

WELCOME TO BURKINA FASO

Burkina Faso is a landlocked country in the heart of West Africa. It is home to a rich variety of African wildlife, including elephants, lions, and leopards. It is multilingual: while French is the country's official language, an estimated 69 additional languages are also spoken here.

Burkina Faso has long been a crossroads of exchange in the region, and a region of transit between many African countries.



SAHELIAN

CLIMATE

WITH DRY
AND RAINY
SEASONS

28°C

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Sanmatenga is one of the 45 provinces of Burkina Faso. Some of the major historical and cultural sites of Burkina Faso are located here, like the remains of the first mosque built in 1905 and the first Catholic Church built around 1935.

Families in Sanmatenga live in traditional huts with thatched roofs. Most people here practice Christianity, Islam and Animism. The most widely spoken language is Mooré.

Children, especially girls, face many challenges while growing-up in Sanmatenga. The society is patriarchal and undervalues women and girls, whose role is limited to domestic work and child-rearing. Women have no access to land, which also limits their engagement in economic activities.



WE STARTED WORKING IN
SANMATENGA IN

1976



POPULATION

862,072

LIFE FOR CHILDREN IN SANMATENGA

25%

OF PEOPLE CAN
READ AND WRITE

69%

HAVE ACCESS TO
CLEAN WATER

10%

HAVE ACCESS TO
SANITARY TOILETS

ACCESS TO SAFE WATER

Access to safe water is a basic right and key to fighting disease. Water-borne diseases impact survival rate in Sanmatenga.

Plan's in-school programmes improve children's access to drinking water and basic sanitation. Through our community outreach programmes, young people learn crisis management, empowering them to develop projects to care for their community.

PROTECTING CHILDREN

Low access to basic health and safety affects child survival. Some children are forced to work at the expense of schooling, while others are forced into early marriage.

Plan is lobbying to raise the legal age of marriage to 18 years for girls. Through our advocacy campaigns, children participate in sessions with authorities and speak out against child marriage, child labour and early pregnancy.

ADVOCATING FOR EDUCATION

Due to gender discrimination, girls have an inferior status in this society. This often prevents them from accessing educational opportunities.

We are supporting young people to influence leaders and local authorities to challenge traditional concepts about education for girls. This gives both girls and boys the chance to access quality education in an inclusive environment.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Girls and women in Sanmatenga have a low social status. This limits their access to training for skills relevant to the job market.

With our support for vocational training and access to microfinance, women are able to create their own business opportunities. This transforms families and communities. It empowers their families and removes barriers to providing education for the next generation.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN BURKINA FASO

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on reducing the spread of the virus by providing soap and hand-washing stations to families, and helping children continue learning through radio broadcasts. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"When COVID started I didn't believe in it. But thanks to Plan International, my family and I became aware and we regularly wash our hands thanks to the tippy-tap and the soap we received."

-Julienne, 14, Sponsored Child



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The political situation in Burkina Faso has spread insecurity across the country. Since December 2018, 1,088 schools have closed, affecting an estimated 145,985

students. Limited access to school spaces, combined with the ongoing conflict, results in disrupted education and exposes children to violence, abuse and exploitation.



New and improved learning spaces help children access education in times of crisis

Access to learning space is vital, so we built 10 temporary learning spaces and rehabilitated 10 defective classrooms. Another 26 classrooms were equipped with benches, desks and cupboards. Teachers learned educational strategies for times of emergency, and 20 teaching kits were provided to 18 primary and two secondary schools. School children, including 1,935 internally displaced girls and boys, were given school kits.

Girls struggle with menstrual hygiene management in times of crisis, so we provided 1,416 girls with menstrual health information, and helped 2,057 girls learn to make hygienic menstrual management kits.

PROVIDING SUPPORT THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating effects, especially for vulnerable regions. As of March 2020, the political and social unrest in Burkina Faso resulted in 2,689,959 internally displaced people in Sanmatenga alone. This double crisis of pandemic and political insecurity worsens existing issues of gender-based violence, limited access to education, and food and water shortages.

We provided information and resources to help families manage the spread of the virus. Workers were given equipment for personal protection as well as for biomedical waste, plus handwashing devices and hygiene kits. We also distributed school kits to displaced children and organised classes for students whose schooling has been interrupted.

“Plan informed us that COVID-19 is a serious, contagious and sometimes fatal disease. To avoid it, I must wash my hands frequently with soap. I must also wear a mask, avoid shaking hands, and cough or sneeze into my elbow.”

-Assanata, 14-year-old, Sponsored Child



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will continue to protect children's rights so they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will strengthen national and community-based child protection systems.



We will advocate for safe, inclusive, quality education for girls. We will work toward eliminating gender-based violence and providing a safe environment for girls and women.



We will increase access to safe, inclusive, and high-quality primary and post-primary education for girls and boys affected by the ongoing conflict in Burkina Faso.



We will provide information and resources on sexual and reproductive health to the many people affected by the conflict in Burkina Faso.



These are just some of the many ways your kindness will continue to touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Sanmatenga.

Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM MEDA D. G. CLEMENT

Programme Area Manager, Sanmatenga

"We are very happy with the progress made this past fiscal year, especially in the field of humanitarian assistance.

This has been possible thanks to your support. Through my voice, the population of Sanmatenga say thank you."



WELCOME TO GUINEA-BISSAU

Guinea-Bissau is in West Africa, bordered by Senegal, Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean. It has a monsoon-like rainy season alternating with periods of hot, dry harmattan winds blowing from the Sahara. In 1974, Guinea-Bissau gained independence from Portugal. Portuguese is the official language, but very few people speak it as a first language. Other languages include Creole and African languages. Guinea-Bissau has a history of political and institutional instability.



TROPICAL
CLIMATE
WITH LITTLE
RAINFALL
IN WINTER

27°C

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Bafatá is located in central Guinea-Bissau. Agriculture is the main economic activity, followed by cattle breeding. It is also noted for its brickmaking.

Bafatá is composed of several ethnic groups. It has a diverse cultural heritage, with rich language, customs and traditions. While most people are Muslim, others practice Animism or Christianity.

Children in Bafatá face many challenges. Large parts of communities live in poverty. Families have limited access to basic hygiene and sanitation facilities and children often have poor access to education. Different forms of violence are common, including early and forced marriage. Girls often get pregnant early and can then face dangerous complications during childbirth.



WE STARTED WORKING IN
BAFATÁ IN

1995



POPULATION

200,884

OUR PLAN TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

46%

OF PEOPLE CANNOT
READ OR WRITE

48%

OF CHILDREN DO NOT
HAVE BASIC VACCINATIONS

22%

OF PEOPLE DO NOT
USE SAFE LATRINES

PROTECTING GIRLS' SEXUAL HEALTH

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is common in Bafatá, and a violation of girls' rights with severe, lifelong health consequences. FGM involves the removal of the outer parts of female genitals.

Plan International is working with local youth organisations and community leaders to publicly engage in the fight against FGM. With information backed by policies and community support, the society can work together to protect girls' health.

CHILD HEALTHCARE INITIATIVES

Limited access to food, safe water and hygiene makes healthcare a challenge in Bafatá.

Our projects bring basic health services, such as pre and postnatal care, vaccinations, family planning and nutrition to the community. This gives parents access to a better quality of maternal, newborn and child health.

FACING EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES

Gender discrimination, cultural norms and generational illiteracy prevent children in Bafatá from accessing educational opportunities.

Plan International is promoting the importance of education to parents and school leaders. Training sessions provide teachers and directors with resources to support pupils. Parents become involved in school management, empowering them to take an active role in their children's education.

CHILDREN AS LEADERS

Traditional attitudes are leading to major gaps in the realisation of children's rights.

Through community events, girls and boys learn their rights and how to advocate for them, influencing national policies and local practices. This enables youth, especially girls, to have a visible role in the future of Bafatá.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN GUINEA-BISSAU

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on providing food baskets and hygiene kits so families can feed their children and reduce the spread of the deadly virus, and broadcasting radio messages about the pandemic. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"I am determined to achieve my academic goals despite the pandemic. It won't be the reason I stop fighting for my dreams-it will give me strength to fight for a better future."

-Monica, 18-year-old, programme beneficiary



IMPROVING GIRLS' EDUCATION

Girls in Bafatá face significant barriers to completing their education. Widespread poverty and entrenched gender norms mean girls' education is not highly valued. Around 51% of girls are not enrolled in primary school. Many girls

are forced into early marriage and experience early pregnancies, both of which prevent girls from going to school and reaching their full potential.



Girls are now able to learn and thrive with the support of their communities

To help promote girls' education, we have held meetings in nine communities. More than 400 people, including 198 parents and nine teachers, attended the meetings to learn about the importance of sending girls to school and how to address the cultural barriers that prevent girls from completing their education.

We also raised awareness in an additional 24 communities through radio programmes and theatre performances. Now, community members are able to advocate for more girls to go to school instead of being forced into an early marriage.

SAFER PLAYGROUNDS

The importance of early childhood education is not well understood in Bafatá. Early childhood centres, where children can learn and play with their peers, are crucial spaces for children to develop physical, social, and cognitive skills. Almost half of the young children in the area do not attend pre-school, and this can prevent them from building a strong foundation for future success.

To help all children learn and play in a safe environment, we worked with communities to identify local playgrounds that needed significant improvements. Now, more than 2,400 children can play at 23 rehabilitated playgrounds. These playgrounds will serve as important community areas for children to play with their friends and learn vital life skills.

"We like the playground rehabilitation initiative and we are very happy to see how our playground looks now. It is so beautiful! It can now serve as an important leisure courtyard for me and my other school mates."

**-Binta, 13-year-old,
Sponsored Child**



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will ensure that children's rights are respected, and they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will ensure young children have the best start in life by improving early childhood education.



We will raise awareness of children's rights through radio programmes and by working with parents, families, and community leaders.



We will increase access to sexual and reproductive health education so both girls and boys can make informed choices about their lives, their bodies, and their relationships.



We will improve opportunities for young people, particularly young women, to gain the life skills and vocational training they need to get a good job or start their own business.



These are just some of the many ways your kindness will touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Bafatá.

Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM SECO DJASSI

Programme Area Manager, Bafatá

"Our projects make important contributions that impact the lives of children and young people by helping them enjoy their rights.

For this reason, we tell you, thank you very much for sponsoring a child in Guinea-Bissau!"



WELCOME TO GHANA

Ghana is located on the Atlantic coast of West Africa. It is bordered by three French-speaking countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, and Togo. To the south are the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean. Ghana means "Warrior King" in the Soninke language and it has a population of approximately 30 million people spanning a variety of ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups.



TROPICAL
CLIMATE
WITH DRY AND
RAINY SEASONS

27°C

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Children growing up in Northern Ghana are very likely to be married early. 37% of women between the ages of 20 to 49 were married before their 18th birthday. Girls from rural areas are twice as likely to become child brides as those in urban centres. Early marriage is linked with teenage pregnancy, health complications, and school dropouts.

