

## **TRUE ORPHANS VS. BEING ABANDONED**

Most volunteers think of orphanages and think that both parents of a child living in an orphanage have died since that's the true meaning of being orphaned. However, in general this isn't the case, but rather that the children have been abandoned by their parents/mother.

Very few, if any, of the children we've worked with are true orphans. Many of the older children, most of whom did not come to the orphanages as babies/toddlers, have relatives that either don't want them, can't take care of them or who aren't allowed to be around them because of abusing them. The same is true for most of the handicapped children. Most of the babies/toddlers have been given up because their parents/mother don't want them, whether it's because of being a single mom, substance abuse issues, unable to provide sufficiently for them or having them taken away because of caring for them so poorly.

For these cases, legal steps have to be taken to finalize the abandonment and declare them available for adoption (after assuring that the family really doesn't want the child and/or that it wouldn't be in the child's best interest to return to their family).