

# A YEAR IN EGYPT

## SUMMARY REPORT 2011

Plan is helping women access good health services



### About Egypt

Most of Egypt's 80 million inhabitants live in the valley or delta of the world's longest river, the Nile.

Over the past 10 years, Egypt has made efforts to protect children's rights and improve maternal and child mortality rates.

### Problems affecting the children of Egypt

- Little understanding of children's rights.
- Schooling quality is poor.
- Little help for disabled children.
- Limited access to clean water, proper sanitation and waste disposal.



Street children learn carpet weaving skills.

## PLAN'S PRIORITIES IN EGYPT

### Children in the community

- Raising awareness of children and women's rights
- Enabling young people to acquire skills to voice their views in their communities
- Lobbying to promote children's rights

### Nursery care and development

- Working with communities to improve young children's health, nutrition and education
- Helping women access good reproductive health services

### Health and education

- Improving medical facilities
- Renovating schools and encourage teacher training
- Helping communities bring sustainable clean water, sanitation and waste disposal systems to their homes and schools

### Children with special needs

- Raising awareness of the rights of children with disabilities, children who have to work and those on the streets
- Promoting action to eradicate child labour

### Secure livelihoods

- Helping increase household incomes through small loans and savings schemes
- Supporting vocational training, skills coaching and job placements for young people

By being a child sponsor, you have directly supported projects like the ones below. Your ongoing support sustains our long-term development work which impacts the lives of children, their families and communities for generations to come.

Together we are making an invaluable difference to the lives of people in Egypt.

To learn more about Plan's work in Egypt visit:  
[www.plan.org.au/ourwork/southernafrica/egypt](http://www.plan.org.au/ourwork/southernafrica/egypt)



Girls learn maths at a vocational training centre.

## CASE STUDY: TAKING ACTION FOR HEALTHIER STREETS

Yassmin wasn't sure why her children kept falling ill, or what she could do to stop it.

But she knew that if they carried on missing lessons, they would never have the skills to make the most of future opportunities.

"My children were always sick but I never guessed what the reason was," she says. "All the time they suffered from diarrhoea, a high temperature and gastroenteritis."

Yassmin has three children and lives in a village outside Cairo. She didn't know that the reason for her children's sickness lay just outside her door, literally. Rubbish was piled up all over the streets and around the houses. Vegetable peelings, discarded packets – whenever anything was thrown away it would end up on one of the heaps of rotting rubbish. Needless to say, the stench was unbearable and huge numbers of flies swarmed everywhere.

### Barrier to change

Fortunately, Yassmin found inspiration at a meeting on hygiene organised by Plan. This is part of a programme we have piloted in two villages on the outskirts of Cairo over the last year to promote cleaner and healthier living environments for children and their families.

Called project PHAST (Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation), the programme aims to equip community members with the knowledge and confidence to improve hygiene and sanitation in their villages.

### Community-led initiative

Its success depends on ensuring that all members of the community – including children – play their role in identifying their environmental problems and in taking action to solve them.

From the start, the project is managed by the community, using local skills and resources. Although Plan supports villagers with training and encouragement, every step they take towards building better water and sanitation systems, refuse disposal and hygiene in their neighbourhood is the responsibility of the community members themselves. They are also responsible for sustaining the project in the future.

At the heart of PHAST is the belief that children have the right to grow up in surroundings that will not endanger their health. Yassmin explains: "When my neighbours and I attended awareness sessions on the importance of cleanliness we knew that living in a clean environment is one of our children's rights and we should change the way we behave."

Armed with her new knowledge, Yassmin was motivated to make changes.

"I decided to encourage my neighbours to join me in clearing our area of all the piles of rubbish and not to throw any more in the streets. They were interested in the idea and we agreed that each neighbour will be responsible for keeping the surrounding of their home clean."

Thanks to Yassmin's efforts, and those of her community, local children can look forward to a future without the constant threat of illness.

"Now our streets are clean and our children are healthy," she says.



Young people help clean up their community.

## HIGHLIGHTS IN 2010

- Created more than 100 women's literacy groups, teaching women how to read and write, and giving them the knowledge and confidence to take action for change in their communities
- Helped more than 300 young people to complete employment training courses. Of these, 85% have secured a job
- Trained children in media activities to raise awareness and lobby for change in areas such as child protection and gender equality

Some names have been changed for child protection and privacy reasons