Birth registration is the foundation for safeguarding children's political, economic, education and health rights. Even though birth registration is free for children up to one year, almost one third of all children under age five do not have birth certificates. Child abuse in the form of physical, emotional and sexual harm is also a widespread problem, exacerbated by gender norms and traditional practices. Many children are not aware of their right to live a healthy life free from violence.



WE STARTED WORKING IN
NORTHERN GHANA IN

2002



POPULATION

702,110

OUR PLAN TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

58%

OF WOMEN CANNOT
READ AND WRITE

14%

OF PEOPLE HAVE
ACCESS TO TOILETS

58%

OF CHILDREN GRADUATE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

ACCESSING EDUCATION

Low family income means families cannot afford to pay school tuition. This greatly affects children's participation and retention in primary schools in the community.

Plan International has introduced complementary basic education to facilitate an inclusive and equal learning environment. This has allowed children to gain life and technical skills that will enable them to earn a living and contribute to the development of their families and communities.

LOWERING INFANT MORTALITY RATES

In Northern Ghana, infant mortality rates are high due to the lack of well-trained maternal health workers and hospital staff.

Plan International is enhancing the knowledge and skills of government health workers which has resulted in the reduction of maternal and infant mortality rates in the region.

ENCOURAGING BUSINESS SKILLS

Youth unemployment is a critical issue in Northern Ghana which stems from few opportunities to gain needed skills.

We are improving the abilities of young people by providing training and entrepreneurship programmes to help them improve their livelihoods. This has resulted in economic growth as young people have started their own businesses.

EMPOWERING YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Youth make up nearly one third of the population. However, decisions that will affect their lives are often made without their input.

We are providing funding for regional youth authorities, the creation of a social media platform, and training youth advocacy leaders. This has provided the space for vulnerable and excluded youth to take the lead in their future.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN GHANA

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on helping children continue learning at home through encouraging parents to support long-distance learning platforms, and raising awareness about the importance of keeping girls in school. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"Plan International brought us masks and also educated us on the coronavirus and how to protect ourselves against it. The pandemic has brought hardship in my family because we were unable to farm."

Gifty, Sponsored Child



EMPLOYMENT SKILLS FOR YOUTH

Young people in Northern Ghana lack opportunities to gain the skills they need to get a good job or start their own business. Unemployment and underemployment

of youth prevent the economic growth of the region and continue to keep young people in poverty.



Village Savings and Loans Associations provide important financial services to local communities

To help give young men and women the skills they need to open the door to a brighter future, we have started village savings and loans associations.

Through these associations, 6,000 young people can now save their money. We provided training on financial literacy, record keeping, and how to start a business. With access to loans from the associations, youth can now invest in their futures and start their own businesses.

These 6,000 young people have also received technical training in green skills and how to protect the environment. They have learned how to ensure that their businesses are green and sustainable.

BETTER HEALTH FOR YOUNG WOMEN

Girls in Northern Ghana lack the knowledge and confidence they need to make informed choices about their bodies and their lives. Early sexual encounters and early pregnancies are common in the region. Transactional sex is widely accepted, and gender inequality sees girls vulnerable to sexual abuse. These issues prevent girls from reaching their full potential.

To help improve the health of young women, we have provided five youth-friendly centres with educational materials on sexual and reproductive health. We have also trained 210 youth group leaders on sexual and reproductive health issues, so they can offer advice and talk to young people in their communities about reducing teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

"There were a lot of teenage pregnancies because there wasn't knowledge about adolescent health. Many girls dropped out of school. Now, after the training on sexual health, I know how to educate my friends on the need for them to stay in school."

- Sariatu, 18 years old



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will ensure that children's rights are respected, and they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will ensure children have inspiring learning environments by improving training for teachers.



Increase sexual and reproductive health education so girls are empowered to make informed choices about their lives and bodies.



Improve opportunities for young people, particularly young women, to get a good job or start their own business by providing vocational skills training and entrepreneurship support.



Increase access to health services and raise awareness on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 through social distancing and good hygiene practices, such as hand-washing with soap.



These are just some of the many ways your kindness will touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Northern Ghana.

Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM ERIC AYABA

Programme Area Manager, Northern Ghana

"We have made significant achievements across hard-to-reach communities and touched the lives of deprived children, especially girls and young women. We have been able to achieve our core objectives of getting out-of-school children back to formal school. We also saw significant improvements in the livelihoods of women."





TILLABERI

WELCOME TO NIGER

Niger is a landlocked nation in West Africa, bordered by Nigeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Algeria, Libya, and Chad. Much of the country is covered by desert plains and sand dunes. The economy of Niger is reliant on multi-crop farming, livestock, and some of the world's largest uranium deposits. Islam is the most dominant religion and there are ten official languages.



SEMI-ARID DESERT
CLIMATE
WITH DRY HOT AND
RAINY SEASONS

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Tillaberi is located in western Niger, and is characterized by the Niger River which flows through the region. Most people live along the river, and people use motorized canoes to travel between communities.

The population in Tillaberi is composed of several ethnic groups, such as the Hausa, the Fulani, and Tuarag, and the Zarma people. Most families earn a living through farming, fishing, or raising livestock.

Children growing up here face a number of challenges. Child marriage is a common cultural practice, and household poverty also leads to more child marriages because families marry their daughters off early to receive financial support. Almost half of people do not have access to safe drinking and less than 20% of people have sanitary toilets. Access to quality education is limited and many children drop out of school.



STARTED WORKING IN
TILLABERI IN

2004



POPULATION

3,280,333

OUR PLAN TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

49%

OF PEOPLE DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO SAFE WATER

75%

OF CHILDREN ARE MARRIED BEFORE THE AGE OF 18

76%

OF PEOPLE CANNOT READ OR WRITE

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

There is limited access in Tillaberi to quality education. Widespread poverty and a lack of materials and resources at school mean many children drop out of education.

Plan International is promoting gender-sensitive and inclusive education by building new classrooms and latrines, and training teachers on creating safe learning spaces.

IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS

Young people in Tillaberi do not have opportunities to gain needed technical skills so they can support themselves as they enter adulthood.

We are providing training to young women on sewing and livestock raising. These technical skills will help young women start their own business and earn an income.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

Children in Tillaberi regularly suffer from malnutrition, and a lack of sanitation leaves children vulnerable to water-borne diseases.

We are setting up childhood nutritional centres so children can receive much-needed food supplements to grow up healthy. And by installing hand-washing stations in communities, families can practice good hygiene and reduce the spread of deadly diseases.

GENDER EQUALITY

Many children in Tillaberi are victims of violence and abuse including forced early marriage.

Plan International is establishing child protection committees in several villages to raise awareness of children's rights and gender equality. This empowers community members to protect girls and boys against gender-based violence.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN NIGER

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on providing food baskets so families can feed their children and setting up community hand-washing facilities with soap to reduce the spread of the deadly virus. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"I learned that the COVID-19 pandemic has upset the whole world. With the support of Plan International, we now know to social distance, wash hands with soap, and wear face masks."

Massaoudou, 10, Sponsored Child



PROVIDING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Around one in four children drop out of school in Tillaberi. Access to quality education is limited, and widespread poverty means many parents cannot afford to send their children to school. Girls' education in particular is not

highly valued, and early marriages and pregnancies often force girls to drop out of school.

Plan International is working to improve schools so all children can open the door to a brighter future. This past year we built a new classroom and eight new latrines, ensuring students have clean and safe places to learn.

We also helped 173 teachers improve their knowledge on different subjects and learn new teaching methods. A further 50 teachers were trained on how to create safe and inclusive spaces for their students, along with how to reduce the spread of COVID-19 at schools.

And through nine awareness raising sessions, more than 130 people learned about children's rights, education for girls, and how to prevent gender-based violence.



Girls and boys are able to attend safe and inclusive schools

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

Girls' rights and gender equality is not well understood in Tillaberi. Girls are regularly forced into early marriages and often experience domestic violence and abuse. Early marriages and pregnancies force girls to drop out of school and prevent them from reaching their full potential.

We are working to keep girls safe by setting up 30 child protection committees. These committees were trained on gender equality and children's rights, which will help reduce cases of child marriage.

And 1,200 young women were supported to start their own businesses, giving them the skills and confidence they need to earn an income and support themselves.

"I was one of the girls selected to be trained in sewing as part of vocational training set up by Plan. We received sewing machines and materials. We are so lucky to have this opportunity to improve our living conditions."

Zidadou, 17, program participant



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will ensure that children's rights are respected, and they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will support schools to provide safe and inclusive learning environments so all children can go to school.



Improve access to sexual and reproductive health education so girls and boys can make informed decisions about their lives and bodies.



Increase opportunities for young people to gain the technical and financial skills they need to get a good job or start their own business so they can support themselves as they enter adulthood.



Promote children's rights and gender equality, and support local child protection groups to keep children safe from early marriage and abuse.

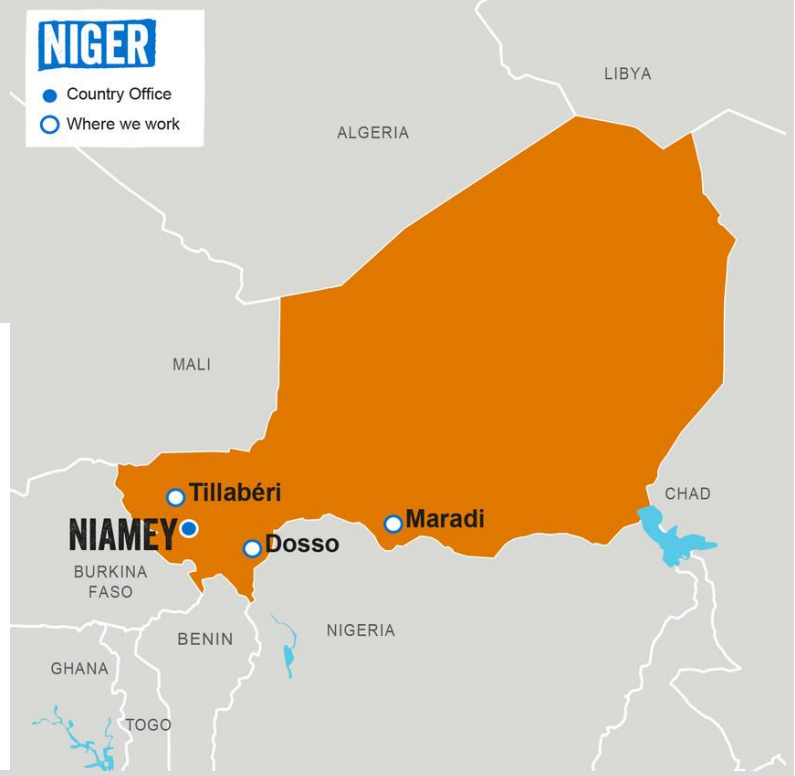


These are just some of the many ways your kindness will touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Tillabéri. Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM MAIDAJI ALIO Programme Area Manager, Tillabéri

"We are very grateful for the support of sponsors to implement our projects. This ensures that many changes are made in different areas such as children's rights, equality for girls, equal access to education and women's empowerment. Thank you so much for all your efforts in the improvement of children's lives."



