start with their feet. But this is not enough," she says. Education is what breaks the cycle of poverty. But for children to learn, they must also have good nutrition. And they need to be respected, and believe in themselves, that they are a child of God, loved and with a purpose in life.



26,300

CHILDREN SERVED  
IN ONE YEAR

57,373

MEDICAL CASES TREATED



1,787,684

MEALS SERVED (2022)



# Education

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTERS.

Their 100+ centers throughout Egypt are lighthouses in the poorest slum areas, serving thousands of pre-school children in Montessori-type learning environments where children sing, color, develop motor skills, and practice good hygiene, as well as eat a nutritious meal. The centers also hold Mothers' Gatherings where parents can discuss the development of their children and share personal and family issues in a safe and positive setting. Children also receive frequent medical check-up.

**FARAH SCHOOLS.** (Farah means joy in Arabic.) Stephen's Children has two first-class schools in Cairo's El Khosous slum area with a strong academic curriculum but also an emphasis on the arts, music, and sports. Farah School I (K-9) was opened in 2012 and enrolls 700 students. Farah School II (K-12) is a special language school that teaches math and science in English. Both schools are open to children of all faiths but have a curriculum that emphasizes Christian moral values. They are model institutions in their community, with a waiting list of students.

**VOCATIONAL TRAINING.** These "Second Chance Centers" teach boys to be cobblers, making shoes, and teach girls to sew, embroider and use knitting machines. The shoes and sweaters are then distributed to needy children. These schools are for older children who are not enrolled in primary education but want to learn a trade as well as basic literacy so that they can be economically self-sufficient.

"Education is what breaks the cycle of poverty."

OVER

15,500

CHILDREN IN COMMUNITY  
EDUCATION CENTERS

1764

STUDENTS IN FARAH  
SCHOOL I & II



# Home Visitation

Home visits are the heart of Stephen's Children. Through weekly encounters, trained and caring workers provide emotional and psychological care, family counseling, emergency assistance, spiritual mentoring, economic assistance, health and hygiene awareness, and assistance in the growth and development of children. Workers develop close mentoring relationships that allow children to personally experience the positive spiritual and emotional impact of a one-on-one relationship with a caring Christian adult—often for the first time in their lives. Full-time leaders have responsibility for 25-30 families that they meet for at least an hour each week over a four to five-year period.







## Camps



Twice a year, children are invited to attend a one to three-day camp where they have three nutritious meals a day, sleep in a bed, are examined by a doctor, sing, play sports, and learn scripture and hear about the Christian faith. One child said to his leader: "My dream is fulfilled ... to sleep in a bed." Some children hide food, not believing that they will have three full meals. Others ask if they can save some food to take home to a brother or sister. At the end of the camp, they are each given a package of food for their family.

The camps are segregated by gender, which enables girls to talk about personal trauma they have experienced. They are taught that their body is precious, a gift of God; they can say "No" to brothers, neighbors, and relatives. Boys are taught to respect the rights of girls. Children are also taught basic hygiene, encouraged to wash and shower, which is a new experience for some since water is a precious commodity in many slum neighborhoods. One child hid in the corner when she arrived. She was shunned because she smelled so bad and had terrible lice. The leaders washed her hair, bathed her, and by the end of three days she was transformed, interacting with the other girls.

# Founder



MAMA MAGGIE GOBRAN is both a servant leader and social entrepreneur. The daughter of an upper middle-class family in Cairo's Coptic Orthodox Christian community, Mama Maggie made the radical decision in her mid-thirties to give up her fashionable clothes and lifestyle to dedicate herself to serving children who live in the slums and garbage areas of Egypt. Today, Stephen's Children serves 32,000 families each year. As a former management consultant and professor at the American University of Cairo, she has established an organizational structure that enables her to spend up to two months a year in retreats with periods of silence, praying for the ministry.

Mama Maggie has won numerous awards including the 2020 International Women of Courage Award from the US State Department and the 2020 Arab Woman of the Year. She has also been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize 10 times, most recently, in 2022.

To find out more, please contact:



Chad Sutton, USA

Chad@StephensChildren.org

3755 36th St SE,

Grand Rapids, MI 49512

(888) 877-2544

[StephensChildren.org](https://StephensChildren.org)

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