WELCOME TO MALAWI

Malawi is a landlocked country in south eastern Africa, with mountain ranges, the Great Rift Valley, and Lake Malawi. It is home to a wide variety of wildlife like lions, elephants, and hippos.

The two official languages of Malawi are English and Chichewa, but numerous other languages and dialects are spoken by the many different ethnic groups in this diverse country.



WARM AND
TROPICAL

CLIMATE

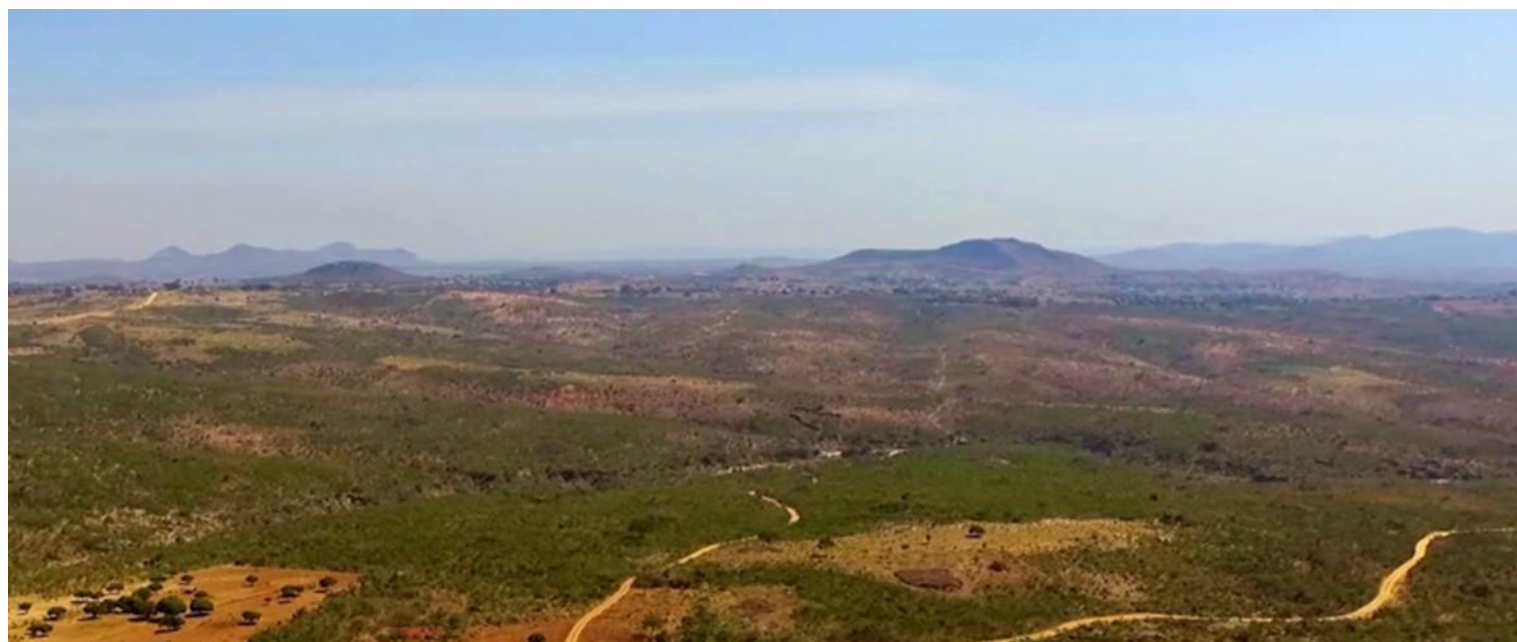
WITH RAINY
SUMMERS

18°C

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Mzuzu is a wooded plateau area found in northern Malawi nestled beside the Viphya Mountains and forest reserves. Most families live in rural areas, making their living through farming crops such as maize, raising livestock, or forestry. Children in Mzuzu live mainly in houses made of mud with grass thatched roofs. Ngoni and Tumbuka are the most commonly spoken languages in the region. Dances such as Ingoma and Vimbuza are important traditions for communities in Mzuzu.

Children and young people in Mzuzu face many challenges. Youth unemployment is high, particularly for girls who are forced out of school and into early marriages. A lack of sexual and reproductive health knowledge has resulted in high teenage pregnancy rates and sexually transmitted infections. Poor quality education and a lack of inclusivity also denies all children the chance to learn.



WE STARTED WORKING IN
MZUZU IN

1997



POPULATION

936,250

OUR PLAN TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

55%

OF ELIGIBLE STUDENTS ARE ENROLLED IN SCHOOL

58%

OF RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO SANITARY TOILETS

85%

OF THE POPULATION HAS ACCESS TO SAFE WATER

HEALTH INITIATIVES

Pregnant women and new-born babies in Mzuzu lack access to appropriate medical facilities and good quality care.

To help keep mothers and babies healthy, Plan International has provided new ambulances and training to health care staff. This will help reduce maternal mortality and give babies the best possible start in life.

IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS

Households who rely solely on agriculture for their livelihoods often struggle to earn enough to feed their families, pay for healthcare, or send their children to school.

By setting up village savings and loans groups, families in Mzuzu can now save their money and access loans, which they can use to improve their farming practices or set up a small business.

PROTECTING CHILDREN

Child labour and early marriage for girls are common in Mzuzu, which prevents children from reaching their full potential.

Plan International is working to promote children's rights and equality for girls by setting up child protection committees, so community leaders can recognise and act when children's rights are being abused.

EDUCATION FOR ALL

Children with disabilities in Mzuzu are often excluded from schools due to a lack of awareness of how to care for them.

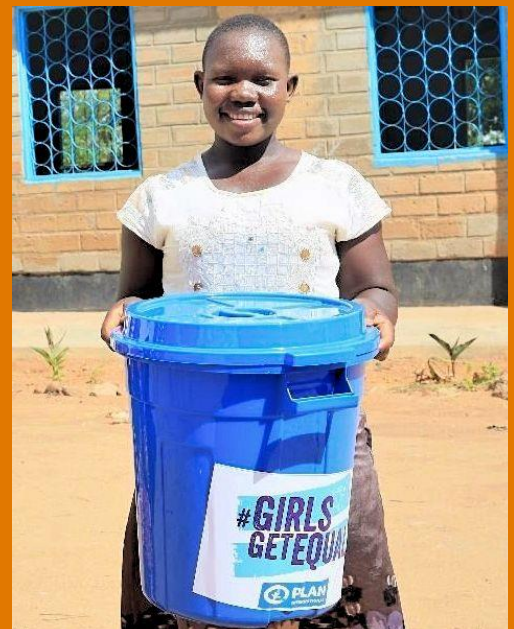
Education is important for all children, so to encourage the enrolment of children with disabilities, we have provided specialised training to teachers, so they feel confident including all children in their lessons.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN MALAWI

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on raising awareness about the pandemic in local communities, and providing kits with soap and handwashing buckets to reduce the spread of the virus. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"In my village people didn't take the virus seriously - we didn't know what it was. Plan raised awareness about how to protect ourselves. Since then, people wear masks and wash their hands."

-Tadala, 17-year-old, Sponsored Child



IMPROVED QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Many schools in Mzuzu are not equipped to provide an inclusive learning environment. In particular, children with disabilities often lack access entirely.

Plan International is helping schools improve their learning and teaching environments, and increasing access for children with disabilities.



We're equipping schools with materials and resources to improve student access to quality education

Through our Quality and Inclusive Education Project, we supported 22 children with school fees and learning materials. We provided equipment such as hearing aids to 103 children with disabilities. We also built 3 teachers' houses in schools to counteract a shortage of instructors.

We provided schools with agricultural supplies to support school meal programs, benefitting 19,508 students. Students participated in planting school gardens to grow vegetables.

Additionally, we're boosting students' food security at the household level with financial assistance and agricultural supplies.

KEEPING GIRLS IN SCHOOL

Poverty, harmful social norms, and poor sanitation mean that many girls in Mzuzu do not complete secondary school. Girls often have to walk long distances to school in unsafe conditions, and schools do not have sanitary toilets for girls. Additionally, many families cannot afford to pay school fees for girls and instead force them into early marriages.

To help, Plan International is improving water, sanitation, and hygiene in schools. We constructed separate menstrual hygiene facilities for girls and installed water systems to provide clean water to all toilets and bathrooms. We also distributed school materials like books and pens for 68 girls. And finally, 22 school officials were trained on how to advocate for girls' education.

"Piped water to the school means we no longer have to queue. I can study at night because the school has solar electricity. I know I will achieve my goal. Just as others have helped me, I also want to help the people from my community."

- Catherine, 20-year-old, secondary school student



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will ensure that children's rights are respected, and they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will support girls' education by working to eliminate child marriage. We will also provide school fees and learning materials to help girls stay in school.



Advocate for child rights laws and support youth clubs with vocation skills training. We will educate community volunteers on child safeguarding policies.



Train teachers in inclusive education, promote school gardens and school feeding programs, and provide classroom materials like desks and chairs.



Strengthen youth clubs and networks to learn about sexual and reproductive health. We will continue to raise awareness about gender and cultural issues that affect maternal and newborn children's health.



These are just some of the many ways your kindness will touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Mzuzu.

Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM CHAKUFWA MUNTHALI

Programme Area Manager, Mzuzu

"We remain committed to supporting children to attain their full potential. With your help we have been able to provide access to better quality of life.

Thank you for your invaluable support!"



WELCOME TO SUDAN

Sudan is in the north east of Africa, with a coastline bordering the Red Sea. The Nile River is the dominant geographic feature of Sudan, and the landscape is generally flat, although mountain ranges in the west and east break up the terrain. The two official languages of Sudan are Arabic and English, but there are dozens of different African languages and dialects spoken in this diverse country.



SUB-TROPICAL
DESERT

CLIMATE

WITH ALMOST
NO RAINFALL

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Kassala is located in eastern Sudan. Its landscape is characterised by the Tutil, Taka, and Mokram Mountains, and the Gash seasonal stream which runs through the desert region. Most families live in rural or semi-rural areas and make their living through farming, animal husbandry or daily labour.

People in Kassala live mainly in round houses made of mud with straw roofs. Many different ethnic groups live in this region, and the jelabiya and thobe are commonly worn attire for men and women.

Traditional gender roles do not value girls' education, and girls are often forced out of school to help take care of the household. In Kassala, 45% of women have been married before the age of 18, and early pregnancies, together with the common cultural practice of Female Genital Mutilation, means girls face serious health complications.



WE STARTED WORKING IN
KASSALA IN

1989



POPULATION

2,519,071

OUR PLAN TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

63%

OF PEOPLE CANNOT
READ OR WRITE

48%

OF CHILDREN DO NOT
ENROL AT SCHOOL

43%

OF PEOPLE DO NOT HAVE
ACCESS TO SAFE WATER

INCREASED ACCESS TO SAFE WATER

Children are most at risk from a lack of clean and safe water. They often suffer from deadly and preventable waterborne diseases.

To ensure that children are able to stay healthy, we have improved access to safe drinking water by drilling new community wells, along with raising awareness of the importance of handwashing with soap to reduce illnesses.

PROTECTING CHILDREN

Child labour and early marriage for girls are common in Kassala, which prevents children from reaching their full potential.

Plan International is working to promote children's rights and equality for girls by setting up child protection committees, so community leaders can recognise and act when children's rights are being abused.

PROMOTING GIRLS' RIGHTS

Girls in Sudan commonly face Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). FGM involves the removal of the outer parts of female genitals. This practice violates girls' rights and has lifelong and severe health consequences.

We are conducting widespread community awareness sessions about the dangers of FGM, so families are empowered to stop this practice.

IMPROVED EDUCATION

Lack of quality schools is a major problem in Kassala. And if families are struggling to feed their children, often girls will be kept at home to help with the household.

To help keep children in school, we are building new classrooms and school toilets, and training teachers to improve their skills. We are also training parents and community leaders on the importance of education for girls.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN SUDAN

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on training local healthcare workers on COVID-19 response, and raising awareness of the pandemic through radio broadcasts so families are able to reduce the spread of the virus. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"My community is aware of the Coronavirus because of Plan International's orientation through the radio, posters and moving microphone."

-Marafee, 10-year-old, Sponsored Child



PROTECTING GIRL'S RIGHTS

Mothers and fathers don't play a significant role in school governance activities. Women especially are often excluded from decision making at their children's school.

Long held discriminatory social norms prevent many girls from receiving a proper education.



Girls and boys were included in the new strategy for the parent-teacher association to consider their opinions and views

A new strategy and agreement between teachers and parents was developed which requires at least 30% of the members of a parent-teacher association to be mothers. 301 members of the associations were trained on inclusive gender responsive education, fundraising and resource mobilisation, leadership and communication. As a result, mothers began to play an active role in parent-teacher associations. In some groups, the percentage of female members was even 46%. 72 awareness campaigns on the importance of education were conducted, reaching 3,011 community members. Many people acknowledged the importance of being educated. As a result, numerous girls were allowed to return to school and continue their education.

QUALITY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

In Kassala there is a high school dropout rate and many children don't even go to school. Education for girls is not seen as important as it is for boys. Therefore, we held awareness sessions in five communities to encourage families to send their girls to school, rather than just focusing on the education of their sons. We reached 3,244 community members and established four girls' education clubs.

These girls carried out awareness-raising sessions for families to explain the importance of education for girls.

To make the learning environment safe and attractive for children, especially girls, we renovated six classrooms, two offices and constructed an additional classroom. 350 children benefit from these newly renovated rooms.

"In my community I see many girls of school age, not attending school. Through our girls education clubs and thanks to Plan, I can work with my friends to convince families to send their girls to school."

-Aisha, 13-year-old, project participant



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will ensure that children's rights are respected, and they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will continue to implement activities to reduce and prevent harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and early marriage.



Youth and women will be equipped with vocational training and entrepreneur skills to improve their livelihood, and diversify their sources of income.



Support the establishment of a natural resource council in Kassala. Activities to improve pasture and water sources will be implemented as well to reduce conflicts over these scarce resources.



Community based child protection committees will be established to support and promote child rights. We will work together with judicial institutions to improve reporting mechanisms of child abuse.

These are just some of the many ways your kindness will touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Kassala.

Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM ELZEIN ALI

Programme Area Manager, Kassala

"We thank you so much for your generous support! Your support has helped improve the quality of education, access to water and health care and has impacted both families and the community as a whole!"



WELCOME TO KENYA

Kenya is in East Africa with coastline on the Indian Ocean. It encompasses savannah, lakelands, the dramatic Great Rift Valley and mountain highlands. It's also home to wildlife like lions, elephants and rhinos.

The two official languages of Kenya are English and Swahili, but there are dozens of indigenous languages spoken by the 42 different ethnic groups that make up this diverse country.



TROPICAL

CLIMATE

WITH HEAVY
RAINFALLS IN
SUMMER

23°C

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Homa Bay is located on the shores of Lake Victoria. Most people here speak Dholuo. English and Swahili are also spoken, especially in urban areas. Homa Bay is home to a rich musical heritage.

Most families here live in houses with an iron roof, earthen floor and walls made of mud and wood. The main crops produced are maize, beans, sweet potatoes and peas. Maize and beans are considered the staple foods of Kenya.

Poverty greatly affects families in Homa Bay, limiting access to education and health care. Women and girls face a number of barriers in education, employment and gender equality. Sexually transmitted infections and teenage pregnancies are also some of the challenges young people face while growing-up.



WE STARTED WORKING IN
HOMA BAY IN

2002



POPULATION

963,794

OUR PLAN TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

33%

OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS
BECOME PREGNANT

28%

OF CHILDREN DROP
OUT OF SCHOOL

21%

OF THE POPULATION IS
INFECTED WITH HIV

SUPPORTING SEXUAL HEALTH

Limited access to sexual and reproductive healthcare information is a major issue in Homa Bay and has led to a high HIV infection rate.

To improve awareness, we are working with youth centres, teachers and local government to reach adolescents with information about sexually transmitted infections. Young people gain knowledge and become empowered to make decisions regarding their sexual health.

EMPOWERING WOMEN

Poverty worsens existing gender-based discrimination. Without access to a form of economic security, women are left vulnerable.

Our programs support girls with vocational training and investment for entrepreneurship initiatives, including raising goats. Women are able to access jobs and business opportunities and transform their families and communities.

ACCESSING EDUCATION

Many children in Homa Bay cannot access quality education. Some drop-out because parents cannot afford school fees, books or uniforms. A lack of sanitary towels often prevents girls from attending school.

Together with the community, we are providing scholarships and basic materials to help children attend school. Teachers, pupils and community leaders are engaged in activities to reduce the barriers to quality education.

ADDRESSING EARLY PREGNANCY

Early pregnancy is a challenge in Homa Bay. Teenage girls who become mothers are more likely to leave school.

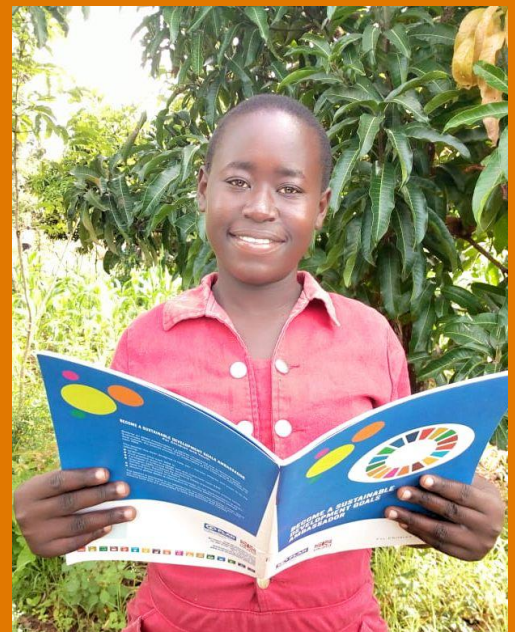
Our community programs provide awareness about menstrual hygiene, reproductive health and family planning. This enables girls to advocate for their health and plan their future.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN KENYA

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on providing financial support so families can meet their basic needs, and setting up community hand-washing stations to ensure people can reduce the spread of the virus. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"It was very difficult to put food on the table. I thank Plan for providing cash transfers to help many households. They also distributed handwashing containers in public places."

-Erick, 53, father of Sponsored Child



PROTECTING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Extreme poverty in Homa Bay means many families are unable to meet basic needs such as food, clothing and medical expenses. The rights of many children, especially girls, are violated with child abuse and neglect, discrimina-

tory cultural attitudes, and child marriages. Some children are made to work, others abandoned. Our child protection project educates both children and adults on children's rights, and helps address the poverty that impacts their ability to lead healthy lives.



Children, especially girls, became more aware of their rights and how to report violations and abuse

We collaborated with the department of children's services to provide educational sessions for children. Adults participated in workshops on positive discipline and parenting, which included peer learning.

To address poverty, we established village savings and loans associations. The associations mean parents can meet their children's basic needs, including school fees.

At the end of the year, they can access savings, which are re-invested in their businesses or used to take care of family needs.

IMPROVING SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Education in sexual and reproductive health is vital for all young people. Yet in Homa Bay, there is a lack of adequate health-care information. The area has the highest rate of HIV/AIDS in the country, and the second-highest rate of teenage pregnancy. To help educate youth, we taught 738 youth about sexual and reproductive health, and empowered them to share the information with

peers. Through our health programme, 35 youth and adolescent leaders conduct dialogue sessions and refer peers with challenges to health facilities. And because girls lack resources on menstrual health management, we provided 108 young women with menstrual hygiene products and helped them learn to manage their periods. This improved their school attendance, confidence and knowledge.

"I am grateful that Plan has given me knowledge on how to manage my menstrual hygiene and further supported me with sanitary pads. This has given me peace of mind and enabled me to focus more on my studies."

- Melvine, 14, beneficiary



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will ensure that children's rights are respected, and they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will hold informational sessions on preventing and reporting child abuse cases, and help children participate in community forums and primary school clubs.



Support students under the bursary program by paying school fees and mentoring them for success in secondary school.



Increase education life skills, and in Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights. We will train and support health workers and teachers as they teach these important topics.



Support agricultural activities including small-scale farming business strategies. We will purchase seeds and other farm resources to boost agriculture in schools and in homesteads.



These are just some of the many ways your kindness will touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Homa Bay.

Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM SAMMY NGOMO

Programme Area Manager, Homa Bay

"Our projects have enhanced participation of children, their families and other key stakeholders towards realisation of children rights. We are hopeful this will bring lasting impact in their lives. We wish to convey our gratitude to you for sponsoring a child in Homa Bay."



WELCOME TO RWANDA!

Located in the landlocked region of Central Africa, Rwanda, also known as 'The Land of a Thousand Hills', is characterised by its many lakes, rivers, rainforests and volcanoes. Rwanda has one of the fastest economic growth rates and is making significant progress to socioeconomic recovery in the wake of the devastating Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994. The principal language spoken by



WARM AND DRY
CLIMATE

27°C

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

A typical house in Bugesera has one living room, plus a bedroom for the children, and one for parents. However, in many cases the children sleep in the living room or in their parents' room while their bedroom is used by small animals like goats.

Only 49% of the population have access to clean water and basic sanitation. More than 50% use water from streams, dams, valleys or swamps.

The effects of the 1994 genocide can still be seen today. Many people live in poverty, and children's rights, especially for girls, are limited.



STARTED WORKING IN
BUGESERA IN

2010



POPULATION

363,339

LIFE FOR CHILDREN IN BUGESERA

6%

UNDER FIVE-YEARS-OLD
MORTALITY RATE

30%

OF HOUSEHOLDS HAVE
UNSAFE DRINKING WATER

22%

ENROL IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

A high unemployment rate among youth remains one of the biggest challenges affecting in the Bugesera. This is due to low level of vocational and entrepreneurship skills, absence of career guidance, poor saving practices, low financial literacy and poor agricultural production. These issues can also later develop into health problems and domestic abuse.

VULNERABILITY OF GIRLS

Due to a lack of education opportunities for girls in this area, many aren't aware of their sexual and reproductive health rights. This can lead to unwanted pregnancies and susceptibility to HIV/AIDS. Teenage pregnancy in this area is a big issue and has several consequences for girls. These include: school dropout, depression, social stigmatisation, unsafe abortion leading often to death and risk of early marriage.

EDUCATION

Throughout Rwanda there are many issues effecting early childhood development and inclusive quality education. Children encounter crowded classrooms due to lack of school infrastructure, unsafe school environments, where girls in particular are prone to abuse, poor teaching methods and a lack of early childhood centres.

CHILD PROTECTION AND VIOLENCE

Household poverty remains a critical barrier to overcoming child abuse, as parents struggle to provide basic care and protection. Underlying cultural, religious and social beliefs also support different types of violence against children and young people in Rwanda. These include beliefs that children have a low status in society and within the family, and therefore physical punishment is an acceptable or normal part of rearing a child.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN RWANDA

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on distributing solar-powered radios to help children continue to learn through radio broadcasts, and providing emergency cash support so families can afford their basic needs. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"I used to walk to my friend's home to follow lessons on the radio but it was a long distance. Thanks to Plan, now I have a solar powered radio, I will not be late in online lessons anymore."

-Agnes, 11-year-old, Sponsored Child



EMPOWERING WOMEN FOR SUCCESS

Women are especially vulnerable to the effects of poverty and high rates of unemployment, making it difficult to provide for themselves and their families.

We're supporting youth and young women with educational opportunities and vocational training, helping them break the cycle of poverty. For youth in school, we made available supplies and furniture to help improve their education. We distributed learning materials to over 4,000 vulnerable students, enabling them to effectively participate in their educational rights. And 10,000 students in 12 schools received school desks. We also invested in young mothers, helping them achieve economic independence. These teenage mothers completed vocational skills training courses in different areas, and received business start-up kits. These resources helped them establish financial security, and gain confidence in their ability to provide for themselves and their family.



We empowered young women with vocational skills and resources to acquire economic independence

STRENGTHENING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Quality, inclusive education is often limited in Bugesera, especially for poor and vulnerable families. We established Village Savings and Loan Associations to help parents invest in their children's education. We also helped children improve their own economic status by encouraging them to also join savings groups. These financial resources allow families to plan for their future.

We focused additional efforts on Early Childhood Development. We trained caregivers on the curriculum and helped leaders facilitate children's transition from preschool into primary school. In addition, we constructed and rehabilitated five Early Childhood Development Centres. We also improved facilities for older pupils, constructing and equipping girls' rooms in five target schools, serving 950 girls.

"I am among the first pupils that passed through the Early Child Development programme and I am now in Grade four. I passed all my subjects with high grades and test scores. I attribute my success to Plan International, who gave me the opportunity to study."

-Aline, 13-year-old, sponsored child



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will continue to protect children's rights so they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will increase our focus on child rights, with a special focus on helping vulnerable families.



We will support communities in providing early childhood development resources. We will focus on literacy and improving educational spaces.



We will provide training for youth and especially young women, in life skills that foster their empowerment and lead to healthy adulthood. We want to achieve inclusive employment processes that benefit women as much as men.



We will increase sexual health and reproductive rights education for adolescents and youth. We will put special emphasis on training girls in leadership, creating adolescent-friendly spaces, and training men to recognize and fight against violence towards women and girls.



These are just some of the many ways your kindness will continue to touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Bugesera.

Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM PEACE MUKABAZIMYA

Programme Area Manager, Bugesera

"Our projects make important contributions that impact the lives of children and youth, and help them realize their rights. This is only possible because of your support for our work. On behalf of Plan International and the children of Bugesera, we thank you so much for your contribution and support!"





OCCIDENTAL MINDORO

WELCOME TO THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines is an island nation located in the western Pacific Ocean. It consists of 7,641 islands broken up by the sea, which gives it one of the longest coastlines in the world. Its landscape consists of mountain terrain, dense forests, plains, and coastal areas. The Philippines is rich in biodiversity, and home to many native plants and animals. While Filipino and English are the official languages, more than 100 distinct indigenous dialects are also spoken.



TROPICAL
MONSOON

CLIMATE

WITH RAINY AND
DRY SEASONS

29°C

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Occidental Mindoro is a province in the Philippines. It occupies the western half of the island of Mindoro and includes outlying islands in the northwest. It is characterised by mountains, rivers, valleys, plains and small freshwater lakes.

Families in Occidental Mindoro celebrate its anniversary with the Arawatan Festival. Arawatan is a Mangyan word, which means cooperation. Among the highlights are street dancing, sport competitions, exhibitions, and recognition of community achievers.

In this vibrant community, life can be difficult for children. Early marriage and teenage pregnancy are challenges. A contributing factor is the culturally-sanctioned practice of Kasal Katipunan, or forced marriage. Many girls must then forgo their education in order to run a household.



STARTED WORKING IN
OCCIDENTAL MINDORO IN

2006



POPULATION

487,414

OUR PLAN TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

24%

OF HOUSEHOLDS HAVE HIGH QUALITY DRINKING WATER

67%

OF CHILDREN ATTEND SECONDARY SCHOOL

76%

OF FAMILIES HAVE A SANITARY TOILET

PREPARING FOR DISASTER

Many families in Occidental Mindoro lack the knowledge and skills to cope with natural disaster.

Plan International is training families in developing a disaster plan, and identifying and reducing the potential risks in their community. Families can prepare for disaster, mitigate the impact on their lives, and more quickly return children to school.

FIGHTING MALNUTRITION

Many families are unaware of the importance of nutrition for health and development. This is a problem in Occidental Mindoro, which has a high rate of malnutrition in children under age five.

We're providing training on the management of severe malnutrition, conducting workshops on malnutrition, and promoting home-based vegetable gardens.

TRAINING YOUTH

Many adolescents must forgo their education in order to work and help support their family, early marriage, or new baby.

Plan International is providing career counselling to help students prepare for their futures. We're giving youth vocational and technical training to improve their chances of gaining employment, and offering life skills training on topics like financial literacy, gender equality and child protection laws.

PROTECTING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Children's rights in Occidental Mindoro are often neglected, and little consideration is given to the issues that affect them.

Plan International is supporting #GirlsTakeover. This programme provides a platform for girls to lobby for support, influence decision-makers, and help implement policy change.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN THE PHILIPPINES

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on providing emergency cash support so families can afford their basic needs, and distributing food baskets and hygiene kits to prevent child hunger and help people reduce the spread of the virus. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"COVID-19 has greatly affected our lives. Plan supported families through giving hygiene kits and food assistance, it was very timely because most parents had stopped making a living."

-Rizza Mae, 14-year-old, Sponsored Child



RESPONSE TO COVID-19

The COVID-19 crisis has impacted vulnerable families in Occidental Mindoro incredibly hard. Families were already struggling under widespread poverty, and many people can no longer earn an income. Parents cannot afford to

feed their children and this has led to high levels of stress. Mandatory lockdowns have also increased the risk of violence in the home.



Food vouchers and other essentials given to families helped to keep their children safe and healthy during the COVID-19 crisis

To help people survive through this crisis, we have provided food assistance to 6,571 families in need. Parents received rice, sugar, coffee and canned goods as well as hygiene kits and other essential supplies so they can keep themselves and their children healthy.

Families also received vital information on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as the importance of hand-washing with soap, wearing masks, and maintaining physical distancing.

Families were also given information on how to prevent violence in the home and where they can go for help if it occurs.

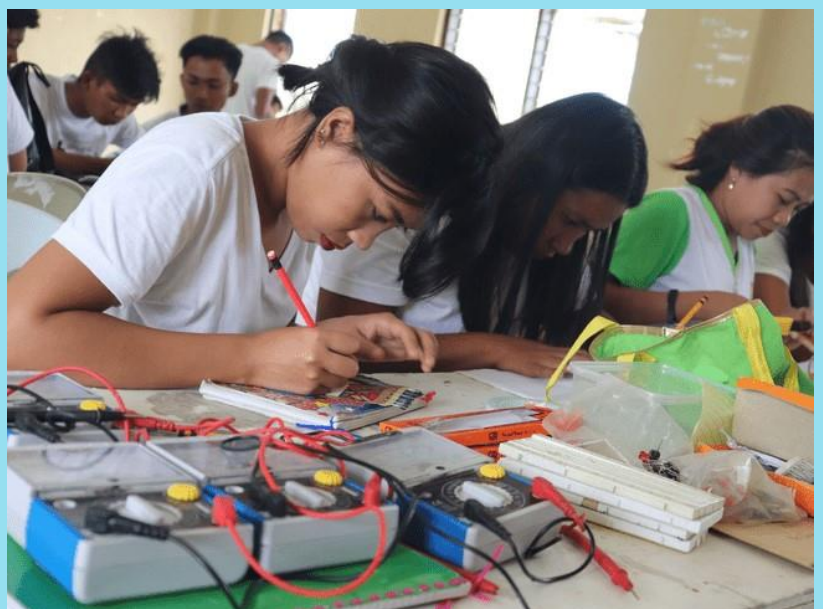
TECHNICAL SKILLS FOR YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Almost 30% of young people are not attending high school, and many have been unable to complete their education because of widespread poverty. There are few opportunities for youth to gain vocational skills that will help them get a good job or start their own business. Young women in particular struggle with early marriage and cultural expectations to stay in the home.

To help young people open the door to a brighter future, we have provided technical training to 136 young women and 188 young men on electrical repair. They also attended life skill workshops, where they learned financial literacy, entrepreneurship skills, and gender equality. Now, these young people are able to get a good job and support themselves and their families.

"Thanks to Plan for giving me assistance. I thought I wouldn't be able to finish my studies but then by training in technical electronic assembly, my dream of finishing my studies and getting a good job was fulfilled. Plan gave me the tools to support my livelihood."

-Evelyn, 20-year-old, project beneficiary



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will ensure that children's rights are respected, and they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will promote equality for girls and increase opportunities for girls to play leadership roles in their communities.



Increase opportunities for young people, particularly young women, to gain the vocational skills they need to get a good job or start their own business.



Support rural families to adapt to climate change and to help communities prepare emergency response plans. Repair community shelters to help communities withstand natural disasters.



Ensure continued access to education throughout the COVID-19 pandemic by supporting teachers to offer alternative learning options, and providing learning kits and school supplies to children in need.



These are just some of the many ways your kindness will touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Occidental Mindoro.

Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM EDGAR MARTIN

Programme Area Manager, Occidental Mindoro

"We are glad that you are with us in every endeavour we undertake with the community. Together we were able to contribute in the development of every child and their families. We will continue to help all children, particularly girls, in order to protect them and so they can achieve their dreams. Thank you for your continuous support!"



WELCOME TO INDONESIA

Indonesia is in Southeast Asia, and is the largest island nation in the world. It is spread across an archipelago of thousands of islands, some of which only appear at low tide. Indonesia also has around 127 active volcanoes. It is home to wildlife like Komodo dragons, orangutans and tigers. While Bahasa Indonesia is the official language, more than 700 languages and dialects are spoken here.



TROPICAL
CLIMATE
WITH DRY
AND RAINY
SEASONS

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Soe is located on Timor Island. The area is composed of wide plains, which are used to grow oranges, apples and corn. Agriculture is the main source of income. Soe is famous for its oranges and sandalwood.

The majority of the Soe community lives in palm walled houses, with grass and zinc roofs. More than half the households don't have access to electricity. Children attend school in areas that are prone to natural disasters such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

Life for children in Soe is challenging. Children are vulnerable to physical, psychological and sexual violence. Girls often marry early. Access to clean water and inadequate community response to natural disasters makes it difficult to have a healthy and secure childhood.



WE STARTED WORKING IN SOE
IN

2004



POPULATION

463,890

OUR PLAN TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

24%

OF HOUSEHOLDS HAVE ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER

51%

OF PEOPLE NEED MORE THAN AN HOUR TO ACCESS WATER

25%

OF CHILDREN REPORT EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE

PROVIDING HYGIENE IMPROVEMENT

Basic sanitation and hygiene are key to fighting disease. Clean water is scarce in Soe, and children must often wake early to fetch water. Some children are unable to bathe during the long dry season due to lack of water.

Plan International is implementing community-based clean water access with water pipe facilities and water tanks in villages, giving residents convenient access to clean water.

EMPOWERING GIRLS THROUGH SPORT

Negative gender stereotypes about girls' worth undermine their self-esteem and confidence.

Sport is one way to improve social empowerment, engage girls with the community and teach self-confidence and assertiveness. Girls are given the confidence, skills and resources to take control of their lives and make their own decisions.

EARLY CHILDHOOD IMPROVEMENT

Limited access to early childhood education has a negative impact on families in Soe.

We are providing resources for community-wide education. Parents attend parenting classes, children gain access to pre-school and kindergarten, and teachers access additional training. Community engagement empowers families, giving children the chance to thrive.

PROTECTING CHILDREN

A high rate of violence against children exists in Soe. Many cases are not handled legally.

Plan International is providing a community-based child protection program. Through training sessions, community members increase their ability to protect children at the village level. Regular meetings involve both adults and children, empowering them to take action against child abuse.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN INDONESIA

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on helping children continue learning through radio broadcasts and providing at-home school kits, and distributing hygiene kits, including soap and face masks, so families can reduce the spread of the virus. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first-- regardless of income, race, or gender.

"Thanks to Plan, I can learn from home with my school kit and through radio lessons. I feel relieved that I can listen to my teachers' lessons. They also help me to look forward to something."

Wita, 14, Sponsored Child



SUPPORTING PARENTS

A safe, healthy childhood is key for children to thrive. In Soe, many families struggle to access information and resources on developing their parenting skills.



Local government and parenting groups in 46 villages advocated for the allocation of funds for child-friendly programmes

To empower families, we organised 13 discussion sessions on early childhood development, nutrition and financial literacy. These sessions helped 1,135 parents and 59 parenting facilitators strengthen their parenting practices. After the training, ten groups of mothers and fathers and 10 groups of fathers formed as support groups.

26 parenting facilitators received 6 Gold Parenting training sessions, focused on helping families develop consistent household routines, giving children a sense of control and enabling them to develop independence. The facilitators reported an increase in parent confidence and ability.

Because poor nutrition and stunting are common in Soe, 13 groups in 7 sub-districts were trained to help stunted children and educate families in stunting prevention.

COVID-19 RESPONSE IN SOE

COVID-19 is devastating for vulnerable communities with limited access to water, proper hygiene and sanitation. Lack of electricity and reliable internet connection make it difficult to educate communities. We developed hygiene kits, school kits and clean water initiatives to help families manage the effects of the virus.

We provided 14,085 children with hygiene kits containing essentials like soap, nail cutters and towels. We distributed 9,457 educational leaflets teaching about COVID-19 prevention, and 4,122 children in 17 communities without access to electricity or internet received school kits to support remote learning. 1,560,000 litres of clean water gave 4,841 children access to better sanitation.

"I was very happy to receive a menstrual kit, school kit and hygiene kit from Plan during the COVID-19 pandemic. Plan taught us how to practice better hygiene and sanitation. This support means so much to me."

-Selvi, 11 years old



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will ensure that children's rights are respected, and they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will increase training for young people, especially young women, on green skills and sustainable farming practices.



Strengthen parenting skills through classes and training focused on the healthy development of children.



Increase awareness among adolescents on sexual and reproductive health and rights. We will also advocate for girls' football to be added to the local government agenda.



Coordinate with local government to encourage child-friendly village sponsorship. This will enable parents and parenting groups to develop their parenting skills and grow healthy families.

These are just some of the many ways your kindness will touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Soe.

Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM MUHAMMAD THAMRIN

Programme Area Manager, Soe

"Your contribution is making a big impact on the lives of children. We remain fully committed to doing everything we can to support children, especially girls, through the provision of dignity kits and accessible clean water while coping with the situation of the outbreak of COVID-19. Thank you."



WELCOME TO INDIA

India is a large country in South Asia with a coastline on the Indian Ocean. It is one of the most populous countries in the world and has stunning geographical diversity, from the Himalayan mountain ranges to the Ganges River plain, forested valleys and coastal beaches. Hindi and English are used for official purposes in India, but there are more than 120 major languages used by hundreds of different ethnic groups that make up this diverse country.



HUMID
SUBTROPICAL

CLIMATE

WITH FOUR
SEASONS

24°C

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Varanasi is located in the fertile northern Ganges River plain. The river and widespread forests in the area are home to a wide variety of animals and fish. Most families live rurally, making their living through farming or as daily wage labourers. People also migrate to larger towns and cities for work.

Children in Varanasi live mainly in houses made of mud with tiled roofs. Many local festivals are celebrated here with traditional music and dances. Women in the region wear colourful sarees and men wear dhoti and kurta.

Gender discrimination is common in rural Varanasi. Girls are often forced out of school to take care of household chores, and they are vulnerable to early marriages. Remote villages lack access to quality health care services, and many children suffer from waterborne diseases due to poor sanitation.



WE STARTED WORKING IN
VARANASI IN

2007



POPULATION

11,062,909

OUR PLAN TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

26%

OF GIRLS GET MARRIED BEFORE THE LEGAL AGE

9%

OF WOMEN IN INDIA OWN THEIR OWN LAND

81%

OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION

SANITARY TOILETS

Open defecation is still a major concern in Varanasi, leading to serious health issues for children and families.

To reduce this practice, we are helping more families build their own household toilets and hand-washing facilities. We have also conducted widespread community awareness sessions on the importance of eliminating open defecation.

PROTECTING CHILDREN

Early marriage is very common for girls in Varanasi. Many families are not aware there is a legal marriage age, or how early marriages prevent children from reaching their full potential.

Plan International has been conducting widespread anti-child marriage campaigns and supporting community protection committees to act to prevent these marriages.

IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS

Girls and young women in Varanasi lack opportunities to earn a living, often being forced to stay at home and help care for their families.

We have provided training to girls on farming and tailoring, along with financial and entrepreneurship skills. With these new skills, girls have started their own businesses, are earning a living and have the confidence to play a more active role in their communities.

PROMOTING GIRLS' HEALTH

Cultural stigmas around menstruation lead many girls in Varanasi feeling shame and using unhygienic practices to manage their periods.

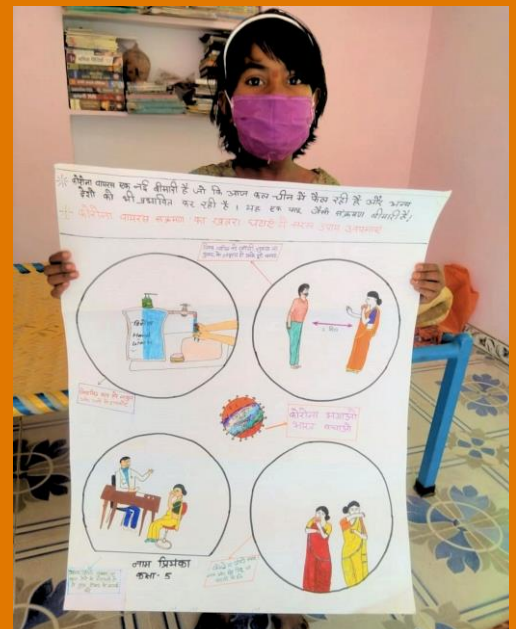
We have held community awareness sessions on menstrual hygiene. Now, girls and young women are able to manage their periods and take part in school and community activities.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN INDIA

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on providing food baskets and hygiene kits so families can feed their children and reduce the spread of the deadly virus, and distributing school materials so children can continue learning at home. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"Before COVID-19, I was not washing my hands very carefully. After attending awareness sessions, I now know how to properly wash to prevent diseases. Thanks to Plan for bringing this change."

-Choti, 15-year-old, Sponsored Child



SAFE WATER AND SANITATION

Families in Varanasi are unable to access safe drinking water throughout the year. Not all families have or use a household toilet, and open defecation remains a common practice. There is a lack of drinking water at schools, and

schools do not have separate toilet facilities for girls and boys. The lack of clean water and toilets can have serious health consequences, particularly for young children who regularly suffer from water-borne diseases.



8,812 children celebrated the Global Handwashing Day to share the importance of handwashing with soap to prevent diseases

To help give children a clean and healthy environment, we have formed water and sanitation committees at 174 schools. 2,436 children have taken part in the committees and have learned about the importance of handwashing with soap and using clean toilets.

We also held community events where 2,829 families learned about the importance of using household toilets instead of practising open defecation. 69 families have now repaired their household toilet, helping to ensure the cleanliness of their communities.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Youth unemployment in Varanasi is high, especially in rural areas. Young people, particularly young women, lack opportunities to learn vocational skills in order to get a decent job or start their own business.

their own business. 1,241 girls completed training on specific trades such as agriculture, dairy farming, tailoring, and beautician skills. More than 600 of these young women have now started their businesses and are earning an income.

To help young people open the door to a brighter future, we have trained 2,691 young women on financial skills and how to start and manage

By being able to support themselves and their families, they are able to inspire other girls in their communities towards economic independence.

"Earlier, we would never have thought that as girls, we can earn money. My mother participated in the programme and got training on entrepreneurship and farming. Now, my family income is improving through vegetable cultivation. My mother has become a good farmer."

- Sadhna, 14-year-old, Sponsored Child



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will ensure that children's rights are respected, and they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will continue to promote the use of household toilets and the importance of handwashing with soap.



Increase access to sexual and reproductive health education for boys and girls, with a focus on menstrual hygiene management.



Provide reading materials to schools to improve literacy and work with communities and parents to promote early childhood education, particularly for girls.



Increase opportunities for young people, especially young women, to complete vocational courses and gain the skills and knowledge they need to get a decent job or start their own business.

These are just some of the many ways your kindness will touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Varanasi.

Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM NEHA CHATURVEDI

Programme Area Manager, Varanasi

"Through our projects, we have been able to work with children and youth on issues that directly affect their wellbeing. It is with your support that we are able to implement programmes where children can participate and become agents of change in their communities. Thank you for extending your continued support to our children and youth."



WELCOME TO CAMBODIA

Cambodia is located in the southern portion of Southeast Asia. It is home to diverse wildlife, such as monkeys, wild pig and buffalo. Cambodia is still a largely rural country. Most people are farmers, growing rice, cassava, cashews, banana and pineapple. Khmer is the official language. Cambodia was devastated by conflict during the rise and fall of the Khmer Rouge regime from 1975-79.



27°C

MONSOON

CLIMATE

WITH A
RAINY
AND DRY
SEASON

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Rolling hills, mountains, plateaus and lakes characterise the diverse geography of Ratanakiri. The area is renowned for lush forests, which are at risk of deforestation to produce more farmland. Despite threats to the region's natural resources, Ratanakiri remains an important site for the conservation of endangered wildlife.

Families in Ratanakiri live in houses built on wooden stilts. The walls are made of wood or bamboo with iron or zinc roofs. The back of the house is for cooking while the rest serves as living room and bedroom. Two or three generations often live together.

Children face significant challenges, especially those living in remote villages with low access to social services. Transportation to school, violence, teenage pregnancy and malnutrition are just a few of the prominent issues facing young people in the region.



STARTED WORKING IN
RATANAKIRI IN

2011



POPULATION

201,547

OUR PLAN TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

5%

OF HOMES HAVE ELECTRICITY FROM THE POWER GRID

65%

OF ADULTS CAN READ AND WRITE

54%

OF HOUSEHOLDS HAVE ACCESS TO SAFE WATER

CLEAN WATER INITIATIVES

Clean water is key to fighting disease. Many people in Ratanakiri are unable to access safe water. Many more are unaware of the connection between contaminated water and disease.

Plan International's community-led programs work with leaders to increase access to safe water, leading to improved sanitation facilities. Families learn habits like safe food preparation and storage, hand-washing and menstrual hygiene management.

IMPROVED EDUCATION

Extreme poverty limits educational access for children in Ratanakiri. Most children migrate seasonally for farm work and are frequently absent from school or drop-out.

Our focus is school construction and community awareness of the importance of education.

IMPACTING GENDER EQUALITY

Girls in Ratanakiri learn at an early age not to speak out or express opinions. Negative gender stereotypes about girls' worth undermine their self-esteem and confidence.

We are working closely with national policymakers to address the taboos and stigmas girls encounter. On a community level, girls and boys are taught to make collective action for gender equality.

PROTECTING CHILDREN

Many children in Ratanakiri are exposed to violence and abuse. The protection system is too weak to address child abuse concerns.

Our public education programs address anger management and domestic violence and teach positive parenting techniques. This gives families the tools to model positive behaviour to their children and break the cycle of abuse.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN CAMBODIA

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on providing families with emergency cash support so they can afford their basic needs, and ensuring children have hygiene kits to keep themselves safe from the virus. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"I wash my hands with soap at home and at school very often, because it is so important to protect from COVID-19. Thanks to Plan for providing hygiene kits and promoting hand hygiene."

Heat, 6, Sponsored Child



PROVIDING NOURISHMENT AND NUTRITION

Childhood malnutrition is a major problem in Ratanakiri. Men and women lack knowledge and skills on good nutrition practices and the importance of proper hygiene.

Limited resources and widespread poverty also prevent parents from accessing nutritious foods and healthcare for their children. To improve community knowledge of health and nutrition, we trained 247 village health support group members to identify and treat malnutrition. More than 600 children attended health screenings, and over 200 children were given the necessary treatment for their malnutrition. More than 700 pregnant women attended health promotion sessions, where they increased their knowledge of nutrition and health during pregnancy and during breastfeeding, to ensure the health of themselves and their babies. We also trained families on home gardening which will increase the variety and reliability of available food.



We distributed 455 home gardening manuals to families which will help improve their farming practices

BUILDING ON EARLY EDUCATION

The needs of young children for early education in rural Ratanakiri are often overlooked. The importance of early stimulation for child development is not well understood, and gender-based stereotypes that perceive women as inferior limit opportunities for girls to go to school. To help give all young children the best possible

start in life, we repaired and renovated 21 community preschools, equipping them with teaching and learning materials. We held 203 meetings with newly formed parenting groups in 47 villages, where both mothers and fathers acquired positive parenting skills. Now, children in Ratanakiri can grow-up healthy and supported, both at school and at home.

"In the past, my village had no community preschool and parents didn't understand how to care for their children. Now, parents are aware of the importance of early education and child care and send them to the new school."

-Souleang, 28,
preschool teacher



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will continue to protect children's rights so they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will empower girls and young women to learn, share, create, and lead projects promoting gender equality in their communities.



Improve access to clean water and sanitation in rural communities by building wells and toilets, and providing training on the importance of hand-washing.



Provide vocational training to young people, especially girls, in order to give them the skills and confidence they need to start a small business, earn a living, and support themselves and their families.



Keep children safe from abuse and exploitation by supporting child protection programmes and increasing knowledge of children's rights both of adults in the community and children themselves.



These are just some of the many ways your kindness will continue to touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Ratanakiri.

Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM MUNINT MAK

Programme Area Manager, Ratanakiri

"Thank you to all sponsors for your support to bring significant changes to the lives of the girls, boys, families and communities in Ratanakiri! Thanks to your contribution, they are now benefitting from improved access to education, better nutrition, access to water, and better health."



WELCOME TO INDIA

India is a large country in South Asia with a coastline on the Indian Ocean. It is one of the most populous countries in the world, and has a very diverse geography, from the Himalayan mountain ranges to the Ganges River plain to forested valleys and coastal beaches. Hindi and English are used for official purposes in India, but there are more than 120 major languages used by hundreds of different ethnic groups that make up this diverse country.



EXTREME

CLIMATE

WITH HOT SUMMERS
AND COLD WINTERS

25°C

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Rajdhani is in the northwest outskirts area of the mega-city territory of Delhi. Families have been relocated to Rajdhani from inner slums. Most families originally migrated from other areas of India and moved to Delhi to find work as day labourers, vendors or domestic workers. Families in Rajdhani live mainly in poor-quality one-room houses.

Parents in Rajdhani struggle to earn enough to feed their children, afford medical care or pay for school fees. Children are often forced to drop out of school to help make an income or to take care of the household or younger siblings.

The slum conditions of Rajdhani mean that many children suffer from waterborne diseases due to poor sanitation and hygiene.



WE STARTED WORKING IN
RAJDHANI IN

2008



POPULATION

16 MILLION

OUR PLAN TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

70%

OF GIRLS EXPERIENCE
VERBAL HARASSMENT

17%

OF GIRLS DROP OUT OF
SECONDARY SCHOOL

81%

OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS
EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION

HEALTH INITIATIVES

Limited access to quality healthcare facilities and a lack of knowledge on hygiene and good nutrition means that young children often suffer from illnesses and malnutrition.

To improve the health of children in Rajdhani, we have provided training to parents on healthy eating habits. We have also supported immunisation campaigns, so all children are protected from preventable illnesses.

PROTECTING CHILDREN

Early marriage is very common for girls in Rajdhani. Many families aren't aware there is a legal marriage age, or how early marriages prevent girls from reaching their full potential.

Plan International has been conducting widespread anti-child marriage campaigns and supporting community protection committees to act to prevent these marriages.

SAFE WATER AND CLEAN TOILETS

Children are most at risk from a lack of safe water and clean toilets, leading to waterborne diseases which keep them from going to school.

We are working to raise community awareness on the importance of drinking safe water and hand-washing with soap. We are also supporting school committees which allow students to spread awareness and maintain hygiene at school.

IMPROVED EDUCATION

The needs of young children for early education are often overlooked in Rajdhani. However, the early years of life are crucial for developing social and cognitive skills.

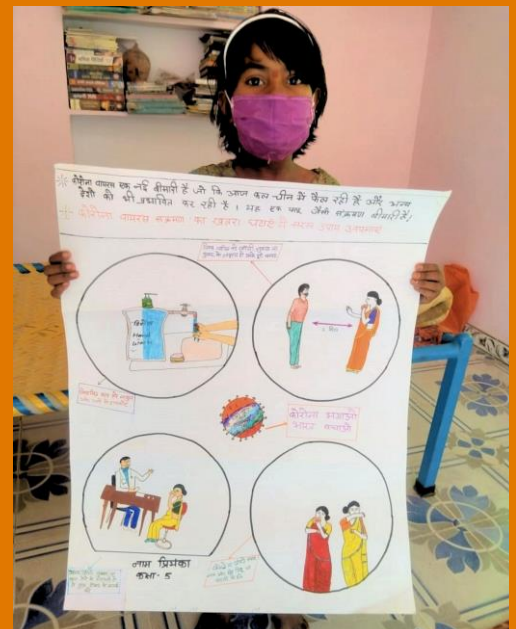
Plan International is supporting early childhood education centres by training teachers and providing learning materials. Young children can now learn and play in inspiring environments.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN INDIA

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on providing food baskets and hygiene kits so families can feed their children and reduce the spread of the deadly virus, and distributing school materials so children can continue learning at home. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"Before COVID-19, I was not washing my hands very carefully. After attending awareness sessions, I now know how to properly wash to prevent diseases. Thanks to Plan for bringing this change."

-Choti, 15-year-old, Sponsored Child



QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

Children in Rajdhani face many barriers to completing their education. Many children are forced to drop out of school due to poverty, household chores, or early marriage. Boys are regularly involved in child labour, while girls are often

forced into child marriages that prevent them from continuing their education.

To help children open the door to a brighter future, we have trained 144 preparatory schools on how to provide early childhood education.

Now, 2,320 children under the age of 6 are able to play and build a solid learning foundation as they grow.

We have also helped 144 preparatory schools implement individual student assessments. Thousands of children are now attending classes based on their learning level instead of their age.

Furthermore, 696 students are now enrolled in remedial education at 9 digital learning centres, so they can improve their skills and knowledge and stay in school.



9,729 children have improved their reading skills by taking part in literary festivals

IMPROVING WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Families in Rajdhani lack access to safe drinking water and clean toilets. Slum areas have limited water facilities and many people are forced to practice open defecation. Local authorities also fail to collect waste regularly, leading to unhygienic public spaces.

water pipes, sinks, taps, and washbasins at 11 local schools. Now more than 1,100 students have access to clean water at schools.

To help ensure children grow up in safe and clean environments, we have repaired and installed

We have also trained 5,187 children and adults in the community on the importance of handwashing with soap. This helps to reduce the spread of deadly water-borne diseases, which is critical during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"On Global Handwashing Day, I learned how to wash my hands properly. I regularly share this with other children at school and in my community. I also told my parents about the importance of handwashing with soap."

- Muskan, 13-year-old, Sponsored Child



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will ensure that children's rights are respected, and they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will improve access to health services for pregnant women, new-born babies, and young children.



Promote girls' rights and increase opportunities for girls to play leadership roles in their communities.



Support access to education for all children, especially girls, during the closure of schools due to COVID-19 by providing education kits.



Increase opportunities for young people, particularly young women, to gain the vocational skills and knowledge they need to get a good job or start their own business.



These are just some of the many ways your kindness will touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Rajdhani.

Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM ANAMIKA SHARMA

Programme Area Manager, Rajdhani

"On behalf of the whole Rajdhani team, I would like to thank the sponsors who have supported us in our journey. There are thousands of children and young people whose lives you have touched and made better with your support."





WELCOME TO NEPAL

Nepal is a landlocked country, with China to its north and India to its east, west and south. Nepal has a diverse geography, including fertile plains and subalpine forested hills. It is home to eight of the world's ten highest mountains, including Mount Everest, the highest point on Earth. Kathmandu is the capital and the largest city. Nepal is a multi-ethnic country with Nepali as the official language.



DHANUSHA

QUICK FACTS FROM YOUR
SPONSORED CHILD'S
COMMUNITY:

POPULATION

754,777

CLIMATE

WARM & TEMPERATE

LANGUAGE

MAITHILI & NEPALI

PLAN INTERNATIONAL COVID-19 RESPONSE IN NEPAL

The Covid-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on helping children continue learning through radio broadcasts, and providing emergency cash support and hygiene kits so families can feed their children and reduce the spread of the virus.

DAILY LIFE FOR CHILDREN IN DHANUSHA

Located in the southeast of Nepal, Dhanusha shares a border with India. It is one of the warmest places in Nepal during the summer, and also one of the coldest places in the winter. Most families earn a living through farming, although the region regularly experiences flooding during the rainy season each year.

Dhanusha is a famous tourist area for Hindu pilgrims as there are many temples and holy places in the region. The Chhat Parva festival attracts thousands of pilgrims to the town of Janakpurdhham every year. During this four-day festival, devotees will bathe in the local ponds, clean their houses, fast from meals, and then prepare special dishes for the final day. On the last evening, people gather at the banks of the river, light lamps and make offerings to the fading sun. On the morning of the fourth day, people celebrate the rising sun and offer prayers and fruits.

In this vibrant and diverse community, life can be a challenge for children. Girls are regularly forced into early marriage, and many children are not able to access quality education or healthcare.

43%

OF CHILDREN ARE NOT FULLY IMMUNIZED

60%

OF WOMEN CANNOT READ OR WRITE

27%

OF CHILDREN ARE OUT OF SCHOOL



CHALLENGES IN DHANUSHA

LACK OF ACCESS TO SAFE WATER AND MENSTRUAL HYGIENE

Families in Dhanusha struggle to access clean and safe drinking water. Frequent flooding regularly damages sanitation facilities, leaving children at risk of deadly water-borne diseases. Menstrual taboos also mean that girls are not aware of hygienic ways to manage their menstruation.

INADEQUATE PROTECTION

Girls' rights in Dhanusha are not well understood, and girls have little power to partake in the decision-making of their upbringing. Moreover, there is broad cultural acceptance that girls should get married early, and a lack of sexual and reproductive health education restricts their ability to make informed decisions regarding their bodies.

Sexual assault and harassment are also common, and girls do not feel safe as they go to school, work, or the market. This prevents girls from playing active roles in their communities. Without strong protection mechanisms, it is challenging to be a young girl in Dhanusha.

LACK OF QUALITY EDUCATION

More than one in four children in Dhanusha are not in school. Access to quality education remains limited for families in rural areas, and schools lack hand-washing facilities and gender-specific toilets. This means that schools are not safe and inclusive places for girls. The importance of early childhood education is also not well understood, and young children are not able to go to preschool to build their social, emotional, and cognitive skills.



IMPROVING THE FUTURE

With your ongoing support, Plan International will continue to work with children, families and partners in Dhanusha to ensure that children have the chance to stand up for their rights.

PROTECTING CHILDREN

Protecting children remains central to everything we do, from working with local leaders to end child marriage, strengthening child protection groups to prevent abuse, to promoting girls' rights and gender equality.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

We know that children need a strong foundation to thrive. With your support, we are promoting preschools and early education so young children can develop the skills they need to open the door to a brighter future. And by improving sanitation and hygiene facilities at schools, more girls will be able to continue their education and safely manage their menstruation.

HEALTH INITIATIVES

Children have the right to a healthy start in life. We are supporting parents to provide nurturing care to their children by educating parents about child health. We are also ensuring parents understand the importance of girls' rights and gender equality.

HYGIENE AND SANITATION

You are helping us train the communities and schools on proper water management and hygiene practices. We are also working to tackle taboos around menstruation, so girls will not have to follow unsanitary practices or be excluded from school or community events.



MESSAGE FROM RAVI SHANKAR PANDIT

Regional Manager, Dhanusha

“We will start to implement our programme interventions in fiscal year 2022 to bring more positive impact in the lives of the children, girls, and young women in the area. Thank you for your continued support to Plan International.”



NEPAL

● Country Office

WELCOME TO BANGLADESH

Bangladesh, to the east of India on the Bay of Bengal, is a South Asian country marked by lush greenery and many waterways. It's the world's 8th most populous country with nearly 163 million people. The official language is Bangla or Bengali and is spoken by the vast majority of the population.



WARM
CLIMATE
WITH RAINY
SEASONS

32°C

YOUR SPONSORED CHILD'S COMMUNITY

Kurigram is located in northern Bangladesh, close to the border of India. Most people speak the Rangpurian dialect of Bengali in their rural areas. Several major rivers flow through the region, and the Nouka Baich festival takes place each year where neighbouring villages compete in boat races.

The area of Kurigram is highly vulnerable to natural disasters. Heavy rainfall regularly causes flooding, and during monsoon season, many buildings and crops are destroyed. Most people rely on farming to earn a living and feed their families, which means children often go hungry during intense floods.

Early marriage is common in Kurigram, which regularly forces girls to drop out of school. A lack of sexual and reproductive health education means young people cannot make informed decisions about their bodies or relationships.



STARTED WORKING IN
KURIGRAM IN

2014



POPULATION

2,069,273

OUR PLAN TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES

64%

OF THE POPULATION
LIVES IN POVERTY

67%

OF PEOPLE CANNOT
READ OR WRITE

59%

OF GIRLS IN BANGLADESH ARE
MARRIED BEFORE THE AGE OF 18

PROMOTING GIRLS' RIGHTS

In Kurigram, girls' rights aren't well understood. Household poverty and cultural norms regularly see girls forced into early marriage, which prevents them from continuing their education.

To help protect girls from early marriage, we are working with local authorities, community members, and religious leaders to raise awareness of the harmful effects of child marriage.

PROTECTING YOUTH IN DISASTERS

Seasonal monsoon flooding in Kurigram has displaced many families, leaving children and youth vulnerable to physical or sexual abuse.

To help keep children safe, we have provided child protection training to 3,000 parents. And 1,500 young people learned about their sexual and reproductive health rights, so they can make informed decisions about their bodies.

BUILDING RESILIENCE

Families in Kurigram are vulnerable to natural disasters, which are becoming more severe due to climate change. Disaster events destroy homes and livelihoods, and often force children to abandon their education and leave them at risk of neglect and abuse.

Plan International is working to improve knowledge among communities on how to adapt to changes in the climate. We are also building resilience among children and young people, so they have the skills and confidence they need to respond in the event of a natural disaster. 3,207 families have now developed household preparedness plans.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IN BANGLADESH

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit children, and especially girls, particularly hard with schools closing and many parents losing income. Our work has focused on providing families with emergency cash support so they can afford their basic needs, and distributing child-friendly booklets to help children practice good hygiene so they can protect themselves from the virus. As vaccines become available, Plan International has a role in encouraging policies that help the most vulnerable people to get the vaccine first--regardless of income, race, or gender.

"I came to know about the COVID-19 pandemic from my Youth Group meetings. I learned how infectious it is, and by wearing a mask we can protect ourselves from the deadly virus."

Shirina, 17, Youth Group Member



RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES

Along with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, families in Kurigram also struggled through a damaging monsoon season. Many people became displaced due to flooding – some moved to ad hoc emergency shelters,

while others set up temporary settlements along roadways. Children, especially girls, are most vulnerable in emergency situations, and cases of child marriage and abuse have increased.



Children received support with their mental health through psychosocial sessions

Plan International has supported the mental health of 750 children by providing psychosocial support sessions so boys and girls can cope with the trauma of the flooding and displacement.

We also provided cash support to 1,500 households to help them support their families. Households can use this financial assistance to buy educational materials, nutritious food, and menstrual hygiene supplies, so their children can continue their education and stay healthy.

3,000 parents also received training on child protection and the harmful effects of early and forced marriage.

EMPOWERING GIRLS FOR BRIGHTER FUTURES

High levels of poverty in Kurigram and a lack of knowledge of girls' rights means many parents force their daughters into an early marriage. Girls do not get to continue their education, and are unable to gain employment skills.

authorities and community members on child protection. Law enforcement officials now have the skills they need to step in and prevent child marriages in their communities.

To help protect girls from the harmful effects of early and forced marriage, we are training local

We are also promoting girls' rights among parents. 72% of fathers now support delaying the marriage of their daughters, and parents also understand the importance of girls going back to school.

"Being a member of Youth Forum, I received life skills training. With this knowledge, I stopped my child marriage when I was only 16 years old. I knew the consequences of early marriage and I convinced my parents to drop my marriage plan."

- Muon, 17 years old



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will ensure that children's rights are respected, and they are able to thrive.



In the coming year, we will continue to work with communities to raise awareness of the harmful effects of early marriage.



Increase opportunities for young people to gain the technical and vocational skills they need to get a good job or start their own business.



Provide sexual and reproductive health education to young people, so girls and boys can make informed decisions about their lives, their bodies, and their futures.



Carrying out parenting sessions and early childhood development initiatives to enhance early stimulation. This interaction with children will help them to grow up and meet their full potential.

These are just some of the many ways your kindness will touch the lives of your sponsored child and other children in Kurigram. Thank you for all that you do!



MESSAGE FROM HRISHIKESH SARKER

Programme Area Manager, Kurigram

"In Kurigram, a disaster-prone area, the children, especially girls, are at risk of child marriage, child labour, trafficking, and malnutrition. We hope our efforts will develop meaningful relationships with the communities, families, children, and sponsors, ensuring lasting improvements in children's quality of life."

